

THE  
KIPLING JOURNAL



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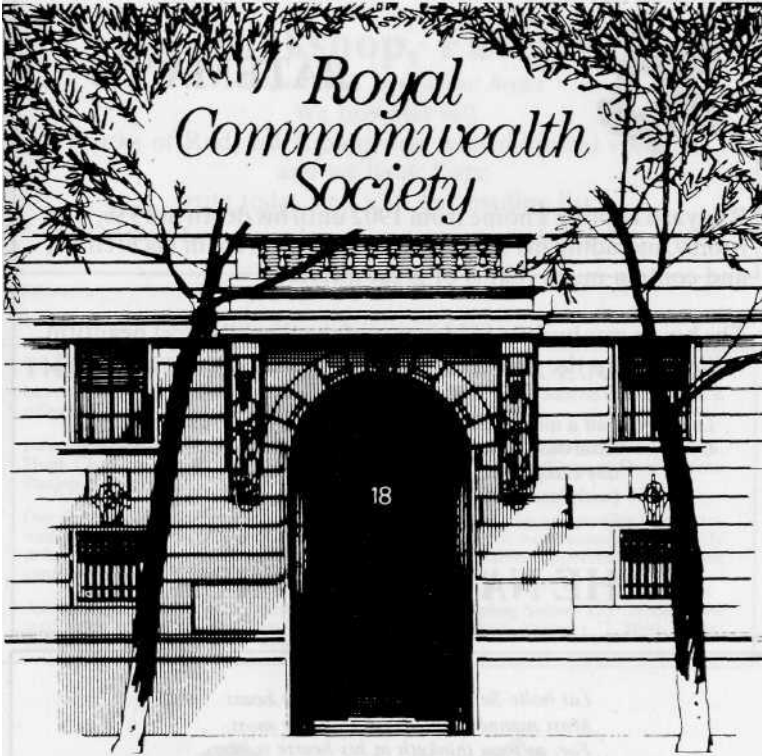
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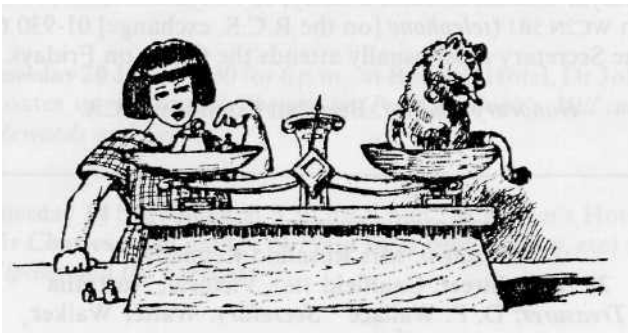
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How many of our readers will recognise this picture, or at least guess its context in Kipling's *oeuvre*? It is quite a difficult test, so here is some help. It appeared in Kipling's lifetime, in an authorised selection of his work, and is among several drawings that illustrate one of his less well known pieces of prose, one derived from personal experience. Enough by way of clues. Any reader from whom I hear before our June 1988 issue goes to print, with a correct guess, will receive an honourable mention. Any who also identifies the edition, the date and the artist, earns a small prize.—*Ed.*

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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS IN 1988  
AND ANNUAL LUNCHEON

**Wednesday 20 April** at 5.30 for 6 p.m., in the Kipling Room at Brown's Hotel (Dover & Albemarle Streets, London W1), **Dr Daniel Karlin** (Lecturer in English at University College, London, and editor of *The Jungle Books* in the Penguin Classics series) on *The Anglo-American Writings*.

**Wednesday 4 May** at 12.30 for 1 p.m., in the Commonwealth Hall at the Royal Commonwealth Society, 18 Northumberland Avenue, London WC2, the Society's **Annual Luncheon**. The Guest of Honour, and speaker, will be **Mr Philip Mason, C.I.E., O.B.E.** Admission by ticket, obtainable from me. Application forms sent to members in Britain with the December 1987 and March 1988 issues of the *Kipling Journal*.

**Wednesday 20 July** at 5.30 for 6 p.m., at Brown's Hotel, **Dr John Coates** on *Historical Themes in 'Puck of Pook's Hill' and 'Rewards and Fairies'*.

**Wednesday 14 September** at 5.30 for 6 p.m., at Brown's Hotel, **Mr Charles Allen** (editor of *Plain Tales from the Raj*, etc) on *Kipling and the Servants*.

**Wednesday 12 October** at 5.30 for 6 p.m., at the Royal Commonwealth Society, the Society's **Annual General Meeting** (subject to confirmation in forthcoming issues of the *Kipling Journal*).



### THE SWASHBUCKLERS.

TORY DIE-HARD. "DOWN WITH HOME RULE!"

RADICAL EXTREMIST. "DOWN WITH ULSTER!"

JOHN BULL. "THIS SORT OF THING MAY AMUSE YOU, GENTLEMEN, BUT I'VE NO USE FOR IT. I'M NOT GOING TO HAVE CIVIL WAR TO PLEASE EITHER OF YOU!"

With acknowledgments to *Punch*. This cartoon by L. Raven Hill appeared in its issue of 13 May 1914—at a time when Home Rule for all Ireland, and potential rebellion in the Protestant north of the island in consequence, seemed to loom so importantly as to exclude almost every other political consideration. Kipling, by no means a Tory die-hard in most respects, was certainly a Unionist die-hard over Ulster, and had come to regard civil war as probably unavoidable. Three days after this cartoon appeared he gave his well-known and intemperate speech to a crowd of Unionists on the common at Tunbridge Wells. His politics at that period are the subject of a major article by Dr Michael Brock in this issue.



# THE KIPLING JOURNAL

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Officers and Branches of the Kipling Society	4
SECRETARY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	5
<i>Frontispiece: The Swashbucklers</i>	6
EDITORIAL	8
"OUTSIDE HIS ART": RUDYARD KIPLING IN POLITICS <i>by Michael Brock</i>	9-32
<i>Illustration: The Queen's Letter</i>	16
"PROOFS OF HOLY WRIT": AN INTRODUCTION <i>by Philip Mason</i>	33-37
BOOK REVIEWS: Various new editions of Kipling, reviewed <i>by Nora Crook</i>	38-41
THE YEARS BETWEEN': RUDYARD KIPLING AND THE GREAT WAR <i>by Ann Parry</i>	42-61
POINTS FROM READERS' LETTERS: <i>Brought up by Wolves</i> (Miss J. M. Vann); <i>'My Lucky'</i> [2] (Mr J. H. McGivering); <i>Lorne Lodge</i> (Mr B. W. Henderson); <i>The Opie Collection</i> (Mr H. Brunner); <i>A View of Britain</i> (The B.B.C.); <i>Monsoon</i> (Mr M. Jefferson)	62-66
MARGHANITA LASKI: Obituary note	66
EVENTS AT BATEMAN'S	67
MEMBERSHIP NEWS	67
A Note on the Kipling Society and its <i>Journal</i>	68

## EDITORIAL

On board ship, in 1889, crossing the bleak North Pacific, Kipling recorded that they had just

passed the wreck of a little sealing-schooner lying bottom-up and covered with gulls. She weltered by in the chill dawn, unlovely as the corpse of a man; and the wild birds piped thinly at us as they steered her across the surges.

This is more than vivid. It has the immediacy and the authenticity of atmosphere which are hallmarks of a skill in which Kipling excelled: the ability to capture the essence of a place or an environment in a few adroitly chosen words, often backed by an original metaphor that conveys more than photographic detail could. At their best, his descriptions have the power to pull the reader up short to admire their sudden clarity and authenticity.

All of us will have been struck by such passages with their startlingly accurate evocation. One of my favourites, from a speech to the Royal Geographical Society in 1914, lifts me at a swoop to a camp site on a Himalayan foothill—

a Tibetan shrine, with frost in the air, one star on the tip of a mountain, and a brown-cloaked Bhotyali rustling up through dry maize-stalks to sell a chicken.

Fortunately the list is inexhaustible. Sometimes there is the deliberateness of set-piece descriptions—the Grand Trunk Road at sunset in chapter IV of *Kim*, the changeable sea in chapter VIII of *Captains Courageous*, the downs in "Sussex", the approach to the house in " 'They' ", the march to the north in "On the Great Wall". Often they are more fleeting but none the less effective—the logging-creek's heavy silence in "Mandalay", the "blue below the little fisher-huts" in "The Song of the Banjo", the "orderly clouds of the Trades, the ridged, roaring sapphire thereunder" in "The Sea and the Hills", and the view from the abbey roof in "The Eye of Allah" with "the bulk of a vast cathedral moored on the edge of the banked shoals of sunset".

Much that is written about Kipling today—not least in this *Journal*, indeed this issue—concerns his life and times and travels, family and friends, politics and opinions, place in history. This is not to be regretted. Yet it is well to remember that what will ensure his survival in literature is not his *public persona* but his very great power with the pen.

## "OUTSIDE HIS ART"

### RUDYARD KIPLING IN POLITICS<sup>1</sup>

by MICHAEL BROCK

[Dr Michael Brock, Warden of Nuffield College, Oxford, and a Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, was Guest of Honour at our last Annual Luncheon. We recorded his excellent address to us in our issue of June 1987, together with a biographical note. He is a historian of distinction, a perceptive commentator on Kipling, and a member of our Society.

In 1986 he had addressed the Royal Society of Literature on the subject of Kipling and contemporary politics (in a survey which incidentally evoked a passing but laudatory comment by Lord Annan in *his* speech to us at our Annual Luncheon of 1986). Dr Brock has kindly authorised us to publish that address, which we now do. It speaks for itself, and all I would say in introducing it is that Dr Brock, who has an extremely high opinion of Kipling as a literary artist, feels that Kipling's *political* influence was less inspired, less effective, and now, as his era recedes into history, less relevant to the appreciation of his great gifts as a writer.—*Ed.*]

When Rudyard Kipling received the Gold Medal of the Royal Society of Literature in 1928 he said:

Fiction is truth's elder sister . . . It is the oldest of the arts, the mother of history, biography, philosophy . . . and, of course, politics.<sup>2</sup>

It is that link — the relationship between Kipling the writer and Kipling the political advocate — which forms the subject of this talk. Did Kipling go too deeply into political questions? Would he have done better to accept that creative writing does not consort well with political advocacy? In one of his last stories the truffle-hunting dog Teem is given the refrain: "Outside his art an artist must never dream."<sup>3</sup> Was this the view at which Kipling had arrived after many political disillusionments? If it was, should we accept it as valid?

There were three dominant elements in Kipling's background and early training. He had the aptitudes and inclinations of the artist, the journalist, and the preacher. Let us look first, however briefly, at the pictorial artist, the son of the art school principal and museum curator. Kipling revered Burne-Jones, his 'Uncle Ned', and his headmaster, 'Crom' Price, who had also been a minor Pre-Raphaelite in youth. He took immense trouble with his descriptive passages, such as the scene in *Kim* on the Grand Trunk Road at evening. Throughout his work there is a consummate mastery of visual detail. As C. S. Lewis wrote, "How the light came in through the oar-holes in the galley, — that little detail which everyone who had served in a galley would remember and which no one else would know — that is Kipling's quarry."<sup>4</sup>

Secondly, we have the journalist. Kipling was in temporary charge of the Lahore *Civil and Military Gazette* a week before his seventeenth birthday. His six and a half years as a reporter and assistant editor in India were formative. They gave him a fine training in the craft of writing, but little chance to form habits of reflection and next to no experience of the clash of philosophies. He left India, splendidly equipped as a short story writer. He was also ineradicably imprinted with the attitudes of the institution which for several years had been, as he later wrote, 'the whole of his outside world',<sup>5</sup> the Lahore Club.

Let us turn, thirdly, to the preacher. Both of Kipling's grandfathers has been Methodist ministers. The wish to preach, to testify to the truth as he saw it, was strong in him. Here is a passage from "On the City Wall", written in India when he was twenty-two. You will hear in it the dogmatic and prophetic notes which he was to sound so loudly a few years later.

Year by year England sends out fresh drafts for the . . . Indian Civil Service. These die, or kill themselves by overwork, or are worried to death or broken in health and hope in order that the land may be protected from death and sickness, famine and war, and may eventually become capable of standing alone. It will never stand alone; but the idea is a pretty one, and yearly the work of pushing and scolding and petting the country into good living goes forward.<sup>6</sup>

This first phase of Kipling's career ended, as will be explained in a moment, with the publication of his poem, "The Flag of England", in April 1891<sup>7</sup> when he was twenty-five, for that poem signalled his assumption of a mission as the prophet of Empire. The political hints which he gave in his first, very active phase were various. In that

passage from "On the City Wall" the British Raj in India is extolled without qualification. At other times it is represented as imperilled only by the foolishness of a Liberal Viceroy with his leaning towards Indian self-government. In "The Head of the District", first published in January 1890,<sup>8</sup> Yardley-Orde, the dying Deputy Commissioner of a frontier district, is depicted as a hero; and, when His Excellency contrives to have a Bengali appointed to manage that turbulent piece of frontier, disaster is prevented only by the devoted skill and courage of Orde's colleagues and subordinates.

More commonly it is the courtiers and bureaucrats of Simla who are the objects of Kipling's satire. In one set of lighthearted verses about a Civil Engineer, published in Lahore when he was twenty, he embroiders the Biblical theme of Potiphar's wife.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,  
 Is seven years junior to Me;  
 Each bridge that he makes either buckles or breaks,  
 And his work is as rough as he. . .

Lovely Mehitabel Lee,  
 Let me inquire of thee,  
 Should I have riz to where Potiphar is,  
 Hadst thou been mated to Me?<sup>9</sup>

In some stories the Indian services seem to be rotten, or at the very least inefficient, not merely at the top, but all through. In "Thrown Away", first published in *Plain Tales from the Hills* in 1888:

India is a place where . . . good work does not matter, because a man is judged by his worst output, and another man takes all the credit of his best as a rule. Bad work does not matter, because other men do worse, and incompetents hang on longer in India than anywhere else. . . It is a slack country, where all men work with imperfect instruments.

In such pieces there are many echoes of the talk in the Lahore Club. The political attitudes revealed in this talk would have been various and fluctuating. They were summarised some years ago by C. S. Lewis in a passage which cannot be bettered.

When we forgather with three or four trusted cronies of our own calling, a strong sense of community arises and is enjoyed. . . . That enjoyment can be prolonged by several different kinds of conversation. We may all be engaged in standing together

against the outer world — all those fools outside who write newspaper articles about us which reveal their ghastly ignorance of the real work. . . . As long as that conversation lasts, the profession appears a very fine one and its achievements very remarkable . . . . And that conversation, if we could do it well enough, would make *one* kind of Kipling story. But we might equally spend the evening standing together against our own seniors: those people at the top — Lord knows how they got there while better men rot . . . . While that conversation lasted, our profession would appear . . . . very rotten and heartbreaking . . . . And out of all that, *another* kind of Kipling story might be made . . . . But we sometimes like talking about our juniors . . . . We have been on the job so long that we have no illusions about it . . . . Nobody will thank you for doing more than you need. Our juniors are laughably full of zeal... Ah well, they'll soon get over it! . . . . And thus, yet *another* Kipling story might arise.<sup>10</sup>

In this first phase until 1891 the political content of Kipling's writing was therefore incidental. He could not avoid politics when writing of the Raj, because it was a political entity, and during the Viceroyalty of the Liberal Ripon a controversial one; but there was little coherence or system in his early political allusions. In politics as in all else he was echoing those Clubs in Lahore and Allahabad. He was writing until 1889 for an Anglo-Indian public and his readers did not want a youngster preaching at them. They wanted a neat epigrammatic version of their own views. This was what Kipling gave them, well salted with scandals in high places and episodes of violence. He had one great advantage where the Club and the officers' messes were concerned. Lord Dufferin, Ripon's successor as Viceroy, was friendly with his family, so that he had the entrée, when the hot weather came, to the courtiers' world of Simla. Added to this was the young 'artist's human retort to that intolerable tolerance,' in Dixon Scott's words,

with which the workers, the doers, fighters, men of action, regard his anaemic indoor trade . . . . Young Kipling . . . . would prove . . . . that a certain small spectacled sub-editor fond of poetry was not quite the innocent lamb that he looked . . . . One of the most effective ways of out-Heroding Herod is to yawn wearily when the head is brought in. . . . Kipling's yawn was a masterpiece . . . . The mess-rooms were duly impressed.<sup>11</sup>

When Kipling reached London in October 1889 he took its literary circles by storm. The work which he had sent ahead of him made the

editor of the *St. James's Gazette* exclaim, "may be ... a greater than Dickens is here."<sup>12</sup> Within six months *The Times* had devoted a long article to this twenty-four-year-old writer, crediting him with some of Maupassant's qualities; and Henry James had pronounced him to be "the star of the hour."<sup>13</sup> Within a year Robert Louis Stevenson was writing from Samoa that Kipling was "too clever to live."<sup>14</sup> This success palled quickly. Kipling was unhappy in 1890, partly because he had overtaxed his health and was unsettled in his personal life, but partly because of that Methodist inheritance. He agreed with what an artist from Gatti's music hall told him: 'It is all right to keep on knocking 'em; but, outside of that, a man wants something to lay hold of.'<sup>15</sup>

Moreover the sort of people who had not been admired in the Lahore Club — socialists, militant trade unionists, Irish Nationalists and sentimental Liberals — seemed to be in the ascendant in London. *Fabian Essays in Socialism* were published in 1889; and a few weeks before Kipling landed the London dock strike had ended in a triumph for the dockers. In February 1890, to Kipling's fury and the delight of the Liberals, the Special Commission cleared Parnell of complicity with the recent Irish outrages.

The intellectuals of the Left "derided my poor little Gods of the East," as Kipling put it, "and asserted that the British in India spent violent lives 'oppressing' the Native." They must be answered by a presentation of the true gospel so readable that no one could neglect it. The account in *Something of Myself* of how Kipling embarked on his Imperial mission is well known. He was working on the verses which were published in April 1891 under the title "The Flag of England". The key-line "persisted in going 'soft'". He asked his parents: "What am I trying to get at?" Instantly his mother answered: "You are *trying* to say: 'What do they know of England who only England know?'" "In the talks that followed," Kipling wrote,

I exposed my notion of trying to tell to the English something of the world outside England — not directly but by implication . . . Bit by bit, my original notion grew into a vast, vague conspectus — Army and Navy Stores List if you like — of the whole sweep and meaning of things and effort and origins throughout the Empire ... After I had got it straight in my head, I felt there need be no more "knockin' 'em" in the abstract.<sup>16</sup>

A mission to tell the British about their Empire seems a tall order for a writer of twenty-five; but Kipling's plan was not a grandiose youthful folly. In a malicious fictional portrait of Beatrice Webb, H. G. Wells wrote that she and Sidney had P.B.P., for *Pro Bono Publico*, engraved inside their wedding rings; "and she meant it," he

added, "as no idle threat".<sup>17</sup> Kipling's Imperial mission was 'no idle threat'. His confidence in his ability to attract a wide readership was not misplaced; and, though he did not know this, he would have the tide with him: Imperialist sentiment was growing in Britain as elsewhere. By 1891 the world of the older Gladstonian Liberals was disappearing. New inventions — the submarine cable, the steel ship, the triple expansion marine engine, and refrigeration techniques — were bringing distant lands and their products closer to Europe. The scene was dominated now by great powers, intent on extending their spheres of influence and controlling the areas where their nationals had invested, or might invest, capital. Kipling's "poor little Gods of the East" were soon seen to be a growth stock. In 1894 a protectorate for Uganda was declared by the Liberal government; and when the Conservatives gained office in the following year Joseph Chamberlain, by now the most compelling figure in British politics, became Colonial Secretary. The immediate future did not lie with those Fabians and Liberals who had been so maddeningly superior to Kipling in 1890. The hero of H. G. Wells's *New Machiavelli*, who is supposed to have been up at Cambridge during the Boer War, says: "The prevailing force in my undergraduate days was not Socialism but Kiplingism."<sup>18</sup>

Kipling's adoption of his Imperialist mission therefore proved felicitous; but, in intention at least, it was neither a sell-out to the establishment nor a formula for boosting his sales. Kipling never cherished political ambitions in the ordinary personal sense.<sup>19</sup> Throughout his career he took great care to be his own man. He refused all offers of public honours (including, more than once, the Order of Merit) and any payment for his political verses.<sup>20</sup> Unlike Belloc, or A. E. W. Mason, or Conan Doyle, or John Buchan, he could never be tempted into becoming a Parliamentary candidate. As to sales, planning how best to take advantage of the market was not his style. He had a journalist's awareness of readers' tastes. As he wrote many years later in "The Fabulists": "Unless men please they are not heard at all." But his experiments and new departures were not made simply to 'catch a market' and he never stuck with a line of work simply because it was selling well.

Did the Imperial mission entail a loss of literary integrity? Did the Imperialist advocate overwhelm the reporter? Was there room in Kipling's picture of "the whole sweep and meaning of things and effort and origins throughout the Empire" for difficulties and defects? The balance certainly changed. There was no more about bad work not mattering in India. "The Bridge Builders" was first published in 1893. Here is Findlayson as the Ganges flood sweeps down:



His bridge would stand what was upon her now, but not very much more; and if by any of a thousand chances there happened to be a weakness in the embankments, Mother Gunga would carry his honour to the sea with the other raffle ... There were no excuses in his service.<sup>21</sup>

This change of tone should not mislead us into thinking that, while the earlier writing gives Kipling's candid views, these have been submerged after 1891 in a flood of Imperialist propaganda. Neither the earlier nor the later stories give a balanced account of the complex governmental system maintained by the British in India. The late Lord Hailey, who joined the Indian Civil Service in the Punjab in 1895 and served in India for nearly forty years, told me that he regarded the early Simla tales as misleadingly derogatory. He had known Simla only a few years after Kipling's time there: it was, he said, intellectually a serious place, its tone being set by the formidably intelligent élite of the Indian Civil Service. It seems reasonable to suppose that, on balance, the Indian services were better than Kipling's representation of them in the early Simla stories, and less good than they would appear from the sketch of Findlayson in "The Bridge Builders". Kipling, it must be added, did not make everything roseate in the later stories. The Government of India nearly ruined Findlayson's bridge by adding two feet to its width at the last moment "under the impression that bridges were cut out of paper". In "William the Conqueror", first published in 1895, while the principal characters toil heroically at famine relief, three of their colleagues are "grossly incompetent".<sup>22</sup>

Kipling's mission extended far beyond India. He had made various visits on his way home in 1889, for instance to Singapore and Vancouver; and between August and December 1891 he visited the Cape, New Zealand and Australia. But north India remained for a decade the only part of the Empire where he had been more than a touring reporter. He kept his head during the excitements of the 1890s better than some others. He was living in Vermont when the Jameson Raid took place in the last days of 1895. The Raid, and the congratulatory telegram which the Kaiser sent to the Transvaal Government after the raiders had been captured, elicited verses of commendable moderation from Kipling:

From panic, pride, and terror,  
Revenge that knows no rein —  
Light haste and lawless error,  
Protect us yet again.<sup>23</sup>

## THE QUEEN'S LETTER TO THE GERMAN EMPEROR.

[We publish with all reserve the following letter, which has, we understand, been despatched from Osborne Castle to Berlin. From internal evidence we should judge that it was not written but suggested by the exalted lady by whom it purports to be signed. There is a nautical breeziness about it that inclines us to attribute the actual authorship to the Duke of YORK.—ED. *Punch*.]

MEIN LIEBER WILLY,—Dies ist aber über alle Berge. Was bedeutet eigentlich deine Depesche an den alten KRÜGER der für Dich doesn't care twopence. Solch eine confounded Impertinenz habe ich nie gesehen. The fact of the matter is that Du ein furchtbarer



Schwaggerer bist. Warum kannst Du nie ruhig bleiben, why can't you hold your blessed row? Musst Du deinen Finger in jeder Torte haben? Was it for this that I made you an Admiral meiner Flotte and allowed you to rig yourself out in einer wunderschönen Uniform mit einem gekockten Hut? If you meant mir any of your blooming cheek zu geben why did you make your Grandmamma Colonel eines Deutschen Cavallerie Regiments? Du auch bist Colonel of a British Cavallerie Regiment, desto mehr die Schade, the more's the pity. Als Du ein ganz kleiner Bube warst habe ich Dich oft tüchtig gep-

spankt, and now that you're grown up you ought to be spanked too. Wenn Du deine Panzerschiffe nach Delagoa Bay schickst werde ich sie aus dem Wasser blasen, I'll blow your ironclads out of the water ehe Du dich umkehren kannst, before you can turn round. And look here, if you'll come over to this country werde ich Dich annehmen, I'll take you on, und ich wette drei gegen eins dasz ich Dich in drei Kunden ausklopfen werde, Queensberry rules, three minutes to a round. Also ich schnappe meine Finger in your face. Du weist nicht wo Du bist, you duuno where you are, and somebody must teach you. Is BISMARCK quite well? Das ist ein kolossaler Kerl, nicht wahr? So lange! Don't be foolish any more.

Deine Dich liebende

GRANDMAMMA.

The fiasco of Dr Jameson's ill-starred Raid into the Transvaal from Bechuanaland occurred at the end of December 1895. However, in the words of Jean van der Poel (*The Jameson Raid*, 1951), "the blunder of the Raid was almost at once minimized by another blunder—the Kaiser's telegram to Kruger". This affront to British pride swung popular feeling strongly behind Jameson and excitedly against Germany, which was suspected of "trying to extend her own holdings in Southern Africa and even to control the Delagoa Bay port and railway". On 18 January 1896 this spoof letter appeared in *Punch*, and it well accorded with the general national sentiment. The Duke of York at that time was, of course, the future King George V.

Compared to the trash in defence of the raiders published by the new Poet Laureate, Alfred Austin,<sup>24</sup> those pedestrian lines rank as a model of good sense.

Indirectly Kipling may, however, have contributed to the "light haste and lawless error" of the Jameson Raid. He had sometimes contrived to make warfare sound like a 'lark'. In *The Light that Failed*, published in several forms in 1890 and 1891, the war correspondents rejoice over "the glorious certainty of war in the Soudan at any moment."<sup>25</sup> The volume of stories published under the title *Many Inventions* in 1893 includes one about a group of subalterns talking to an elderly novelist. One of them is describing an expedition against dacoits in Burma.

'I think I am beginning to understand a little,' [says the novelist].  
'It was a pleasure to you to administer and fight?'

'Rather! There's nothing nicer than a satisfactory little expedition, when you find your plans fit together.'<sup>24</sup>

Some of the tragedies to which such notions could lead were comparatively small. In August 1894 Captain Frederick Lugard (Lord Lugard as he later became) was pressed to join a naval launch in an expedition up the Niger against a slave-raiding chief. The preparations seemed to him somewhat light-hearted. He declined to go; but the Vice-Consul joined the party which left in high spirits. The launch soon returned, her decks stained with blood, and carrying a cargo of dead and wounded, the Vice-Consul among the latter. Nana, the slaver, had been found to command cannon in plenty.

"These young chaps see what *war* means," Lugard noted in his diary, "they were *horrified* and I fancy it has choked off their martial ardour a good deal and they no longer 'hope to goodness Nana won't give in without a fight after all our preparations,' as they said to me before."<sup>27</sup>

The tragedies were not all small. The Jameson Raiders did Britain serious damage. In "The Head of the District" the Liberal Viceroy who had the Bengali appointed was accused of being "a trifler with the lives of men". Liberal Viceroys were not the only ones open to that charge.

The missing note in these Imperialist writings is that of realism. Kipling never understood that rejecting the sentimentality of some late Victorian liberals did not make him a realist. In 1898 after sailing twice with the Channel Squadron he commented: "Any other breed

with this engine at their disposal would have used it savagely long ago."<sup>28</sup>

Kipling neglected here the somewhat obvious fact that, as the British had only a very small army, they were not in a position to use their preponderant sea power aggressively. He did not comprehend that it was precisely this fact which made British naval supremacy acceptable to other nations. As Eyre Crowe was to put it a few years later, the statesmen of a country which could not itself command naval supremacy would rather see it in British hands than in those of any great land power.<sup>29</sup>

The school stories, *Stalky and Co.*, were published in book form on 6 October 1899. In the last story Stalky repeats on the Indian frontier a deception which he has used successfully at school. In the final passage Kipling takes the stage to say:

India's full of Stalkies — Cheltenham and Haileybury and Marlborough chaps — that we don't know anything about, and the surprises will begin when there is really a big row on . . . Just imagine Stalky let loose on the south side of Europe with a sufficiency of Sikhs and a reasonable prospect of loot.

The capacities of the various Stalkies were soon put to the test. Five days after *Stalky and Co.* had been published Britain was at war with the two Boer Republics.

The Boer War was the second turning point in Kipling's political life. Within a few months of its outbreak he realised that the "Cheltenham and Haileybury and Marlborough chaps" were much less well trained and resourceful than he had thought. In "The Outsider", published less than nine months after the *Stalky and Co.* volume, the picture of Second Lieutenant Walter Setton was unflattering:

When he could by any means escape from the limited amount of toil expected by the Government, he did so; employing the same shameless excuses that he had used at school or Sandhurst . . . For the rest, he devoted himself with no thought of wrong to getting as much as possible out of the richest and easiest life the world has yet made; and to despising the "outsider" — the man beyond his circle.<sup>30</sup>

Kipling's view of these public school products had thus changed completely. He now characterised them, in one of his most famous phrases, as "the flannelled fools at the wicket... the muddied oafs at the goals."<sup>31</sup> He joined ardently in the campaigns which the defeats in the Boer War engendered for army reform and national efficiency.

From 1903 onwards he engaged more deeply in politics and took political questions more seriously.

Kipling did not fit naturally as a party man. He was, as Beaverbrook put it, "hostile to politicians [and] . . . often impatient with leaders of the Tory party."<sup>32</sup> On the other hand he belonged with the party of order and Empire.<sup>33</sup> After he had settled in Sussex he came to put a high value on the continuities of national life. He thus became a strong, though idiosyncratic, Conservative partisan. He even managed to put the Liberals' overwhelming victory of 1906 into perspective:

Cities and Thrones and Powers  
Stand in Time's eye,  
Almost as long as flowers,  
Which daily die.<sup>34</sup>

Like many other Conservatives of the time, and nearly all other readers of the *Morning Post*, Kipling was immensely distrustful of democracy. Though keenly interested in new techniques of communication such as wireless telegraphy he never realised how potently in India and Africa they would stimulate the demand for self-government. Throughout his life he wrote of the Indian Congress Party as if it owed its influence to a succession of foolish Englishmen, whom he satirized as 'Pagett, M.P.'. "If you care to look up some of my old Indian work," he told F. N. Doubleday in April 1919, "you'll see that what I wrote then covers what is happening in India today."<sup>35</sup> In November 1930, discussing the Indian independence movement with his friend Gwynne, the editor of the *Morning Post*, he wrote: "Of course, the thing is a Brahmin plot."<sup>36</sup>

Thus a deeper involvement in politics made Kipling no more realistic. He still believed that sound political views were reducible to a few simple maxims: it was his business, as he put it, to serve 'the Gods of the Copybook Headings'.<sup>37</sup> He wrote as if all his imperialist heroes — Theodore Roosevelt, Rhodes, Jameson and Joseph Chamberlain — were glorified versions of the Indian administrators whom he had admired in his youth. His poem "The White Man's Burden" was a plea to the United States to take over the administration of the Philippines.<sup>38</sup> The obituary verses on Rhodes foresaw a day in South Africa when

. . . unimagined Empires draw  
To council 'neath his skies.<sup>39</sup>

This was too much for one irreverent commentator who pointed out

that the skies, unlike the diamond mines, were a South African feature which Rhodes had not owned, while 'Mr. Dooley', for the American Democrats, summarised Anglo-American imperial expansion as: 'Hands across the sea and into someone's pocket.'<sup>40</sup> Like many upper class people Kipling saw the Tariff Reform campaign which Joseph Chamberlain launched in 1903, not only as consolidating the Empire, but as taking British politics off class war lines: the tariff was supposed somehow to produce both full employment and a revenue for social reform. In praise of Chamberlain Kipling wrote,

Where Dothan's dreamer dreams anew  
Of vast and farborne harvestings:  
And unto him an Empire clings  
That grips the purpose of his plan.<sup>41</sup>

When this verse was published in August 1904 a more photographic image would have shown an experienced political operator fighting ruthlessly for the control of the Conservative party, and moving warily where the Empire was concerned. Chamberlain had good reason for this wariness. The passage in his opening campaign speech appealing to the colonies to concentrate on primary production was so liable to anger industrial interests in the colonies that a tactful alteration had to be made in the 'official version'.<sup>42</sup>

Though Kipling's political activity was far greater between the Boer War and the Great War than in the 1890s his political influence was almost certainly less. The Boer War had ended a certain kind of noisy Imperialist sentiment in Britain. The strong silent Empire builders were held to have done too much talking and to have fallen down on the job. Moreover some of Kipling's pronouncements were such as to make his political allies tremble. Kipling's poem "Our Lady of the Snows", extolling the Canadian Preferential Tariff of 1897, was perhaps a little extravagant. His open letter of September 1911 condemning the reciprocity proposals between Canada and the United States was far more extravagant: this agreement might lead, he suggested, to Canada being 'compelled later on to admit reciprocity in the murder-rate of the United States'.<sup>43</sup>

The Home Rule Bill of 1912, whereby the Irish were to be granted a measure of self-government, moved Kipling to strident denunciation. His poem "Ulster" was published in several countries by careful arrangement on the day in April 1912 when Bonar Law, by now the Conservative leader, was to make an important speech in Belfast.<sup>44</sup> It was not altogether helpful to the Conservative cause. Kipling's fervent indictment of Home Rule included the lines:

We know the wars prepared  
On every peaceful home,  
We know the hells declared  
For such as serve not Rome.

"This," wrote Mark Sykes, a Conservative M.P. and a Roman Catholic, "is a direct appeal to ignorance and a deliberate attempt to foster religious hatred."<sup>45</sup>

Speaking to a great crowd of Conservatives at Tunbridge Wells in May 1914, Kipling said:

Ireland is sold today. Tomorrow it may be the turn of the southern counties . . . Why not? . . . Six months ago you would have said that the plot against Ulster was impossible. Nothing is impossible in a land without a constitution — nothing except peace. . . . If by any lie, by any falsification of facts, speeches, documents, or telegrams, by any bribe of money, title, or promotion, by subornation of evidence or prearranged provocation, the blame of causing bloodshed can be laid upon Ulster, the cabinet will openly or secretly lend itself to that work.<sup>46</sup>

The leader writer of Northcliffe's *Daily Mail*, which was strongly opposed to Home Rule, commented:

Everybody who enjoys familiarity with [Mr. Kipling's] writings will recognise the flavour . . . The outlook is that of the schoolboy (bless his unstained young heart!) who divides mankind into two classes — 'our fellows' and 'the cads'; and whatever may be the political developments in store for us we are not likely to make much political progress along that line. A great deal of what Mr. Kipling said was, of course, unquestionably true, though his extravagances here and there seem to have made his audience laugh. But it is not for the admirers of Mr. Lloyd George to protest when Mr. Kipling lets himself go in the Limehouse style.<sup>47</sup>

There seems here to be a great paradox. On the one hand, Kipling's political pronouncements are either too romantic or too wild to be taken quite seriously: by 1914 both political commentators and literary critics had seen through the pose of 'knowingness' and had remarked on his innocence. Writing in *The Bookman* in 1912 Dixon Scott called Kipling "one of those blessed born innocents who never grow up."<sup>48</sup> On the other hand, "Kipling's scheme of things... rests", to quote Lord Annan, "on a highly articulated functional analysis of

society . . . He was one of the *cleverest* of Victorian writers."

How could a great writer who had gained from India such an insight into social structures and functioning have remained politically so credulous and uncomprehending? The antithesis has been a little overstated, since Lord Annan goes on to point out that Kipling's "in-group theories . . . offend because they are too simple-minded."<sup>49</sup> None the less, the contrast between Kipling's social insight and his political ineptitude remains startling.

It would be absurd in the highest degree if I tried to pontificate here on the components of literary genius; but we can perhaps agree on one component. Creative writing demands great energy of soul, an exceptionally vivid imagination and an intensity of response to people and situations. Socrates was surely right to say that the poets wrote "by a natural gift and inspiration";<sup>50</sup> and in the Greek the word translated as 'inspiration' carries a direct reference to the divine spark in a person. The descriptions of Kipling in his prime give an impression of just such a person. "Kipling has been here for a day or two," John Hay wrote to Henry Adams in September 1895; "how a man can keep up so intense an intellectual life without going to Bedlam is amazing. He rattled off the framework of about forty stories while he was with us."<sup>51</sup>

Someone of that kind may have unusual imaginative insight into the workings of society; but political judgment is likely to be denied him. That needs a cooler, more analytic temperament. Effective writing about politics and political systems, even if for entirely partisan purposes, requires study, and reflection, and the ability to stand back and weigh possibilities. Kipling was incapable of such an approach or indeed of seeing the need for it. The Socratic quotation given just now was left incomplete, for Socrates says that, working in this way, the poets "do not understand the meaning" of their own writings. Kipling revealed in *Something of Myself* that he held this Greek view about an author's inspiration, and that he applied it to both verse and prose. "When your Daemon is in charge," he wrote, "do not try to think consciously. Drift, wait, and obey."<sup>52</sup>

This imaginative intensity made Kipling liable to political obsessions and fears of conspiracies. He was ridden rather than guided by the experiences which had affected him most closely. Seeing everything from the Imperial viewpoint, he was worried in 1910 that "even a limited female suffrage bill means more trouble in Egypt and India than anyone cares to think about."<sup>53</sup> By March 1914, when he had signed the Ulster Covenant, he was afraid that the government might be opening his letters.<sup>54</sup> In August 1914, when the war was only a week old, he was asking the editor of the *Daily Express* to report to him how often two Jewish financiers, Sir Ernest Cassel



and Sir Edgar Speyer, had lunch with the Prime Minister.<sup>55</sup> After his son had been posted missing at the end of September 1915 in the Battle of Loos he became relentless in tracking down pro-German influences and spying out German crimes. In February 1916 he warned Gwynne to beware of "a move . . . to appoint pro-German clerics to high places in the Church".<sup>56</sup> In July 1916 he remarked to his cousin, Stanley Baldwin: "it is a curious thing that most of the Huns in our neighbourhood live on ridges facing the sea."<sup>57</sup>

In July 1919 he wanted the *Morning Post* to investigate allegations of defects in the gas masks manufactured by Brunner, Mond, that firm being both Jewish and Liberal; and towards the end of that year he was interested in reports that the Germans had been trying to infect the cattle of their erstwhile opponents with tubercular and other diseases. He asked Gwynne to investigate a statement that the attacks of foot and mouth disease in Oxfordshire "had been in some cases traced to the proximity of Hun prison camps".<sup>58</sup>

Not all of these suspicions were necessarily quite as extravagant as they now seem. Sir Edgar Speyer did indeed have close financial connexions with Germany and, when these were investigated after the war, he was found to have retained some of them in defiance of the Royal Proclamations against trading with the enemy.<sup>59</sup> But enough has been said to establish that in his later years Kipling had become politically an eccentric and isolated figure. Churchill was not forgiven for the crimes of his Liberal period — for humiliating Milner in 1906,<sup>60</sup> and for the Antwerp adventure in October 1914. Kipling's close friendship with Beaverbrook was ended when the Beaver dallied with Home Rule and treated Lloyd George as a war-winning Prime Minister and not as a radical scoundrel; and all Beaverbrook's arts could not persuade Kipling to meet Lloyd George.<sup>61</sup> With Stanley Baldwin Kipling remained friendly; but, as he confided to Gwynne in August 1931, Cousin Stanley was "a socialist at heart. It came out of the early years when [S.B.] was . . . among some of the academic socialist crowd."<sup>62</sup> Only Taffy Gwynne of the *Morning Post* remained faithful. By 1937 when the *Morning Post* disappeared as an independent paper Kipling was dead.

One particular claim which Kipling made about his achievement in public life merits investigation. He had, he said, been one of those who, in the years before 1914, warned the British government and public of the danger of war. "I feel", he told Colonel Feilden on 4 August 1914, "like Jonah or whoever it was who went about saying: 'I told you so!'"<sup>63</sup>

It is hard to judge how much Kipling actually achieved between the end of the Boer War and 1914 in promoting British military preparedness. He quickly grew impatient at the Conservatives' very

limited success in army reform. These verses are from the "Song of the Old Guard" in 1904:

Know this, my brethren, Heaven is clear  
 And all the clouds are gone —  
 The Proper Sort shall flourish now,  
 Good times are coming on —  
 The evil that was threatened late  
 To all of our degree,  
 Hath passed in discord and debate,  
 And, *Hey then up go we!*

A common people strove in vain  
 To shame us into **toil**,  
 But they are spent and we remain,  
 And we shall share the spoil  
 According to our several needs  
 As Beauty shall decree,  
 As Age ordains or Birth concedes,  
 And, *Hey then up go we!*

When the Liberals gained office in December 1905 their War Secretary, R. B. Haldane, proved a far more successful reformer. But he received no recognition from Kipling for reorganising the Expeditionary Force and creating the Territorial Army. As a Liberal, a lover of German philosophy, and, in those years, an opponent of compulsory military training, he was in the unforgivable class. Kipling insisted that nothing less than conscription for home defence was of any use. The chance of the conscription campaign succeeding was clearly slight, though, in one of the ironies of high politics, compulsory training was part of a foredoomed coalition package put together secretly in 1910 by Kipling's leading arch-villain, Lloyd George.<sup>64</sup>

Kipling probably did not persuade many Liberals to foresee the possibility of Britain becoming involved in a European war. Some of them were unpersuadable: 'a very active Liberal M.P.' assured the Foreign Secretary, Edward Grey, a few days before the war began that the German army would certainly not invade Belgium.<sup>65</sup> Kipling was not the right person for the work of persuasion. In such a case a prophet's reputation is all-important. The reference to "the glorious certainty of war" was remembered. Kipling's early verses celebrating looting and unauthorised reprisals in Indian fighting were on record.<sup>66</sup> Nor had he abandoned all bloodthirsty phrasing after the turn of the century. In "The Captive", first published in December

1902, he seemed to approve of a remark about the Boer War which he put into the mouth of the English General: "It's a first-class dress-parade for Armageddon. With luck we ought to run half a million men through the mill."<sup>67</sup>

Kipling was regarded, however unjustly, as a militarist who did not dislike the prospect of a general European war — 'a big row' — and who advocated compulsory military training in order to discipline the working class.<sup>68</sup>

Moreover for the last nine months before August 1914 Kipling not merely abandoned his own warnings about Britain's possible involvement in a European war, but scouted those of Gwynne. He had become convinced that by far the greatest danger threatening England was the betrayal of Ulster. As early as March 1912 he speculated to the editor of the *Daily Express* whether the country would emerge from these years of Liberal government "without a change of dynasty".<sup>69</sup>

A great many Conservatives lost their heads in their determination to stop Home Rule, and forgot continental Europe in their fears for Ireland's future; but towards the end of 1913 some of them (Gwynne being one) though they saw Home Rule as a step towards dismembering the Empire, hesitated about driving their country towards civil war on the issue. They feared that the sight of a distracted, and therefore impotent, Britain might tempt the rulers of Germany and Austria-Hungary to seize the chance of settling accounts with France and Russia. Kipling had no such fears. Repeatedly he insisted to Gwynne that a compromise on Ireland would be fatal. The greatest danger, he explained, was not civil war, which had become unavoidable, nor a German attack in the west, but the fact that, if betrayed by George V's government, the Ulster Protestants would turn to another of Queen Victoria's grandsons. They would appeal to the greatest Protestant monarch in Europe, the Kaiser, to intervene, and would have much support from the rest of Britain in doing so.

"I know the German danger," Kipling told Gwynne, "the Indian danger which will be more acute as time goes on, and all the chances that may crop up at any moment of further complications. Those we must risk, because if we now betray ourselves we surely die, and we do not avoid civil war."

"An Ulster or an Ireland handed over to the Celt", he added on 10 March 1914, "means an appeal for outside intervention as in 1688. That is what I fear horribly. For the moment — we can depend on much more than a few weeks — the Teuton has, or pretends to have, his eye glued on Russia."<sup>70</sup>

Apparently it did not occur to Kipling that loyalty to Britain's *Entente* partners, on which the Conservatives insisted, might entail a British response to a German move against Russia.<sup>71</sup>

It seems right in talking of Kipling's politics to stress what contemporaries thought of them, because it would be absurd to judge these attitudes by the standards of our own more introspective age. In Kipling's time the psychologists and the sociologists had not done their work, his sociology about which Lord Annan wrote not being of the kind most admired in today's university departments of the subject. Kipling was, for instance, much less aware of his own position in society than a writer of his insight would be today. He spoke for the rising professional class. He expressed their satisfaction at belonging to the ruling group in India, and their ambiguous relationship both with the older territorial elite, and with the successful entrepreneurs; but he was not particularly conscious of the degree to which he exemplified their attitudes and their psychological needs. His formal education, apart from ending at sixteen, had been almost entirely classical and literary: it told him nothing about the social structure of his own country. That would have applied whatever his school. Practically none of the public men of Kipling's Britain had learned anything about the history of their own times at school: such studies would then have been regarded as verging too dangerously on denominational religious controversies to be included in the syllabus.<sup>72</sup>

One of the most interesting contemporary judgments of all has still to be mentioned. Soon after the outbreak of war in 1914 the possibility that Kipling might go on an American lecture tour was mentioned in governmental circles. It drew an emphatic protest from Edward Grey.<sup>73</sup> He may have guessed that various Americans who were not too friendly to the allies would have confronted Kipling with his anti-Russian verses published sixteen years earlier, "The Truce of the Bear".<sup>74</sup> Much more probably Grey's objection was based on the view that in a delicate situation, when British contraband control was about to disrupt American trade, Kipling was the wrong spokesman for Britain. The need was to persuade the Americans that the British had entered the war because, if Germany's violation of the Belgian Treaty had gone unpunished, the whole fabric of European civilisation would have been in ruins. This called for a spokesman who could say with conviction that nothing less than this moral imperative would have drawn the British into the struggle.<sup>75</sup> Once again Kipling looked too like a militarist to fill the bill. It is no wonder that in those first weeks of the War the Foreign Secretary sought to veto the idea of Kipling in the United States.

I must not give the impression that all of Kipling's effort in public

affairs was ill-starred. When young he helped to give his fellow countrymen some conception, however imperfect, of what the government of India entailed. In his later years he contributed notably to an organisation which any social historian of modern Britain has to take seriously, however much it raises smiles elsewhere, namely the Boy Scout movement.<sup>76</sup> He could make shrewd judgments of particular public figures. Having paid a visit to Cairo in 1913, he knew what others were to learn painfully during the war, namely that Kitchener had "gone to seed" and had become "garrulously intoxicated with power".<sup>77</sup> In the main, however, his political work was not of great value. Yet it seems in retrospect inevitable that he should have dreamed 'outside his art'. The ardent imagination which disturbed his political judgment was the very quality which had turned him to politics. It was this quality which Rider Haggard recognised when, dedicating *The Way of the Spirit* to Kipling in 1906, he wrote: "Both of us believe that there are higher aims in life than the weaving of stories well or ill."<sup>78</sup> Nowadays a young man of Kipling's talents would be a graduate by the age of twenty-two. He would be more self-conscious than Kipling and more analytic. He might end by writing better than Kipling did. Equally he might become too inhibited to be a creative writer at all.

If we are to accept fiction as being the mother of history and politics we should keep in mind that many children do not take after their mothers. Let me give just one illustration of the gap between fictional and historical writing. I referred earlier to "William the Conqueror", Kipling's account of a famine and the effort to alleviate it. This includes one of his few really successful love stories. It is essential to the story that people have been drafted to the famine area from all over India. Two of the principal characters — one of the government officials and the sister of another — are among those who make the long rail journey southwards from the Punjab to Madras. These two have known each other for some time: now they are both suddenly involved in an environment which is not only tragic and perilous but utterly unfamiliar. This setting, which is contrived with wonderful artistry, seems to have had only a loose relationship with what really happened during famines in South India at that period. A member of the Kipling Society has recorded that in the 1930s he talked with Sir Frederick Nicholson, who had served in the Madras Presidency through the famine of 1896-97. Nicholson was outraged by Kipling's story. "The impudence of the man!" he said, "to suggest that Madrassis could not run their own famine."<sup>79</sup> What the evidence tells constrains the historian. Unlike the fictional writer he is not permitted to shift the furniture or alter the lighting in order to improve the plot or heighten the tension. What the evidence does

not tell constrains him still more. He has often to confess that he does not know what drove his characters to act as they did. The gulf between that kind of writing and fiction is not small. A creative writer of the highest class who was also thoroughly adept at marshalling, assessing, and analysing the recorded facts would be a genius indeed.

"It will only be possible to give [Kipling] his rightful place,' wrote Bonamy Dobrée in 1927, "when the political heats of his day have become coldly historical."<sup>80</sup> That time has now come; and the place accorded should surely be a high one. The controversies, as well as the pomp, of yesterday will soon be "one with Nineveh and Tyre". We need not mind what attitude Shakespeare adopted to James I, or Dryden to Charles II. However hackneyed, Kipling's "If—" remains a remarkable poem: the fact that it was based on an unwarrantably romantic view of Dr Jameson of the Raid is an irrelevance. "Recessional" no doubt owed something to Kipling's notion of 'good form', and to his distaste at the spectacle of white men boasting.<sup>81</sup> Such elements in its genesis are of no consequence. We owe the best things in our inheritance to moments when great writers used their powers to soar above their limitations:

For heathen heart that puts her trust  
 In reeking tube and iron shard,  
 All valiant dust that builds on dust,  
 And guarding, calls not Thee to guard,  
 For frantic boast and foolish word —  
 Thy mercy on Thy People, Lord!

#### NOTES

1. The author is greatly indebted to the National Trust for permission to quote from, and cite, unpublished passages in Kipling's letters, and to the Beaverbrook Trustees for the same permission in the case of two letters from Lord Beaverbrook. He is grateful to the Librarians and staffs of the Bodleian Library (Milner Mss.); the Library of Congress; the Houghton Library, Harvard (C. E. Norton Mss.); Princeton University Library (F. N. Doubleday Mss.); Sussex University Library (Kipling Mss.); and Syracuse University Library, for access to unpublished material, and to Dr Benedicte Hjejle and Professor Thomas Pinney for their help with the lecture.

2. *Morning Post*, 6 July 1928.
3. *Strand Magazine*, vol. 90 (Jan. 1936), pp. 244,255; *Thy Servant a Dog' and Other Dog Stories* (1938), pp. 162, 200.
4. *They Asked for a Paper* (1962), p. 77. The paper concerned was originally given to the English Association.
5. *Something of Myself*, (1937), ch. 3.
6. *In Black and White* (1888).
7. *National Observer*, 4 April; *St. James's Gazette*, 10 April. Later, better known as "The English Flag".
8. *Macmillan's Magazine*; collected in *Life's Handicap*, 1891.
9. 'Study of an Elevation, in Indian Ink', *Civil and Military Gazette*, 16 Feb. 1886 (quickly reprinted in *Pioneer Mail*); collected in *Departmental Ditties*, 1886.
10. *They Asked for a Paper*, pp. 87-88. The last sentence has been shifted to make the meaning clear in this shortened version.
11. *The Bookman*, 1912. Dixon Scott died on active service in 1915. For this passage see *Men of Letters* (1916), pp. 53-54.
12. C. Carrington, *Kipling* (1955), p. 135.
13. *The Times*, 25 Mar. 1890, 3a, b; James to R. L. Stevenson, 21 March 1890; quoted Carrington, p. 187.
14. To Henry James, Aug. 1890; Carrington, p. 187.
15. *Something of Myself*, ch. 4.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *The New Machiavelli*, Bk. 2. ch. 2.2.
18. *Ibid.*, Bk 1, ch. 4.6.
19. 'I mistrust politicians when they eat with literary men', Kipling to C. E. Norton, 31 Dec. 1896: Houghton Library, Harvard, b MS Am. 1088 No. 4075.
20. See, for instance, Kipling to Aitken, 6 April 1912, about the publication of the "Ulster" verses: Beaverbrook Mss., House of Lords, BBK C/197.
21. *Illustrated London News*, Christmas 1893; collected in *The Day's Work*, 1898.
22. *The Gentlewoman* and *The Ladies' Home Journal*, Dec. 1895 and Jan. 1896; collected in *The Day's Work*.
23. "Hymn Before Action".
24. *The Times*, 11 Jan. 1896, 9f.
25. Ch. 12.
26. "A Conference of the Powers".
27. Margery Perham, *Lugard* (1956), p. 498: diary entry, 27 Aug. 1894.
28. *A Fleet in Being* (1898), p. 34 ("Ours by Right of Birth").
29. *Brit. Docs. War*, ed. G. P. Gooch and H. Temperley, in (1928), **403**.

30. *Daily Express*, 19, 20, 21 June 1900. Published in two other journals in 1900 and privately printed by E. W. Martindell in 1922, but not included in any collection during Kipling's lifetime. In Sussex Edition, vol. 30, 119-140, and *Kipling Journal*, 134 (June 1960), pp. 5-16.
31. "The Islanders", first published in *The Times*, 4 Jan. 1902.
32. Beaverbrook to Charles Carrington, 8 Dec. 1954: Beaverbrook Mss, BBK B/309.
33. For Kipling's concern with 'order' see G. K. Chesterton, *Heretics* (1905), ch. 3.
34. The opening lines of the verses heading "A Centurion of the Thirtieth" in *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906). Kipling had been working on these stories since the end of 1904. The poem may well have been composed before January 1906: the Liberals' victory had been generally expected.
35. 22 Apr.: Doubleday Mss., Princeton University Library.
36. 26 Nov: Kipling Mss., Sussex University, 15/15, 194.
37. The verses with this title were first published in Oct. 1919.
38. It was published in the *Sun* and the *Tribune*, New York, 5 Feb. 1899, in time for the crucial vote on annexation in the U.S. Senate.
39. "The Burial".
40. The commentator was T. W. H. Crosland. 'Mr Dooley', the fictional creation of Finley Peter Dunne, first appeared in a Chicago newspaper in the 1890s, and gained national recognition in 1896 with William Jennings Bryan's Presidential campaign. His sage comments were recorded in a thick Irish brogue.
41. "Things and the Man", 1 Aug. 1904.
42. Julian Amery, *Joseph Chamberlain*, vi (1969), pp. 463, 468, 477. The 'official version' was issued the day after the speech had been given.
43. To the *Montreal Star*, 6 Sept. 1911.
44. 9 April 1912. See note 20 above.
45. Sykes's letter appeared in the *Morning Post*: Shane Leslie, *Mark Sykes* (1923), p. 128.
46. 16 May.
47. 18 May, 6c. In a speech at Limehouse on 30 July 1909 Lloyd George had employed popular invective against the critics of his 'People's Budget'.
48. *Men of Letters*, p. 49. See note 11 above.
49. "Kipling's Place in the History of Ideas", *Victorian Studies* (June 1960), iii, pp. 344, 348.
50. Plato, *Apology*, 22. Jowett's translation from R. W. Livingstone, *Portrait of Socrates* (1938), p. 13. A literal translation of 'by inspiration' would be 'with god inside them': Plato uses the word from which 'enthusiasm' is derived.
51. Thayer, *Hay* (1915), ii. 126.
52. Ch. 8. See also Dick Heldar to Maisie, in *The Light that Failed*, ch. 7; "Good



work has nothing to do with — doesn't belong to — the person who does it. It's put into him or her from outside."

53. To Gwynne, 21 June 1910: Kipling Mss., 15/15, 67.
54. To Gwynne, 3 March 1914, *ibid*, 102.
55. To R. D. Blumenfeld, 11 Aug.: Kipling Mss., 14/19. Cassel was not Jewish by religion at this date: he had been received into the Church of Rome soon after his wife's death.
56. 19 Feb. (Kipling Mss. 15/15, 125). Kipling explained that he meant by "pro-German . . . men who believed in reconciliation after the war."
57. 24 July: Kipling Mss., 11/3.
58. 16 July, 14 Dec. 1919: Kipling Mss., 15/15; 142, 146.
59. Ctee. Rep., p. 16: *Parl. Papers* 1922, CMD 1569, vii. 156. Kipling's "If—" had been hung on the wall in the Speyer office; Aitken to Kipling, 17 Sept. 1914: House of Lords BBK C/198.
60. *Parl. Deb.*, Commons, 4th Series, 153. 1237-9; 154. 487-499 (14, 21 Mar. 1906).
61. Beaverbrook to Carrington, 8 Dec. 1954: see note 32 above. Kipling's isolation in the post-war years was the subject of a cartoon by Max Beerbohm, now in Harvard College Library — "On the Shelf" (1921): R. Hart-Davis, *Catalogue of Beerbohm Caricatures* (1972), no. 860 (p. 88).
62. 26 Aug: Kipling Mss.. 15/15, 200. Kipling's mother and Baldwin's were sisters (Alice and Louisa Macdonald). Baldwin had been at Trinity College, Cambridge, 1885-88.
63. Syracuse University Collection. For Col. H. W. Feilden see Carrington, pp. 411-2.
64. The passage on defence in Lloyd George's memorandum, 17 Aug. 1910, is reproduced in John Grigg, *The People's Champion* (1978), pp. 365-6.
65. Grey, *Twenty-Five Years* (1915), I. 337-8.
66. "Loot" (1890) had been included in *Collected Verse*, 1907; "The Grave of the Hundred Head" (1888), about the revenge exacted after a subaltern's death in an ambush, had been included in *Departmental Ditties* (4th edition, 1890) and republished in the *Windsor Magazine*, Aug. 1898. For the effect see E. T. Raymond, *All and Sundry* (1919), pp. 184-5.
67. An unpublished passage in Kipling's letter to Dr J. Conland, 20 Feb. 1901, shows that the General's views were indeed those of his creator: Library of Congress Mss.
68. For the pre-war advocacy of conscription "apart from military necessities" see A. J. A. Morris, *The Scaremongers* (1984), pp. 229, 322-3.
69. To R. D. Blumenfeld, 28 Mar 1912: Kipling Mss., 14/19.
70. Kipling Mss., 15/15, 101 and 104. The first letter, which is undated, was probably written in December 1913.
71. In his letter to Asquith, 2 Aug. 1914, Bonar Law wrote that it would be "fatal to

- the honour and security of the United Kingdom to hesitate in supporting France and Russia". He did not mention Britain's treaty obligation concerning the guarantee of Belgian neutrality: Blake, *Bonar Law* (1955), p. 222.
72. See Peter Slee, *Learning and a Liberal Education* (1986), pp. 41-43. When C. R. Attlee, returning to Haileybury soon after leaving it, told the masters there that they had a very odd idea of how "to train a ruling class" since "they taught. . . nothing about economics, government, or politics.... one old master said, 'Yes, but you see we know nothing about these things ourselves'." Earl Attlee, recounting this in old age, added: "He was probably right" (*Spectator*, 21 Nov. 1958, p. 678).
  73. Grey to Masterman, 14 Sept. 1914: L. Masterman, *C. F. G. Masterman* (1939), p. 277.
  74. Kipling received a telegram, 13 Sept. 1914, from F. G. Krebs, Cambridge, Mass., (Milner Mss., Bodleian Library) conveying an ironical invitation to come to the United States to give a public reading of his anti-Russian poem, "The Truce of the Bear" (1898). Interestingly the other poem which he was invited to read in public was "The Grave of the Hundred Head": see note 66 above. In December 1914 Kipling's letter to Dr Charles M. Blackford about "The Truce of the Bear" was published in the *New York Times Current History of the European War*.
  75. Speaking in the Commons on 6 Aug. 1914 the Prime Minister, H. H. Asquith, had put all his emphasis on the Belgian Treaty. "We are fighting", he said, "to fulfil a solemn international obligation . . . to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed, in defiance of international good faith, by the arbitrary will of a strong and overmastering power" (*Parl. Deb.*, Commons, 5th Series, 65.2079).
  76. See Hugh Brogan, *Mowgli's Sons* (1987). Kipling and Baden-Powell were not always at one. "It was", in Mr Brogan's words (p. 40), "the general who was the man of peace . . . ; the writer who valued the Scout movement largely because it trained boys for war."
  77. Carrington, p. 419.
  78. Quoted in *Rudyard Kipling to Rider Haggard*, ed. Morton Cohen (1965), p. 63.
  79. W. R. Aykroyd, *Kipling Journal*, 178 (June 1971), p. 13. The fact that Kipling could depict the famine at all attests his skill in picking up local detail. He saw south India only once, when he travelled by train from Tuticorin to Lahore in Dec. 1891, though he had probably read the passage (pp. 112-124) on the Madras famine of 1877 in *Under the Punkah* (1881) by Philip Stewart Robinson. See also Theodore Roosevelt to H. C. Lodge, 2 Aug. 1909 (*Roosevelt-Lodge Correspondence*, ii. 345). Roosevelt found that the officials near Nairobi looked on Kipling "much as Californians look upon Bret Harte." An anonymous contributor to *Blackwood's* [J. H. Millar] commented in October 1898 (clxiv. 475-6): "A vivid impression . . . is not necessarily a correct one; and it is quite natural that there should be more than one opinion as to the truth of Mr. Kipling's sketches of Anglo-Indian society."
  80. *Monthly Criterion*, vi (Dec. 1927). 514-5. The article was rewritten for *The Lamp and the Lute*, (1929), this statement being retained in the revised version: see *Kipling and the Critics*, ed. Elliot L. Gilbert (1966), p. 51.
  81. See Kipling's letter in reply to J. W. Mackail's congratulations: Carrington, p. 268.

# "PROOFS OF HOLY WRIT"

## AN INTRODUCTION

by PHILIP MASON

[Philip Mason, whom we hope to report more extensively soon—he is to be Guest of Honour at our Annual Luncheon this year—has meanwhile kindly given permission for us to reproduce an introductory essay he wrote in 1981, for a special limited edition of "Proofs of Holy Writ" published that year in slim paperback by the National Trust. We are glad to print it here. To its self-evident merits as a wise commentary on a story that is still rather little known, can be added its timeliness as a kind of sequel to Dr John Coates's slightly longer study of the same story which formed our leading article in September 1987.—Ed.]

"Proofs of Holy Writ" was first printed in the *Strand* magazine of April 1934. Kipling died in 1936 and the last collection of his stories, *Limits and Renewals*, appeared in 1932; "Holy Writ" was, therefore, never included in a collection. It was reprinted in the *Strand* in 1947, with a note by Hilton Brown, and it has twice been reprinted in the *Kipling Journal*, for private circulation. It is to be found in volume 30 of the Sussex Edition.

Hilton Brown says that the idea of the story originated at a lunch in Fleet Street, at which the conversation turned on the rhythms and assonances of the Authorised Version of the Bible and John Buchan said it was strange that such splendour had been produced by a body of men learned, no doubt, in theology and in languages, but including among them no writer. Could it be, he wondered, that they had privately consulted the great writers of the age, Shakespeare perhaps and Jonson and others? 'Kipling said to Buchan: "That's an idea" and away he went to turn it over.'

Kipling started work on the story at Bath, in 1932, where he visited George Saintsbury, now retired from his post as Professor of English Literature at Edinburgh. Saintsbury, Kipling said, gave him 'inestimable help in a little piece of work called "Proofs of Holy Writ" which without his books could never have been handled.' Saintsbury's *History of English Prose Rhythm* (1912) has in fact half a chapter on the Authorised Version of the Bible. This was clearly the main source for Kipling's story. It deals at length with the very verses from *Isaiah* 60 discussed in the story, for which it sets out in full the Greek and Latin versions, as well as Coverdale's and the Bishops' Bibles, and it draws attention to various differences in the Geneva

and Douai texts. In fact, he really need have gone no further.

'Story', I have written, but it is hardly a story as Kipling usually thought of a story. There is no plot, no tension, only a friendly, if teasing, conversation between two writers about aspects of their profession. But it opens with a few characteristic sentences reminiscent of the famous opening paragraphs of " 'Love o' Women' " and "The Manner of Men", packages of minute significant detail which set the scene. We are at New Place in Stratford; it is early autumn; Shakespeare and Jonson are talking, as writers do talk, about the way they work, the iniquities of critics and the enormities of rivals. Perhaps they had talked earlier about publishers and booksellers! (Gabriel, by the way, is Gabriel Harvey, a quarrelsome fellow, who attacked Greene and Nashe and corresponded with Spenser.) 'Will' tells 'Ben' that his *Bartholomew Fair* (which has not yet been produced) would be the better for cutting—and we remember that in *Something of Myself* Kipling had described his own ruthless cutting and had said that a story that had been heavily cut burned brighter 'like a fire well-poked'. Indeed, he poked one or two of his fires so hard that no one can be sure what happened! Ben retorts that he does at least make up his own plots, while Will steals his—and this Will cheerfully acknowledges. And it occurs to us that nearly forty years ago Kipling had written some Cockney verses to the same effect:

When 'Omer smote 'is blooming lyre  
 He'd 'eard men sing by land and sea  
 An' what he thought 'e might require  
 'E went and took—the same as me!

Shakespeare in short claims to be a craftsman; give him the bones and he would cover them with flesh. And that too was a point Kipling had made in Horatian verse, imagining Shakespeare at the Mermaid in conversation with Jonson, whom he calls the 'overbearing Boanerges', and recalling how he had made use of scraps of conversation that he had overheard:

How at Bankside, a boy drowning kittens  
 Winc'd at the business; whereupon his sister  
 (Lady Macbeth aged seven) thrust 'em under,  
 Sombrely scornful.

That poem is called "The Craftsman" and is included in *The Years Between*, published in 1919. It would be interesting to know if Kipling had read Quiller-Couch's *Shakespeare's Workmanship*, published in

1918, in which the Professor of Literature at Cambridge wrote of *Macbeth*, *The Tempest* and other plays as problems in craftsmanship cunningly solved.

At last we come to the 'proofs of Holy Writ', sent over for suggested amendments from Oxford by the Reverend Miles Smith of Brasenose College. This man was indeed, as the story says, the son of a butcher; he was later to be Bishop of Gloucester. He was a scholar in Hebrew and other Eastern languages and was one of the 47 Commissioners appointed to prepare what was to be known as the Authorised Version. He wrote the preface and was of the 'company' to whom *Isaiah* and the prophets up to *Malachi* were assigned. I know of no evidence that he ever met Shakespeare. Kipling may have found his name in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th edition) which lists the 47 commissioners and the parts they played. And he would have followed him to the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

The reader will find his own way through the discussion which follows, comparing the versions from older Bibles with the Authorised Version set out at the beginning of the story. If he knows Kipling, he may occasionally be reminded of "Regulus" and of King taking Beetle and the Fifth through an Ode of Horace. The *Oxford Companion to English Literature* bravely states that while 'the Prayer Book text of the Psalms is largely Coverdale's', the Authorised Version is 'practically the version of Tyndale with some admixture from Wycliffe'. But that is to simplify considerably and not everyone would agree. Saintsbury's conclusion is that each of the successive translations has added something but that the Authorised Version took a step forward incomparably greater than any made before. He too comments on the absence of any great stylist among the 47 Commissioners.

Kipling too has simplified considerably. For example, he makes it sound as though the 47 were translating from the Latin of the Vulgate instead of from the Hebrew. But he was writing a story and, as Shakespeare is made to say here, 'they pay their penny for pleasure, not for learning'. His object is to make us see the difficulties of the task and to wonder at the success of some of the solutions. Compare, as one example, Coverdale's flat: 'darkness and cloud covereth the earth and the people' with the A. V.'s: 'Darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people'. Try reading both aloud, preferably in a church to a congregation, and you will see the difference rhetoric makes. And dwell on the passage about 'great wings gliding' and its culmination: 'And thy God thy glory'.

We know something of Kipling's method of work. He would get up from his desk and lie down on a sofa till the exact form of the sentence he wanted was composed in his mind—and it is not surprising to find

that Shakespeare too gets up and walks about till he gets the phrase right—'a well-worn track through the grass' replacing the sofa. Kipling trusted to his Daemon, who could be relied on to tell him what to say; Shakespeare must have quiet when he is waiting on his Daemon. Both felt that something 'took charge'.

There is one striking phrase. Miles Smith is said to have felt himself 'going down darkling into his tomb 'twixt cliffs of ice and iron' and to have been struck by the famous lines in *Macbeth*, 'To-morrow and to-morrow. . .' which seemed to express his own pessimism. And it has been said that in his last days Kipling himself felt those 'cliffs of ice and iron' closing upon him. There is good evidence that he sometimes did. But not always; Shakespeare, in this glimpse of him in the years before his death, is serene and Kipling not much before this had written:

He who used the clay that clings to our boots to make us  
Shall not suffer earthly things to remove or shake us.

And I believe that is nearer the core of his belief.

When did this imaginary conversation take place? Shakespeare came to live at New Place about 1611, though he had owned it for some time previously. The story suggests that he has been there long enough to wear a track in the grass: it is September and there are fallen apples on the ground. He speaks of *The Tempest* as though it was well known and that play was first produced on the stage in November of 1611. *Bartholomew Fair* has not yet been produced—and that was to be in 1614. Internal evidence therefore would suggest the autumn of 1612 as the date—but that is impossible because the Authorised Version appeared in 1611! It took nine months to go through the press. It is possible to suppose that the talk occurred in 1610 when Shakespeare was taking an autumn holiday at New Place, and that *The Tempest* was then already written though not yet produced, but the story does not give me that impression. *The Tempest* as we know it contains clear references to the wreck of *The Sea Adventure* in Bermuda in 1609, of which the news did not reach London till 1610 and the theory that *The Tempest* is a revision of an earlier play does not seem to me convincing. The most sensible solution of this difficulty is that Kipling did not worry much about the exact date—and there are good precedents for this. Meticulous in detail about some things he had a blind spot for time. As one example, he made a wolf on three legs establish a lead of 36 hours over a pack of red dogs who were 'hot on his trail'!

The story is a hunting-ground that would keep an annotator happy a long time. Will calls Ben 'Holofernes', no doubt after the pedantic

schoolmaster in *Love's Labour's Lost*, who himself must have been named after Gargantua's tutor, not Nebuchadnezzar's general killed by Judith. The quotation on page 5 is from *Sejanus* I.i.5., a play in which Shakespeare did take a part, though we do not really know what part. 'Convey' is used as a euphemism for stealing by Pistol in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* I.iii.5. The 'landward principality on a sea-beach' is of course a reference to *The Winter's Tale*, generally dated 1609-10. 'Mine earnest vehement botcher' comes from *The Alchemist*, Act V, scene iii. And so on. In this kind of thing, Kipling was exact; he read very fast and his memory was prodigious. But it is worth noting that the version of Isaiah recommended to Miles Smith in the story is not exactly that of the Authorised Version, which has in verse 1 'Arise' instead of 'Rise' as recommended; in verse 2 a 'the' has been inserted, and there is 'cover' instead of 'cloke', 'upon' for 'on'. There are also changes in verse 19.

The nub of this 'little piece of work' lies in one phrase: 'That so much should lie on a word!' Kipling believed passionately that the manner of telling a thing, the sound and the rhythm, were of supreme importance to the meaning. Dr. J. M. S. Tompkins, in the last pages of her book *The Art of Rudyard Kipling*, has written:

Like the Elizabethans, he had an original and unembarrassed love of eloquence. Words had for him history and personality, and in sequences their sounds could acquire a symbolic fitness. He believed that some subjects could not be properly handled without eloquence; and when he dispensed with it, his reserves have the 'bursting' qualities of theirs, and imply the head of passion that is dammed back.

It seemed to him a miracle that a committee of 47 should have produced one of the greatest glories of the English language and "Proofs of Holy Writ" is a suggestion as to how that miracle might have happened. What he would have said of those who would now cast it away would have been extreme and intemperate. But why, from such riches, he chose *Ezekiel* 27 as betraying the hand of Shakespeare I find hard to see. The theme is the theme of "Recessional" but there are examples innumerable of that in the Old Testament and some others at least as eloquent.

## BOOK REVIEWS

[In our September 1987 number, Nora Crook reviewed eight Kipling titles that had recently been reissued by the Oxford University Press in their World's Classics series, and at the same time four of the recent Penguin Classics titles—namely those which were duplicated in the O.U.P. batch. She now continues for us her admirable summaries of new editions of old Kipling titles—and particularly of the new introductions that accompany them. Below she comments on eight more in the Penguin series, this time eight which are *not* duplicated in the O.U.P. batch that she has already reviewed.—*Ed.*]

The following titles from **Penguin Classics**, 1987; each in paperback; each with an introduction by the editor unless otherwise stated. *JUST SO STORIES*, ed. Peter Levi; ISBN 0-14-043302-3; 171 pp; £1.95. *TRAFFICS AND DISCOVERIES*, ed. Hermione Lee; ISBN 0-14-043286-8; 344 pp; £2.95. *PUCK OF POOK'S HILL*, ed. Sarah Wintle; ISBN 0-14-043284-1; 231 pp; £2.50. *REWARDS AND FAIRIES*, ed. Roger Lewis; ISBN 0-14-043315-5; 291 pp; £2.95; *A DIVERSITY OF CREATURES*, ed. Paul Driver; ISBN 0-14-043295-7; 367 pp; £2.95. *DEBITS AND CREDITS*, ed. Sandra Kemp; ISBN 0-14-043284-X; 288 pp; £2.95. *LIMITS AND RENEWALS*, ed. Phillip V. Mallett; ISBN 0-14-043296-5; 288 pp; £2.95. *SOMETHING OF MYSELF*, ed. Robert Hampson; introduction by Richard Holmes; ISBN 0-14-043308-2; 220 pp; £3.95.

This is the second 'leg' of a review of the annotated Kipling titles selected by O.U.P and Penguin, published in 1987 and intended for a new generation of students of Kipling as well as for the 'common reader'. The titles under consideration, unlike the group reviewed in September 1987, don't contain any 'uncollected' tales, though there was a missed opportunity to add as an appendix "A Tour of Inspection" to the *A Diversity of Creatures* volume, since Kipling substituted it for "Regulus" in the Sussex Edition. As in the previous selection, the introductions span the distinguished to the disappointing, while the notes correspondingly range from the industrious to a cull of the *Readers' Guide*. Most use the Macmillan's first English edition as the text.

Holmes's beautifully written introduction to *Something of Myself* is outstanding, and may well do more to alter the perception of



Kipling in the mind of the book-buying public than any other single title in the total venture. Certainly the clever-silly tag that *Something of Myself* should be re-titled *Practically Nothing of Myself* deserves to die the death after this. Holmes, who approaches Kipling through his understanding of Romanticism and the art of biography, sees Kipling as choosing to reveal a good deal of his secret emotional life—if we know how to read the book. The key to this, Holmes explains, is Kipling's own craft and, especially, his use of the symbolic anecdote. Holmes tactfully illustrates what he means, and then it's over to us. The notes are informative, but miss a couple of things, repeating, for instance, the *Readers' Guide* guess that 'Tante Sannie' should be 'Sanna', whereas Kipling is alluding to the Boer matriarch in *The Story of an African Farm*.

Three of the editors are female academics, which shows that Dr Joyce Tompkins did leave heirs, and perhaps marks public recognition that Kipling is no more a 'man's writer' than Jane Austen is a 'woman's'. Sandra Kemp's *Debits and Credits* is very good indeed, with many sensitive and original insights (especially on "A Madonna of the Trenches"), informed by thorough scholarship. This will surprise no one who heard her speak at the 1986 Sussex University Kipling Day School. Readers of *the Kipling Journal* will be interested to note her acknowledgments of indebtedness to Lisa Lewis.

Sarah Wintle and Roger Lewis both sensibly treat their respective titles as books with meanings for adults (what else could they have done?), both try to do justice simultaneously to the books' didactic purpose and their 'magic', and are strong on the social context. Wintle produces interesting material on the contemporary perception of folklore as suitable training material for future servants of Empire, and has made use of the Sussex archive. She does not always succeed in establishing connections between her argument and Kipling's known reading, though the missing links may yet turn up. Sometimes she produces a telling fact but to my mind draws the wrong conclusion. She thinks that the joke is on Kipling for choosing a medieval tide-well as a hiding place for the treasure, little knowing that such wells were used as privies. More probably Kipling knew this perfectly well, and was more in control of his symbolism than she supposes. She tries creditably to define Kipling's complicated attitude towards Jews, and to defend *Puck* against the charge of 'creeping nostalgia', but somewhat inconclusively, as if she is not herself quite sure where she stands.

No diffidence informs Lewis's flash performance, which he would probably take as a compliment, for he is a great admirer of Kipling's vulgarity. It opens: "1900, and consider this bag of cats. Elgar composed *Gerontius*, Puccini saw the premiere of *Tosca* . . .", and

goes on like that. If there is a parallel to be wire-drawn between Kipling and anyone from Defoe to Craig Raine, he'll do it. His head is a-buzz with quotations, and he has a tic of giving in full the names of people whom he's looked up in dictionaries. Kipling sometimes gets lost in the coruscations, and occasionally one wishes Lewis had taken time to read the words on the page. It isn't Mrs Kidbrooke who plays the organ in "The Conversion of St. Wilfrid". On the plus side, Lewis's exuberance may bewilder and irritate, but at least it is not dull. If he parades his knowledge, some of it is worth parading, and the wealth of information he adduces on myth, saints' lives, botany, alchemy and so forth fits a subject who himself had a magpie mind. He is the first I know to discuss seriously the relationship between the art of Burne-Jones and Kipling, and his evocation of Victorian fairy painting and the Early English Text Society retrieves previously unconsidered contexts. His notes are patently his own. He has bothered to look up *The Hope of the Katzekopfs*. There is also an unusual feature: a list of some of the chief editions of Kipling, with some basic information about dates of revisions. But he should have taken the Indian ink to his manuscript and done some raking out.

Paul Driver's introduction to *A Diversity of Creatures* focusses on Kipling's style, and tries to account for its peculiar difficulties. He is intermittently penetrating here. "Nothing is too strongly emphasised or too carefully clarified. . .his stories float on a sea of suggestion." Partly true, but what about Kipling's 'repetition device'? He notices the pun on "Sheep" and "Cheape" in "Mary Postgate", and his comment on the contribution made by this "emotional hiccup" seems just right: "a sort of Dostoevskian. . .voice which obviously laughs in all the wrong places". But he is not always so inward, and the strong smell of received ideas hovers over his discussion of some stories, notably "The Village that Voted the Earth was Flat". He is interested in the links between prose and verse but can find "no obvious connection" between "The Fabulists" and "The Vortex". He should work at it a bit more. Incidentally the cover design, based on the magazine illustration to "The Vortex", is most atmospheric and retrospectively ironic—a basking brink-of-war rural England, fearing nothing worse than bee-stings.

*Traffics and Discoveries* is not the easiest book to put across to the modern reader, containing as it does large chunks of Kipling's most arid work, like "The Army of a Dream". Hermione Lee succeeds pretty well, though she is predictably happier when presenting "They'" and "Mrs. Bathurst", drawing attention to the way in which these two undermine the "assertive vigorous masculine language" of the other tales. She produces a compelling description of what it feels like to read the latter, and explains why it works as a

story, regardless of any solution. The notes have much background information on the Boer War, though she misses the references to Norse mythology in "Steam Tactics", first spotted by Tompkins.

Lee exemplifies how to be sharply discriminating without harping on the subject's shortcomings. Not so Phillip Mallett, who writes as if he had picked the short straw in taking on *Limits and Renewals*, admittedly not everyone's first choice of an introduction to Kipling. "What is so disturbing is that..."—"What Kipling may be accused of here. . ."—"The limitation on Kipling's greatness is. . ."—"The complexities are of the wrong order. . ."—"It might have been redeemed from unpleasantness if. . ."—it is a litany of woe until he gets on to "Unprofessional", "Dayspring Mishandled" (where he obviously is engaged) and "The Manner of Men". His readings are thoroughly conventional, which is a pity, for *Limits and Renewals* is a challenge, and here was an opportunity to discuss just how strange some of Kipling's final stories are. What is the point of juxtaposing "Aunt Ellen" and "Fairy-Kist", one containing the symbolic, the other the real death of an Ellen? Who are "them" in the final words of "Unprofessional"?—"Pity! There ought to be some way of pulling 'em through it—somehow—oughtn't there?" Why the insistent mispronunciation of "Kniveat" in "Beauty Spots"? An editor isn't bound to come up with answers, but he might have at least raised the questions. The first note is inaccurate: the epigraph of "Dayspring Mishandled" comes from "La Fée aux Miettes".

Finally, and alas, there is the One That Should Not Have Been Allowed. If *Just So Stories* must be edited, let it be done with conviction. Let us learn how the book got its name, how it was received in 1902, what is written on the bladebone opening "The Cat that Walked" (the reproduction of Kipling's drawings here is so smudgy that one could never read it unaided), and so forth. But Peter Levi does his job half-heartedly. His introduction abounds in mistakes and unsubstantiated assertions (Kipling died at eighty-one, spent Christmas at Southsea with the Burne-Joneses, must have been read by Hopkins). It seems that Levi would have preferred to write about Kipling's verse, or Kipling and Chesterton, but was given the wrong vehicle. Penguin should have left the field to the Piccolo (cheaper, with nicer paper and print). But if I were you, Best Beloved, I should invest in the good old Macmillan hardback.

NORA CROOK

# 'THE YEARS BETWEEN'

## RUDYARD KIPLING AND THE GREAT WAR

by ANN PARRY

[Mrs Parry, who is a member of the Council of the Kipling Society, will be remembered as the author of an article about "The Bridge-Builders" which we published in two parts in our issues of March and June 1986, and as an occasional reviewer. She graduated at Keele, and is now a senior lecturer in English Literature at North Staffordshire Polytechnic, where she is also responsible for developing inter-disciplinary courses in Literature and History.

Literature and History certainly interrelate where they bear on one aspect of the origins of the 'Great War' of 1914-18, namely the question which is sometimes raised—Did the British help to provoke that war? In starkly simple terms, the subject is rooted in human attitudes; if these are polarised—artificially and for the sake of argument—into two categories, total complacency and provocative defensiveness, they can each be represented as factors which tend to cause, or to avert, war. For about a dozen years before the actual onset of war in 1914 Kipling was afraid that it was coming. He said so with anxiety, and pressed for military preparedness with a mounting urgency which, among those of a politically liberal persuasion and those who merely hoped for the best, reduced his popularity. It is possible to argue (and it is argued in a new book by an American academic, C.D.Eby's *The Road to Armageddon*) that what might be termed the 'martial spirit' before 1914 in English popular writing, and not least in Kipling, helped to bring on the catastrophe. My own view, insofar as concerns Kipling, is that he was completely on the right side, and that had he been heeded more widely, the Great War—if it had occurred at all—could have been shorter and less dreadful.

It is an ancient argument, and not one that will be ended in a hurry—unless we are all extinguished as we debate it. In the 4th century A.D. the Latin writer Flavius Renatus Vegetius, in his *Epitome Rei Militaris* dedicated to the Emperor Valentinian II, recommended preparedness as a deterrent to war: "Qui desiderat pacem, praeparet bellum." This theme, and its impassioned contradiction, are still expounded, strongly if less pithily, today. Mrs Parry's study of Kipling's standpoint is welcome as a fresh look at a past topic which, though seemingly old, unhappy and far-off, is not without resonance for the present. The causes of war apart, what she has to say about Kipling's poetry, arising from the conflict itself, is a valuable contribution to a neglected subject.—*Ed.*]

Kipling has long been mythologised as one of the chief promoters of what Wilfred Owen called "the old Lie".<sup>1</sup> A few voices have spoken out in his defence, but no sustained attention has been given to what he wrote in the years preceding 1914 about the prospect of war; and

how the ideas he then formed conditioned what he said about the war when it occurred. Critical response, therefore, has not really gone beyond the level of assertion and generalisation<sup>2</sup>. However, the volume of poetry he published in 1919, *The Years Between*<sup>3</sup>, provides a unique insight into Kipling's understanding of, and response to, what from the day of its outbreak he realised would be Armageddon.

The chronological span of the poems included in this volume, and its title, are the key to the appreciation of Kipling's interpretation of the Great War as a historical event. The first group of poems, at least half, span the period from 1898 to the outbreak of war in 1914, and they record Kipling's response to domestic and foreign politics during these years. A second group includes those poems written while the Great War was being fought: when we remember that Kipling produced few stories between 1914 and 1918, these poems constitute a significant insight into his literary response to the war.<sup>4</sup>

The title that Kipling chose for his volume would seem to refer to the years between the onset of war in South Africa and the conclusion of war in Europe. This deliberate choice, to include poems written before 1914, would also suggest that he saw some kind of continuity or connection between the dates. However, before examining these groups of poems and discussing their relationships with one another, an important distinction should be made between the types of poems contained in the volume.

The earlier group consists entirely of 'occasional' poems; that is to say they had been called forth by some turn in affairs abroad or at home. In this sense they are typical of Kipling, who most often *used* his poetry, directing it to an end beyond itself. To understand what those ends were is to understand also the determinations at work in Kipling's later response to the events and progress of the 1914-18 war.

In the second group there are also occasional poems, but there is another sort too—poems such as those merely headed "Epitaphs" (or in the Definitive Edition, "Epitaphs of the Great War"), whose essential characteristics are their composure, simplicity and brevity, aided by the classical form in which they are written. They indicate a more meditative response to the war than that of the occasional poetry. The "Epitaphs" record the fates of a whole variety of individuals who were caught up in a war machine that seemed to have passed beyond human control. However, these are not the vernacular poems through which Kipling had, for the first time in British history, made the figure of the private soldier vivid and sympathetic. 'Tommy Atkins' never appeared in this war from Kipling's pen—perhaps because Kipling thought that such a tragedy

had overtaken the tommy as to quell even his ebullient humour. In poems like "Gethsemane", "Mesopotamia" and the "Epitaphs" it is clear that he is with grief and rage pondering the fate of "Mine angry and defrauded young". These apparently simple poems were undervalued in his own age, that increasingly placed a premium on poetic complexity<sup>5</sup>, and they are unrecognised today by many who dismiss Kipling because they think he merely wrote "propagandist poems, directed at such targets as 'The Pope, the swithering Neutrals, / The Kaiser and his Gott' ".<sup>6</sup>

Most of Kipling's attitudes to pre-1914 England were forged during the South African War. In "The Islanders" (1902) he bitterly attacked Tory complacency—

Given to strong delusion, wholly believing a lie,  
Ye saw that the land lay fenceless, and ye let the months go by  
Waiting some easy wonder . . .

It was this political incompetence and lack of foresight that culminated in a totally inadequate military organisation<sup>7</sup>. Lord Roberts, the Commander-in-Chief, had been sent

Sons of the sheltered city—unmade, unhandled, unmeet—  
Ye pushed them raw to the battle as ye picked them raw from  
the street.

It was this "remnant", whom Kipling saw, at first hand, die in their thousands, that had saved England.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, Kipling warned that soon she would be facing a threat in Europe from Germany, and he asked pointedly:

Do ye wait for the spattered shrapnel ere ye learn how a gun is  
laid?  
For the low, red glare to southward when the raided coast-  
towns burn?  
(Light ye shall have on that lesson, but little time to learn.)

This sharp warning at the end reveals that element of foresight that is often present in Kipling's political verse.

This virulent attack on the Tory Party was carried forward in *The Years Between* in two poems "The Houses" and "The Rowers".<sup>10</sup> In "The Houses" he indicted the Conservatives for their failure to understand the special responsibility and potential strength that accrued from England's imperial role:

In thy house or my house is half the world's hoard;  
By my house or thy house is half the world's fate . . .

If my house be taken, thine tumbleth anon,  
If thy house be forfeit, mine followeth soon . . .<sup>11</sup>

And in "The Rowers" he stressed that the Empire should also influence Great Britain's European policy. With Germany's ambitions in Africa fresh in his mind, and their support for the Boers, Kipling has his sailors respond with disgust to a demonstration which required them to support the German Navy in its efforts to collect debts from Venezuela. These men rail against being servants of what seems to them to be a fickle and opportunistic policy; they complain that

Last night you swore our voyage was done,  
But seaward still we go,  
And you tell us now of a secret vow  
You have made with an open foe—

whereas now they find

That we must lie off a lightless coast  
And haul and back and veer,  
At the will of the breed that have wronged us most  
For a year and a year and a year!<sup>12</sup>

In his story "Below the Mill Dam" (1902) Kipling provides a more sophisticated satire on the failure of the Tory Party to adapt its policies to the needs of the twentieth century.

However, the elections of 1906 returned the Liberals to power, and they remained in office until the Coalition of 1916. Many, therefore, of the occasional poems in *The Years Between* are waspish comments on their rule. Before considering how they continue and embellish Kipling's discontent, evident prior to their arrival in power, a general point needs to be made about his political writing.

Kipling was never a party man. Essentially he saw himself as a satirist. This is why he constantly refused the Honours that were offered him, and would not take any work that could be seen as a party political appointment<sup>13</sup>. He could be, and was, as virulent towards Tory "flannelled fools" as he was towards the "wastrels" of the Liberal Party. This was his duty, as he conceived it, as a political poet. It is why, in refusing an Honour, he remarked that he could "do his work better without it".<sup>14</sup>

This is not to deny or disguise Kipling's right wing views, or that many of his friends were prominent in the Tory Party, but it is absolutely necessary to remember the breadth of his political attacks if we are to understand the essential comment that lay behind them. In attacking both pre-war Toryism and Liberalism he meant to indict a whole generation of politicians whose corruption and carelessness eventually cost them and him their sons and an Empire—as he constantly predicted they would. The general political nature of his attack, and his inclusion of himself in the guilt of this generation, has never been appreciated, but this is surely the full meaning that lies behind "Common Form", in the "Epitaphs":

If any question why we died,  
Tell them, because our fathers lied.<sup>15</sup>

The political lies, and policies, that in Kipling's view played a large part in the occurrence of war in 1914 appear *in toto* in a poem like "The City of Brass", and singly in other of the poems.<sup>16</sup> The recurrent charge, made first against the Tories, but increasingly after 1906 against the Liberals, was that they had all betrayed their inheritance—

Swiftly these pulled down the walls that their fathers had made  
them.<sup>17</sup>

The work of "The Pro-Consuls" like Milner, as Kipling saw it, had been to

.. .dig foundations deep  
Fit for realms to rise upon . . .

With no veil before their face  
Such as shroud or sceptre lend—  
Daily in the market-place,  
Of one height to foe and friend—  
They must cheapen self to find  
Ends uncheapened for mankind.<sup>18</sup>

What he believed to be a courageous civilising force that spent itself "At the day's need" was now set to nought by politicians—

They unwound and flung from them with rage, as a rag that  
defiled them  
The imperial gains of the age which their forefathers piled  
them.<sup>19</sup>



The "simple service simply given" of "The Sons of Martha"<sup>20</sup> was now "exposed to derision",

For the show and the word and the thought of Dominion is  
evil!<sup>21</sup>

Kipling's political satire seemed to reach a frenetic crescendo in poems like "Ulster", "The Covenant" and "The Female of the Species"<sup>22</sup>. He believed that those who were truly loyal to their country were facing

. . . every evil power  
We fought against of old.  
Rebellion, rapine, hate,  
Oppression, wrong and greed . . .

We must however place such expressions within the context of a period which historians have described as "one of domestic anarchy".<sup>23</sup>

The temper of politics between 1910 and 1914 rapidly gained pace, with what many saw as the demagoguery of Lloyd George, the fanaticism of Carson, and the extremist behaviour of suffragettes and strikers. In the face of such events Kipling's right wing views were sharpened; along with Roberts and Milner he became one of the Covenanters, who believed it would be unconstitutional to use the British Army to coerce Ulster into accepting the Home Rule Bill. Kipling was outraged that men who had given so little attention to the Army should consider using it for these purposes. Their treatment of the Army had been further evidence of the way in which Liberal politicians betrayed Great Britain's best imperial and European interests. Whereas the Tories had neglected it in terms of training, recruitment and the quality of its officers, the Liberals had

. . . disbanded in face of their foemen their bowmen and  
archers.<sup>24</sup>

Kipling gave his wholehearted support to the campaign Lord Roberts mounted from 1905 onwards for national conscription.<sup>25</sup> It was this more than anything else that led to their both being accused, in the Liberal press, of being warmongers: it is the origin of one part of the mythology that surrounds Rudyard Kipling.<sup>26</sup> Whether one agrees with their point of view or not, one should understand what it was. They belonged to that group which believes that to be armed and strong is to deter attack. Kipling and Roberts held that the Empire made Britain a special case in military terms. Since her prosperity depended on trade, her first requirement was

peace, and security from war alarms and panics. Such security, they argued, was not always to be attained by diplomacy and conciliation alone: in any last resort these methods had to be seen to be backed by armed forces. To meet her commitments Britain had need of two armies: a small, highly trained regular force for service in the Empire, and a larger, less highly trained reserve for home defence.

In the years preceding 1914 Kipling was increasingly convinced that the Germans were preparing for European war, that

Through learned and laborious years  
They set themselves to find  
Fresh terrors and undreamed-of fears  
. To heap upon mankind.<sup>27</sup>

It would not be long, he said, before there was seen that "low, red glare to southward".<sup>28</sup> Lord Roberts in 1912 gave the same message in uncompromising terms<sup>29</sup>, and Kipling had put it very pungently in a letter the previous year:

. . . the Teuton has his large cold eye on us and prepares to give us toko when he feels good and ready . . . we ought to see in a few years now . . .<sup>30</sup>

It was these kind of warnings, which admittedly became more strident the more they were ignored, that allowed the Liberal press to revile Kipling and Roberts as wicked men who were anxious for war and were doing their best to precipitate it. In fact their argument, supported by *The Times*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Mail* and the *Spectator*, was the reverse. They asserted that war would be less likely if Germany did not think Britain ill-prepared.

The argument, as we know, still belongs to the realm of political and moral debate. Kipling, however, always believed that what he had advised as deterrent policy would also have saved many British lives. Had Britain not been assured that there was "no need for preparation against war", that "the mere thought of preparation against war was absurd where it was not criminal", then it might not have been necessary "through the first two years of the war . . . to throw up a barricade of the dead bodies of the nation's youth behind which the most elementary preparations could be begun".<sup>31</sup> The war as he saw it had divided the generations: there was the older one which committed, or bore witness to, folly but could not defeat it, and there was the younger one which paid the price for that folly. This indeed was the generation "for whom their fathers prepared such distant graves".<sup>32</sup> This vision of youth as the victim of history was one that was to find its echo in the work of the soldier poets.

The occasional poetry of *The Years Between* that belongs to the

pre-war period shows, therefore, that Kipling had become increasingly isolated from the politics of his own time. His own right wing views which placed a heavy stress on the duties that came with rights, on the Empire as a civilising mission, and on the absolute necessity for England to become technologically competent if she was to deal with the demands of the twentieth century, did not find the same emphasis in either of the major political parties.

The Conservative party, which was Kipling's 'natural' home, did not impress him under the leadership of Balfour, whom he saw as a procrastinating philosopher only able to concern himself with the preservation of an aristocratic life, oblivious to scientific and technological change. When in later years Kipling found himself a guest alongside Balfour at an official dinner party he wrote on the back of a programme:

The foundations of Philosophic Doubt  
Are based on this simple premiss:  
Shall I be able to get out  
To Wimbledon for tennis?<sup>33</sup>

Though the satire is now muted by the doggerel form, the barb is still there: the pursuit of social pleasure bred a "wait and see" policy and it ended, of course, in failure to meet the challenge of the new century. This is not to argue that Kipling had the answers to England's problems in his own extreme right wing views, but it is at least to acknowledge his perspicacity in analysing pre-war Toryism.

The Liberals had inspired his more frantic vituperation. He loathed the "radical opportunists" Lloyd George and Churchill, and detested their policy of giving "to numbers the Name of the Wisdom unerring".<sup>34</sup> Speaking at a later date his friend Rider Haggard probably intimated most truly what Kipling's general position was at the outbreak of war: "How he hates politicians!".<sup>35</sup> They were the "Sons of Mary" who

. . . smile and are blessèd—they know the angels are on their side.

They know in them is the Grace confessèd, and for them are the Mercies multiplied.

But it was for them, "pleasantly sleeping and unaware", that the "Sons of Martha" must make it

. . . their care in all the ages to take the buffet and cushion the shock,

and must make it their burden and responsibility to

. . . finger death at their gloves' end where they piece and  
repiece the living wires.<sup>36</sup>

Again, with the advantage of hindsight, one might remark that prophetic note in a poem written in 1907. Its imagery conjures what were to become commonplace associations of the Western Front, with bodies torn or lifeless on the barbed wire. Siegfried Sassoon (in *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer*) records how he spent one leave searching out strong gloves that would help him on his midnight forays into No-Man's-Land to bring in the dead and repair the fences.

Given what he had been saying for so long previously, "For All We Have and Are", one of his first public responses to the war, contained the ambivalence one might expect.<sup>37</sup> Though contemporaries described it as "a rousing call to arms"<sup>38</sup>, the lines of this poem convey deep-seated reservations about the war. While Kipling accepts that the war has to be "taken", that there is no alternative to it now, the poetic expression realises it as a terrible necessity. He prophesies its awfulness in the images used to evoke it—"steel and fire and stone"—which, with their stress on coldness and power, convey also its potential cruelty and terror. War is seen very much in a Hebraic perspective, like that of Isaac Rosenberg: it is a recurring phenomenon, "That sickened earth of old", and will mean violence "Unsheathed and uncontrolled".

But it is in the final question of the poem—"Who dies if England lives?"—that the darkest undertones coalesce, and extend his preoccupations of the years before the war. The answer to the question, of course, was that those who would die would be the enthusiastic young men queuing at the recruitment offices to go and defend England's "Freedom". It is an answer that forces the reader back to the earlier phrases of the poem, which take on new meaning—"Though all we knew depart . . . Though all we made depart. . ."—which refers not only to a way of life but also, surely, to the soldiers who were already leaving for the Western Front. This is "our children's fate", invoked in the first lines of the poem.

Further, it is crucial to note to whom the poem speaks. It is not addressed to those who might die; it is no rallying call to the flag; it is a warning to the older generation, of the days to come. The only comfort it offers to them is "In patience keep your heart". What it foresees is an actuality that was to occur only too soon, an England emptied of its young men, where

Only ourselves remain  
 To face the naked days  
 In silent fortitude . . .

We are reminded again of the price to be paid for a world "o'erthrown" or thrown away "In wantonness". In sombre tones a time is foretold when every reserve of courage will be called upon. While Brooke, Grenfell and Sassoon were glorying in the redemptive prospects of battle, Kipling the "war-monger", was foretelling that this renewal would only come through "iron sacrifice / Of body, will, and soul".

The reservations of this poem affected much of what he had to say to those about to go to war. In December 1915, addressing boys of Winchester College, which by then had its list of fallen, he said:

It is well to die for one's country. But that is not enough. It is also necessary that, so long as he lives, a man should give to his country . . . a mind and soul neither ignorant nor inadequate.<sup>39</sup>

It is this attitude towards patriotism that liberal intellectuals have found so hard to understand. Neither militarist nor defeatist, it asserts that loyalty to one's country could be a responsible and well-considered position.

However, the poems he wrote about Germany and the Germans are what make it difficult for some to believe that Kipling's patriotism was not of a bellicose kind. In *The Years Between* he refers to Germany as "Evil incarnate"; he could see only "the dead on every shore", and was convinced, as we noted earlier, that the Germans

. . . paid the price to reach their goal  
 Across a world in flame.<sup>40</sup>

In "A Death-Bed" he gloried in the pain and misery that the Kaiser might be imagined to experience from (rumoured) cancer of the throat. For Kipling it was inseparable from, and a just return for, those Englishmen who had died "... shouting in gas or fire . . . silent, by shell and shot . . . desperate, caught on the wire . . .".

He never admitted the suffering of the Germans in the war, and is indicted by some critics because he was incapable of writing lines which extend pity to the enemy. Certainly Kipling never saw a possibility of reconciliation with Germany. By 1921 he was warning again of the possible threat it offered to Europe; and he believed that England and France should continue in alliance. Surely, he appealed, "those memories of the dead . . . have been burned into us for ever".<sup>41</sup> It is this refusal even to consider forgiveness which,

according to Silkin, drives "the average humane reader" into a fury with Kipling.<sup>42</sup> If we judge poetry solely in moral terms, perhaps these "average humane readers" are correct, but it will involve abstracting Kipling's poetry from its historical context, and ignoring distinctions in attitude between soldiers and civilians.

In his hatred of the 'Hun', Kipling was typical of the Home Front, in whose outlook the literary critics have remained steadfastly uninterested. Prince Louis of Battenberg and Lord Haldane had been forced to resign because of their German family associations. In November and December 1918 Lloyd George stumped the country making bitter speeches about the kind of justice Germany should receive at the hands of the Allies. Even a well known trade union leader had declared, "I am for hanging the Kaiser . . . It would be a monstrous thing if the greatest culprit and murderer in history escaped the just penalty of his crimes."<sup>43</sup> Hatred of the Germans was clearly no party matter.

Further, we should remember that during the war, propaganda had been professionalised; it had become an official branch of state control; and one of its first concerns had been to build up an image of the enemy as a menacing, murderous aggressor. It was felt necessary to do this to invigorate popular support for the war.<sup>44</sup> The perception of the war by the civilian Home Front, therefore, was shaped by the simplifications and absolute ideals defined by propagandists. These then seemed confirmed by the grievous loss of thousands, often in a single day, and by the terrible injuries of the men who returned. Historians now recognise that the psychology of the Home Front, and conditions there, were as much a part of the war as what was happening on the battlefronts. Critics have not been so quick to realise that if we are to understand the war as a literary event we have to do more than consider the perceptions of the fighting men, we must also consider those of the Home Front, and compare the two.

*The Years Between* provides invaluable information for such an exercise. It deliberately tries to represent a variety of people who waited, watching the course of the war.<sup>45</sup> We all prefer to think that we would not react like the woman who worked the lathes that made "*Shells for guns in Flanders!*"; that we would not see ourselves as "servants of the Judgment", even though we had "had a man that worked 'em once".<sup>46</sup> Indeed many, then and now, might not react in this way, but we deny historical reality if we think there were none who did entertain such feelings, or that this was merely a device of Kipling's to distance or sublimate his own vengeful feelings.

A poem such as "The Question" (1916) can give us insight into

the anger and bitterness that was felt against America while she did not enter the war. There were many, as the newspaper record and the memoirs of public figures make clear, who thought it would be

. . . proven that all my good,  
And the greater good I will make,  
Were purchased me by a multitude  
Who suffered for my sake . . .

America's isolationism was put on a par with Peter's betrayal of Christ:

Brethren, how must it fare with me,  
Or how am I justified,  
If it be proven that I am he  
For whom mankind has died;  
If it be proven that I am he  
Who being questioned denied?<sup>47</sup>

The Biblical parallel and language have the effect of translating a political question into a moral and spiritual one, so that the conscience of America is assailed, and English feelings of righteous anger are appeased.

Finally there is plenty of evidence to show that the rage Kipling expressed in "Mesopotamia" was also felt by a great number who lost their sons in this disastrous campaign—

They shall not return to us, the resolute, the young,  
The eager and whole-hearted whom we gave:  
But the men who left them thriftily to die in their own dung,  
Shall they come with years and honour to the grave?<sup>48</sup>

Haggard remarked during the war that he valued the poetry Kipling was writing then, because it expressed "in terse rhyme exactly what other men like myself were thinking".<sup>49</sup> Of course, harsh or unpleasant views are not justified by being commonly held, but we must not allow our own moral values to disguise the nature and enormity of historical circumstances that people in the past have faced. This was the first total war, waged with all the ferocity that technology could provide; it was the first time, therefore, that men had been called upon to react to such conditions. Those reactions were not always high-minded.

There is one further point: the poems just discussed must be seen in the total context of those contained in *The Years Between*. There remain those mentioned earlier, that record a more personal and meditative response to the war.

"A Nativity", "My Boy Jack" and "A Recantation"<sup>50</sup> are almost unique in Kipling's poetry in revealing a private emotion—the irreparable grief he and his wife experienced at the loss of their son John at Loos. Kipling, as is well known, was an extremely reticent and private man, and it was probably because his family's grief was such a common or general one, that he allowed himself to speak. Again, there is this important sense in which Kipling was representative. Moreover the evidence, especially of "A Nativity", would suggest that although the home fires were being kept burning, and there was no open revulsion from the war, the same questions as Owen asked in "Futility"—

Was it for this the clay grew tall?  
—O what made fatuous sunbeams toil  
To break earth's sleep at all?—<sup>51</sup>

had become a strong undercurrent in civilian response; there too religious and metaphysical principles were in turmoil.

In some respects "A Nativity" and "My Boy Jack" are similar poems. Both evoke the terrible grief of anguished mothers whose sons are 'missing, presumed dead'. Each poem tries to end convincingly on an affirmative note, asserting that comfort lies in the knowledge that their boy "did not shame his kind".<sup>52</sup> However, these affirmations are undercut by the prior content of the poems. In "A Nativity" the mother sees her son's manner of death exceeding the cruelty of that handed out to Christ, and her own role as a mother being more demanding than that of Mary.

*The Cross was raised on high;*  
*The Mother grieved beside—*  
But the Mother saw Him die  
And took Him when He died...  
Seemly and undefiled  
His burial-place was made...

The soldier's mother knows "not how he fell" nor "where he is laid"; his shattered body could have lain for days "with none to tend him or mark". The awfulness of Calvary has in this poem been exceeded by the monstrosity of the Western Front; mankind has outdone itself in barbarism; so that the question, "Is it well with the child, is it well?", with its heavy falling emphasis on the repeated word *well*, finds no meaningful answer in spite of the affirmative assertion that follows. Kipling deliberately sets the missing body on Easter Day—which was a sign of Christ's rising from the dead—against the missing body of the soldier—which is a sign only that he is lost for ever. Meaningful death is set against meaningless death.



The implication would seem to be that no Christian interpretation can explain the fate of the "children" in this war. Mankind has passed beyond the bounds of Christianity, where there is no longer a "Sign of the Promise given". The assertion at the end, therefore, only heightens the poignancy of this deeply felt poem: it is a claim for well-being in the face of overwhelming odds against its being so. Like "For All We Have and Are", this is a poem whose contradictions cause it to work on a dual level of affirmation and doubt.

A similar process is at work in "My Boy Jack". The final injunction to "hold your head up all the more", in pride at the sacrifice of the young man, comes after the reader has received a strong impression of minimal meaning. Whereas this arose in "A Nativity" through the contrast with Christ, in this poem the refrain creates the effect. The repetition of the elemental ferocity of "this wind blowing, and this tide", ensures that "news of my boy Jack" becomes an ever-decreasing possibility. By the end of the poem the refrain has come to represent the monstrous powers that are destroying mere boys; the fact that Jack "did not shame his kind" heightens their awfulness, and the tragedy of his loss.

"A Recantation" and "Gethsemane"<sup>53</sup> are equally worthy of comment. The former is most unusual among Kipling's poetry in being written in the first person. It is an elegy both for the lost young (John Kipling and the son of "Lyde of the Music Halls") who "possessed sleep before noon", and for those who remain, knowing that from now on "vultures rend their soul". "Gethsemane", though so little known, is a remarkable poem, haunting in its ghostliness, and so close to many of the visions of the trench poets.

The Garden called Gethsemane  
In Picardy it was,  
And there the people came to see  
The English soldiers pass.  
We used to pass—we used to pass  
Or halt, as it might be,  
And ship our masks in case of gas  
Beyond Gethsemane.

The Garden called Gethsemane,  
It held a pretty lass,  
But all the time she talked to me  
I prayed my cup might pass.  
The officer sat on the chair,  
The men lay on the grass,  
And all the time we halted there  
I prayed my cup might pass—

It didn't pass—it didn't pass—  
It didn't pass from me.  
I drank it when we met the gas  
Beyond Gethsemane.

It is clear from the outset, both from the tense of the verb, "we used to pass", and from the play on the word "pass", that this soldier, like the one in Owen's "Strange Meeting", speaks from the confines of death. This heightens the poignancy of his memories, and sharpens the metaphysical questions that the poem raises about the war and Christianity. The cup that Christ prayed might pass, but which he drank to redeem man, has now become the senseless torture that leads only to purposeless death.

As in "A Nativity", Kipling is using an occasion from the war to make his reader question whether man is any longer capable of redemption, or is indeed still in God's care, and whether, therefore, Christ's sacrifice was to any purpose. The individual instant is again the way into the larger metaphysical issues, raised by the monstrous nature of technological warfare. Paul Fussell, in his book *The Great War and Modern Memory*, identifies the tendency in several of the trench poets to equate the ordinary soldier with Christ as the archetypal victim—of a political system made corrupt by the corruption of human nature. What is remarkable here is that Kipling, who in the famous cartoon was seen to be the pen (with blood dripping from it) to Kitchener's sword, the arch inciter of men to battle, is here expressing the same revulsion towards the war that the soldier poets felt. It suggests the need once more to interrogate the accepted critical response to Kipling's war poetry.

Perhaps, however, it is in the sequence of epigrams, entitled merely "Epitaphs"<sup>54</sup>, that Kipling makes his most complex response to the Great War. Critics have remarked that the lyric was, in some ways, an inappropriate poetic form with which to deal with the experience of the war. Its brevity, subjectivity and, following from this, its narrowness of perspective, meant that it was unable to take in the magnitude of the war in historical, geographical and metaphysical terms. Further, it has been argued that such a form only demands of the reader a limited response to the subject. J.H. Johnston, in his book, goes so far as to maintain that only the epic could have accommodated the large vistas necessary to convey the extent of the war and the variety of effects needed to draw forth a complex appreciation of its horrendous implications.<sup>55</sup> The form that Kipling chose, the sequence of classical epitaphs, is of course the very reverse of epic proportions. It nevertheless shows that the

impression of magnitude and variety could be created on a small scale, to elicit from a reader a whole range of reactions. These, while including Owen's burning pity, call on other contradictory attitudes which have to be assimilated if we are to understand the experience of this war.

The starting-point is "Equality of Sacrifice":

A. 'I was a "have" '.      B. 'I was a "have-not" '.  
(*Together*). 'What hast thou given which I gave not?'<sup>56</sup>

This emphasis on the classlessness of death is then brought to a sharp focus in social terms, in "A Servant":

We were together since the War began.  
He was my servant—and the better man.<sup>57</sup>

The variety of voices which speak throughout—"Ex-Clerk", "The Refined Man", etc.<sup>58</sup>—makes it clear to us that one of the strongest impressions produced by the war on soldiers and civilians was that historic, cultural and class divisions had been laid aside. It is an insight into the bitterness and incomprehension of those who did return, to find the fabric of English society unchanged and unchanging.

Kipling however is careful to include in his equality of sacrifice those who had come from distant parts—"Hindu Sepoy" and "Native Water-Carrier (M.E.F.)"<sup>59</sup>. The respect and reverence with which these brave men are remembered suggested that whatever political role England reassumed after the war towards the Empire, she would be dealing with those to whom she owed a debt of gratitude for their loyalty.

This stress upon "equality of sacrifice" is combined with references to naval engagements, graves near Cairo, Haifa, and Salonika<sup>60</sup>; and the effect is to extend repeatedly our awareness of how far-flung the battlefields of this war were. The reader gradually comes to appreciate that he is committing to memory not only the poignant details of the fallen but also a new historical phenomenon—the first *world* war. Within this global outlook, as we would expect, the political dimension stands condemned as its "lies are proved untrue", and it must make its answer to its "angry and defrauded young".<sup>61</sup> A line which in this context records all Kipling's pity and sympathy for the young, and the guilt borne by the older generation.

Individual and family tragedies are captured in details made more pitiful by their brevity—the young boy who died on his first day in the trenches because curiosity got the better of him and he peeped

out, only to be caught by the sniper's bullet; or the only son whose death broke his mother's heart.<sup>62</sup>

The total effect of moving in this way through brief lives in ever-widening geographical dimensions is a complex one. While the 'pity of war' is distilled in those cases just mentioned (and in many others not) the reader also discovers those who found purpose and courage in the war<sup>63</sup>, and those who had committed the most terrible actions and reactions.<sup>64</sup> It is an encounter with what seem to be ultimate contradictions—a world and a humanity that are simultaneously ennobled and brutalised. Momentarily we

... whom Life shall cure,  
Almost, of Memory,<sup>65</sup>

are able to glimpse, through the "Epitaphs", the historical reality of those whose only choice was "to endure" the "immortality" that life thrust upon them. Kipling, as a Commissioner of War Graves, was responsible for the line placed on all memorials to those who had died—*Their name liveth for evermore*. "Epitaphs" would suggest that he had meditated long on the human, metaphysical and historical implications of this kind of immortality.

The accusation which is still often levelled at Kipling's work, that it shows a "limited sense of values" and a "lack of understanding of issues broader than the individual"<sup>66</sup>, is refuted by many of the poems in *The Years Between*. However, this kind of misrepresentation disguises from many readers that it was Kipling who gave a voice to the thoughts, fears and emotions of the Home Front—to ordinary people who waited for news of their sons, who were outraged by the cost of the so-called 'victories', and who became bitterly hostile to the politicians who could not bring the war to an end. Perhaps the greatest irony of all is, that of those writers well established in 1914, the one whom the war poets felt they had least in common with was Kipling. In fact, as we have seen, few were—and perhaps no other civilian was—closer to them in the attitudes and outlook revealed in some of his war poems. Certainly, there was no other writer who appreciated more the fate of a generation whose "cup did not pass".<sup>67</sup> The political principles for which Kipling stood, and which we may despise, should not prevent our seeing what there is to admire. Orwell sounded the warning many years ago, but it still needs heeding.

## NOTES

1. "The old Lie: Dulce et Decorum est/Pro patria mori." See *The Collected Poems of Wilfred Owen*, ed C.Day Lewis, p 55.
2. Among more recent condemnations Silkin in *Out of Battle* might be seen as representative, see pp 59-64; or Bergonzi's essay in *Rudyard Kipling: the man, his work and the world*, ed J. Gross. In the same book Robert Conquest suggested that Kipling's attitudes to the war had been "wildly and inexcusably misunderstood" (p 110), though this claim was taken no further. The Editor of the *Kipling Journal* recently (March 1985, p 69) remarked how "the hoary old inference that Kipling was among the warmongers" continued to hold its ground, and that research was needed on Kipling's writing to dispel this prevalent idea.
3. *The Years Between* was published by Methuen. Page references are given to this volume (hereinafter *TYB*), but also to the *Definitive Edition of Kipling's Verse* (hereinafter *DEKV*), as this is more likely to be available to most readers.
4. "Swept and Garnished", "Mary Postgate" and "Sea Constables" were published in magazines between January and September 1915, before Kipling lost his son. He published no other new fiction during the war.
5. T. S. Eliot, a practitioner of complexity, but also a champion of Kipling — see his introduction to *A Choice of Kipling's Verse* (Faber) — reviewed *TYB* in the *Athenaeum*, May 1919, and remarked that "Mr. Kipling is a laureate without laurels. He is a neglected celebrity. The arrival of a new book of his verse is not likely to stir the slightest ripple on the surface of our conversational intelligentsia."
6. Bergonzi in *op. cit. supra*, p 137.
7. See *DEKV*, p 302.
8. Kipling went to South Africa during the Boer War; he visited the front, and worked on the *Friend*, a newspaper established by Lord Roberts for circulation amongst the Army. It was another example of the astuteness of this remarkable soldier, in realising the importance of communication, to the morale of the Army. He was to offer much advice on the organisation, and the best tactics, for an Army fighting in the twentieth century. This advice, like his campaign for national conscription, was often, it seems, deliberately misunderstood. Further reference to the conscription campaign, which Kipling supported, is made later in the article.
9. *DEKV*, p 303.
10. *TYB*, pp 42, 1; *DEKV*, pp 179, pp 282.
11. *TYB*, p 42; *DEKV*, p 179.
12. *TYB*, p 2; *DEKV*, p283.
13. A full record of the offers made, and the replies they received, is to be found in Appendix of *Rudyard Kipling* by Lord Birkenhead, pp 377-85.
14. Birkenhead, *op. cit.*, p 205 (Caroline Kipling's Diaries).
15. *TYB*, p 141; *DEKV*, p 390.
16. *TYB*, pp 148-55; *DEKV* pp 315-18. For examples of poems that treat themes individually see "Gehazi", "The Pro-Consuls", "The Dead King".

17. *TYB*, p 149; *DEKV*, p 315.
18. *TYB*, p 88; *DEKV*, p 107.
19. *TYB*, p 152; *DEKV*, p 317.
20. *TYB*, p 75; *DEKV*, p 382.
21. *TYB*, p 152; *DEKV*, p 317.
22. *TYB*, pp 9, 13, 128; *DEKV*, pp 232, 320, 367.
23. "Domestic anarchy" is a phrase ascribed to Halévy by A. E. Harighurst and quoted by him in *Twentieth Century Britain*, 2nd edn, 1962, p. 108. Harighurst indicates no source for the quotation.
24. *TYB*, p 150; *DEKV*, p 315.
25. A full account of the reforms that he believed were necessary in the Army, and the policy he advocated in his conscription campaign, can be found in *Lord Roberts*, by David James.
26. The kind of abuse to which both men were subject can be seen in this extract from *John Bull*, 20 February 1909: "With all the sordid selfishness of the professional soldier, you are anxious that our generals shall cut a finer figure, enjoy the glory of larger retinues, prance about on parade-grounds in the presence of bloated battalions. Not satisfied with your garish uniforms and nodding plumes, medals, stars and tinkling titles, all the fripperies of a fop and all the ribands of a prize bullock, you must needs seek to harness free Britons to the wheels of your triumphal car . . ."
27. *TYB*, p 27, "The Outlaws"; *DEKV*, p 322.
28. "The Islanders", *DEKV*, p 303.
29. In a speech at Manchester on 22 October; the text is in James, *op. cit.*, p 457.
30. To Duckworth Ford, an American friend serving in the Philippines, quoted from the Kipling Papers by Carrington in *Rudyard Kipling*, 3rd edn, p 476.
31. From "England and the English" (April 1920), collected in *A Book of Words*.
32. This is from an epigraph he appended to a talk he gave to the boys of Winchester School. See "War and the Schools" (December 1915) in *A Book of Words*: more is quoted from it later in this article.
33. Quoted in Max Egremont's *Balfour* (1980), p 201.
34. *TYB*, p 150; *DEKV*, p 315.
35. *Rudyard Kipling to Rider Haggard*, ed M. Cohen, p 101.
36. *TYB*, p 76; *DEKV*, p 383.
37. *TYB*, p 21; *DEKV*, p 329.
38. Dorothy Poynton, see *Kipling Journal*, July 1942, pp 9-11.
39. See Note 32: *A Book of Words*, p 122.
40. *TYB*, p 28; *DEKV*, p 322.
41. November 1921, when he was awarded a doctorate at Strasbourg University, see *A Book of Words* pp 215-16.
42. Silkin, *Out of Battle*, p 60.
43. G. N. Barnes, November 1918, quoted in John Terraine, *Impacts of War*, p 267.

44. Accounts of the development and organisation of propaganda techniques are to be found in H. D. Lasswell's *Propaganda Techniques in World War I* and C. Hastie's *Keep the Home Fires Burning*.
45. See for example "A Song at Cock-Crow", "A Song in Storm", "The Song of the Lathes", "Justice", "The Verdicts", "The Choice".
46. *TYB*, p 81; *DEKV*, p 310.                      47. *TYB*, p 33; *DEKV*, p 327.
48. *TYB*, p 65; *DEKV*, p 300.
49. Haggard to Kipling, 23 May 1918, quoted in Cohen (see Note 35), p 102.
50. *TYB*, pp 52, 61, 58; *DEKV*, pp 217, 216, 368.
51. See *Collected Poems*, ed Day Lewis, p 58.
52. *TYB*, p 61; *DEKV*, p 216.                      53. *TYB*, pp 58, 85; *DEKV*, pp 369, 98.
54. *TYB*, p 135; *DEKV*, p 386.
55. See for example J. H. Johnston's *English Poetry of the First World War*; A. Lane in his book *An Adequate Response* also considers this problem of perspective.
56. *TYB*, p 135; *DEKV*, p 386.                      57. *Ibid*
58. *TYB*, pp 136, 140; *DEKV*, pp 387, 389.      59. *TYB*, pp 137, 140; *DEKV*, pp 387, 389.
60. *TYB*, pp 138, 145; *DEKV*, pp 38, 391.      61. *TYB*, pp 141-42; *DEKV*, p 390.
62. *TYB*, pp 139, 135; *DEKV*, pp 389, 387.      63. *TYB*, p 136; *DEKV*, p 387.
64. *TYB*, pp 144, 145; *DEKV*, p 391.              65. *TYB*, p 146; *DEKV*, p 392.
66. See I. M. Parsons, *Men Who March Away*, p 189.
67. *TYB*, pp 85-86; *DEKV*, p 98.

## POINTS FROM READERS' LETTERS

### BROUGHT UP BY WOLVES [2]

*From Miss J. M. Vann, 5 Tilgate Drive, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex TN39 3UH*

Miss Vann, on reading the letter by Mrs P. J. M. Goffe at page 37 in our issue of December 1987, was reminded of an old newspaper cutting in her possession, dealing with similar phenomena. She kindly sent it to us, and we reproduce the text below, with grateful acknowledgment to the *Observer*. Miss Vann wonders whether Kipling's 'source material' for Mowgli has been researched.

FIVE LETTERS PRINTED IN THE *OBSERVER*

SUNDAY 19 NOVEMBER 1916

Sir,—The reference in Lady Login's interesting Recollections of India to a wolf-child seen by her in Oudh in the 'fifties has naturally aroused much interest. Instances of these wolf-children are not so rare as English readers imagine.

My father, the late Colonel H. Brabazon Urmston, when Commissioner of the Rawal Pindi Division (1869-1874), saw one who had been recently captured. He proved quite irreclaimable, and died after a few weeks' captivity.

In the report of the C.M.S. Secundra Orphanage for 1872, written by Mrs. Erhardt, appears the following:-

Among the newcomers during the past year was that unfortunate boy who had been burned out of a wolf's den and who caused so much interest and inquiry. He came to us from Mynpoorie. He had been found in a wolf's den. A fire had been lighted to drive or compel the young wolves to come out, and with them came out this little boy. He was about eight years old and deaf and dumb. He much enjoyed raw meat and did not walk unless led. He was a very nice-looking boy and fair.

The poor boy was never happy among us. Whether he was homesick after his former quarters and friends, or whether he had some internal complaint we never could find out. Neither did he improve in any way. He kept on living in dark places, uttered now and then a half-smothered whine, tore up regularly his clothes and his blanket, till he fell ill in July.

It seems to me that wolves must rather like having human children in their dens, for this is the second boy we have received from them. This one, who came on a Wednesday, we called 'Wednesday'. The previous comer, called 'Saturday', because he came on a Saturday, has been here some years. When 'Wednesday' fell ill, 'Saturday' was his friend to the last. Whenever he saw anyone coming towards their room he shook his hand and pointed to the poor sick comrade. The sick boy refused all nourishment from the very beginning, and though we tried very hard to do our best for him, he died. Sunichar (Saturday), the old wolf-boy, is perhaps slightly improving. He imitates more what he sees others do, and if anyone joins him in playing at ball or any other kind of game he makes the most unearthly



noises out of sheer joy of heart. Whether he will ever learn to speak I greatly doubt, as he does not seem to have any memory for anything except eating.

That similar cases occurred in England when wolves existed in this country I have little doubt. With them originated the name "were-wolf" so often interwoven in nursery tales; cf., too, "loup garou" (wolf goblin) in France, where wolves are also said to have been known in the Middle Ages to carry off and suckle children. The Romulus and Remus tradition is not necessarily a fairy tale, as your correspondent "D." agrees. I came across it when living in Germany in 1879.

Fintonagh, Maidstone, Nov. 14, 1916.

Yours &c,  
Arthur B. Urmston.

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Sir,—When in India in 1892 I saw what might have been the original of Mowgli. He was 34 years old, deaf and dumb. I found him in an asylum in Bengal. He had, no doubt, been put outside the parental doorstep shortly after birth, and when about eight years old had been caught by the Commissioner of the district at the mouth of a wolf's lair. I was told that the shock of being caught by the wolf—or the Commissioner—had rendered him deaf and dumb. He was a *crétin* to look at, and preferred an ambling, shambling gait to walking on his hind legs. Even the gift of a two-anna piece only seemed to afford him something to chew.

I was told that there had been a better specimen a year or two before in Madras, but that somehow he had evaded capture.

Nov. 12, 1916.

Yours faithfully,  
Lt.-Col.

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Sir,—I enclose a photograph of a genuine wolf-child who grew up to manhood. He was carried off by wolves in his infancy and was reared amongst them. He was captured one day in the district of Agra while wandering in some fields on all fours, and was named "Sanichar", the Hindustani word for Saturday—i.e., the day on which he was caught. He was taken to an orphanage at Sikandra, near Agra, and as far as I can recollect—for this incident occurred many years ago—everything possible was done to civilise him, but he never learned to speak. The semi-brutal look of "Sanichar" will be noticed, as well as the abnormal size of his hands and the cramped chest and other peculiarities due to his having spent so much of his life on all fours.

Stamford Hill, N., Nov. 13, 1916.

Yours faithfully,  
J. A. Hypher.

[The photograph which our correspondent encloses is hardly suitable for reproduction. It shows the figure—a man apparently of between 20 and 30—in a crouching attitude. The frame is emaciated, and the face is wild and bears a look of defective intelligence.—*Ed. Observer.*]

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Sir,—May I be allowed to add my testimony on the subject of "wolf-children"? When in Lucknow in the year 1882 I saw one of these children which had then attained the age of twenty years. It spoke no articulate language, was covered with hair, walked in a shambling and ungainly manner—in fact, had scarcely attained the upright position. The arms of the "wolf-man", as he was known locally, were unusually long. I have no information as to the age eventually attained by the wolf-man, but he appeared particularly healthy and vigorous at the time of which I write.

Nov. 15, 1916.

Yours faithfully,  
M.

Sir,—A few years ago a retired Army Chaplain kindly sent me to see a photograph of a wolf-child, together with a little mission-printed book giving an account of all that was known of the case. The photograph showed a young man, rather good-looking, with nothing whatever about him to suggest that he had ever lived with the wolves. I think he was about 25 when it was taken. He was found among wolves with callosities on elbows and knees, but was quite human in disposition, and, like Mowgli, unafraid of "The Red Flower", as he greatly enjoyed smoking a good cigar. Unfortunately he was deaf, and consequently dumb, and at that time there was no means of teaching him to speak, so that what he might have told was lost to our knowledge.

If this should meet the eye of the chaplain he would be able to give fuller details than I can supply, writing from memory after only having the photo and booklet for a few days.

75 Charlwood-street, S. W., Nov. 12, 1916.

Yours faithfully,  
M. H. James

[The "evidence" supplied by these five letters, entertaining though they are to read, is in scientific terms of limited value, and depends to a perhaps unavoidable extent on second-hand inference. What they make clear is that the notion of children brought up by wolves was a sufficiently familiar one in late 19th century India, one that could plausibly be employed by an imaginative writer. It would be interesting to go beyond this, and to establish whether more has ever been learnt about the detailed actualities of survival of a child among wolves—or any other animals which might credibly adopt a human infant. Such information, if it exists, need not be expected to bear closely on the Mowgli story, which is literary myth of a very high order indeed and does not demand authentication.—*Ed.*]

## 'MY LUCKY' [2]

*From Mr J. H. McGivering, 32 Cheltenham Place, Brighton, Sussex BN14AB*

Mr McGivering writes about the query concerning the origin of the phrase, to 'cut one's lucky', in Mr G. L. Wallace's letter at page 34 of our issue of December 1987.

Mr McGivering cites Eric Partridge's *Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* which defines the term as "to decamp", attributing it to 'low London' dialect from about 1830, but which does not really explain it. He has also consulted Farmer & Henley's *Dictionary of Slang* without deriving much more except an association of the phrase with the idea of 'cut and run'—i.e. to cut a cable and make sail to escape. A fuller explanation, if possible, is awaited.

## LORNE LODGE

*From Mr B. W. Henderson, Brookfield, Ashchurch, Tewkesbury, Glos GL20 8JY*

Mr Henderson is a cousin of Miss I. M. Oldbury, owner of Lorne Lodge, 4 Campbell Road, Southsea, Hampshire, where Kipling spent five years as a child while his parents were in India. He tells us that Miss Oldbury, who is elderly, has wondered if the house, with its Kipling connections, might be of interest of the Kipling Society if it came on the market in the future.

## THE OPIE COLLECTION

*From Mr. H. Brunner, Joint Honorary Organiser, The Friends of the Bodleian Opie Appeal, 26 Norham Road, Oxford OX2 6SF*

Mr Brunner, writing on behalf of the Appeal for the Opie Collection of Children's Literature (of which the Patron is the Prince of Wales), warmly thanks the Kipling Society for a recent contribution to the Appeal. That contribution was given in memory of our former Editor, the late Roger Lancelyn Green, whose wish it was, as an authority on children's literature, to be associated in that way with a deserving Appeal that was very close to his heart.

## A VIEW OF BRITAIN

*From the British Broadcasting Corporation, London W14 0AX*

Liz Hartford, of B.B.C. Television (who can be reached at Room 2041, Kensington House, Richmond Way, London W14 0AX), has written to us, as no doubt to a large number of other periodicals, regarding a proposed television series with the provisional title, "I like Britain". She is researching the series with a view to producing it

in the autumn of 1988, and meanwhile with a presenter/reporter will be filming and interviewing people who were born outside Britain but have since made their homes here. She would like to get in touch with anyone who has views to express on the reasons for coming to this country, and on the British way of life as perceived by an outsider now living here permanently.

## MONSOON

*From Mr M. Jefferson, 21 Hollow Lane, Hayling Island, Hampshire PO11 9AA*

Mr Jefferson writes in praise of a particularly evocative passage in "The Return of Imray" (*Life's Handicap*). "Was there ever a more masterly meteorological observation? . . . the delightfully economic passage of prose that describes with precision and feeling the onset of the monsoon . . . one is transported to the verandah of an Indian bungalow . . . in less than eighty words."

The heat of the summer had broken up and turned to the warm damp of the rains. There was no motion in the heated air, but the rain fell like ramrods on the earth, and flung up a blue mist when it splashed back. The bamboos, and the custard-apples, the poinsettias, and the mango-trees in the garden stood still while the warm water lashed through them, and the frogs began to sing among the aloe hedges . . .

[This letter suggested the theme for the Editorial in the present issue.—Ed.]

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## MARGHANITA LASKI

We record with regret the recent death, at the age of seventy-two, of Marghanita Laski (Mrs J. E. Howard). She had been a novelist, critic and journalist, active in public and literary life. Of particular relevance to the Kipling Society—of which she was a member—was her considerable output on Kipling, including three popular radio series, "Kipling's English History", "Kipling's India" and "Round the World with Rudyard Kipling". Her recent book, *From Palm to Pine: Rudyard Kipling Abroad and At Home*, was reviewed by Philip Mason in our issue of September 1987.

## EVENTS AT BATEMAN'S

Our members may care to note certain events which are scheduled to take place at Bateman's in mid-1988, namely:

**24 & 25 June** *She Stoops to Conquer* by Oliver Goldsmith: two performances by the Oast Theatre, Tonbridge, sponsored by Strutt & Parker, Lewes. Tickets: £3.50 (or £4 at the gate).

**8 July** Music by the Band of the Gurkhas; and other entertainment—details to be finalised.

**16 July** A Vocal and Instrumental Concert, by the Farrant Singers of Salisbury and the Sweetapples Consort, sponsored by Peter Scoones Limited, Hawkhurst. Tickets: £3.50 (or £4 at the gate).

Tickets are obtainable from The Administrator, Bateman's, Burwash, Etchingham, East Sussex TN19 7DS—telephone (0435) 882302; or from The National Trust, Kent & East Sussex Regional Office, Scotney Castle, Lamberhurst, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 8JN—telephone (0892) 890651.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

### NEW MEMBERS

We welcome to the Society the following new or rejoined members:

Mr R. H. Belderson (*Surrey*); Major S. D. Clarke (*Yorkshire*); Mrs H. C. Denman (*Ottawa, Canada*); Mr W. L. Fugate (*Virginia, U.S.A.*); Mr S. P. Ginder (*Maryland, U.S.A.*); Mr Charles Harris, Jr (*New Hampshire, U.S.A.*); Dr T. D. Harris (*California, U.S.A.*); Mr B. D. Henderson (*Cornwall*); Dr F. M. Howard (*Surrey*); Mr W. Monteiro (*New York, U.S.A.*); Mr & Mrs J. C. Penson (*Texas, U.S.A.*); Mrs I. F. Pollock (*London*); Mr P. V. S. Prasad (*Andhra Pradesh, India*); The Royal Library (*Copenhagen, Denmark*); Mr N. M. Whistler (*Cambridge*); Mr J. D. Whitehouse (*Texas, U.S.A.*).

# A NOTE ON THE KIPLING SOCIETY

*Head Office at 18 Northumberland Avenue, London WC2N 5BJ*

This literary and historical society is for anyone interested in Rudyard Kipling's prose and verse, life and times. His published writings, in 35 volumes, are by any standard remarkable. His life (1865-1936) was very eventful. The period through which he lived and about which he wrote with such vigour was one of huge and dramatic change.

As a non-profit-making cultural organisation run on an essentially unpaid footing to provide a service, the Society has the status of a Registered Charity in Britain. Its management and principal activities are in England, but it has branches or secretariat arrangements in Australia, Canada and the U.S.A. About a third of its members, including scores of universities, colleges and libraries, are in North America.

Founded in 1927, the Society has attracted many notable literary and academic figures, including of course the leading authorities in the field of Kipling studies; but it also caters for an unspecialised public of general readers, from whom its wider membership is drawn. Its managing focus is the Secretary in London, Norman Entract. He and other office-holders arrange various activities, including regular talks and discussions in London, and an Annual Luncheon; answer enquiries from correspondents; and maintain a specialised Library for reference and research.

The quarterly *Kipling Journal* is sent free to all members. On various pages in each issue, information on the Society's functions is provided. More can be obtained from Norman Entract or branch Secretaries. Applications for membership are most welcome: the Society and *Journal* depend heavily on such support.

<b>MINIMUM ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES</b>	<i>Britain</i>	<i>Overseas</i>
Individual Member	£12	£14
Junior Member ( <i>up to age 24</i> )	£5	£5
Corporate Member	£20	£20

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## LITERARY AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE *KIPLING JOURNAL*

The *Kipling Journal* is essentially the Kipling Society's publication, and though the Editor selects its contents with an eye to merit, originality and an interesting range of topics, he will always allot some space to the Society's business, including at least a few of the addresses delivered at the Society's meetings, if they are short enough.

Independent literary contributions, however, are very welcome. If we cannot print them at once we may be able to place them in a later issue. Like other literary societies, we do not pay for articles: authors gain the satisfaction of publication in a periodical of authority and repute, recognised as the only one in the world specialising in this subject.

We have at present much more publishable material than we can print, and have to defer or decline some items of interest. However this is healthy. We would like *more*, to improve our variety and quality. *It should invariably be sent to the Editor.*

*Articles* submitted should be fairly brief. Our average page carries only 400 words of text. A 4000-word article, however good, may be hard to place. We impose no limit, but must remind contributors of a factor which inevitably influences selection.

*Letters to the Editor* are welcomed: unless told otherwise, we reserve the normal right to shorten. *Book Reviews*, usually invited, may be volunteered: a range of 200 to 800 words is suggested. We will gratefully accept, even if we cannot quickly use, relevant and reproducible *illustrations, news cuttings, book excerpts, catalogue data* and other *miscellanea* which might enhance the *Journal's* interest. Kipling touched the literary and practical world at so many points that our terms of reference are broad.

*Advertisements.* We welcome *regularly placed* advertisements which are compatible with the style of the *Journal*: for current rates, please enquire of the Editor.

The Editor's address is *Weavers, Danes Hill, Woking, Surrey GU22 7HQ.*

