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There is much to interest members of the Kipling Society, and there are not infrequently items directly related to Kipling's writings. We have recently published an article by George Webb on *The Irish Guards in the Great War*; another by Peter Lewis on *The War in the Mountains*, Kipling's evocative impression of the Italian front in 1917; and two reviews of new collections of Kipling. We have further items of this sort in mind.

The annual subscription is currently £49.80 — but for members of the Kipling Society there is a special rate, £44. Enquiries and remittances to the *AQ & DJ*, 1 West Street, Tavistock PL19 8DS, Devon, England.

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## SECRETARY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

### SOME FORTHCOMING EVENTS

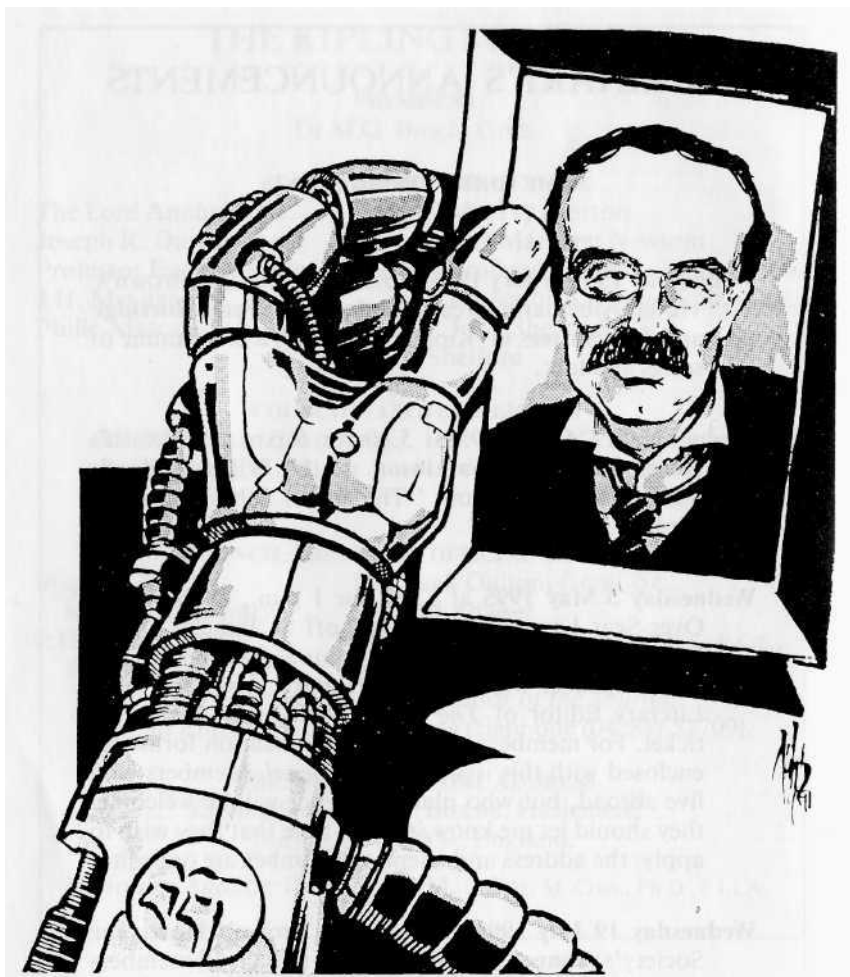
**Wednesday 15 February 1995** at 5.30 for 6 p.m., at Brown's Hotel (Albemarle Street, London W1), **Peter Horridge** and **Ann Surtees** in '*Kipling a capella*' a programme of songs and talk.

**Wednesday 19 April 1995** at 5.30 for 6 p.m., at Brown's Hotel, **Raymond Watkinson** of the William Morris Society, speaking about "The Art of John Lockwood Kipling".

**Wednesday 3 May 1995** at 12.30 for 1 p.m., at the Royal Over-Seas League (Park Place, off St James's Street, London SW1), the Society's Annual Luncheon. The Guest Speaker will be **Philip Howard**, for many years Literary Editor of *The Times*. Admission will be by ticket. For members in the U.K., application forms are enclosed with this issue of the *Journal*. Members who live abroad, but who plan to attend, will be welcome: they should let me know in good time that they wish to apply: the address and telephone number are opposite.

**Wednesday 19 July 1995** at 4 p.m., at Brown's Hotel, the Society's **Annual General Meeting** (which all members are entitled to attend), followed by **tea** (booking forms will be sent to members in the U.K.), followed at 5.30 for 6 p.m. by a **discussion meeting** (speaker and subject to be announced).

**Wednesday 13 September 1995** at 5.30 for 6 p.m., at Brown's Hotel (speaker and subject to be announced).



### "THE KIPLING LEGACY"

With acknowledgment to the artist, Larry Dickison, and to *Niekas: Science Fiction and Fantasy*, a long-established American periodical, of which the Feature Editor, Fred Lerner, is a member of the Kipling Society. This drawing was the cover design for *Niekas's* recent issue No 44 (1994), which devoted several pages to an appreciation of Kipling. [See Editorial, page 9.]

# THE KIPLING JOURNAL

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"WORKING-TOOLS"

Another drawing from *Niekas* – see page 6 – with acknowledgments to the artist, Jane T. Sibley. In the last chapter of *Something of Myself*, Kipling wrote: "Mercifully, the mere act of writing was, and always has been, a physical pleasure to me." Mercifully, he did not need to learn to use a WP – though he might have found it handy for what he called, in that chapter, the Higher Editing.

## EDITORIAL

### WEST IS EAST

"Perfection is only of God," as the carpet-sellers of Isfahan used to protest – incontrovertibly enough – if a purchaser was so injudicious as to point out a trifling flaw in a design. The same plea by magazine-editors, when confronted with *errata* in their product, may be less acceptable.

Many of our readers spotted that the standard note on the last page of our September 1994 issue appeared twice, while the corresponding note on the last-but-one page was omitted; but in this regard I can shift the blame to our excellent printers. Where I must take responsibility is for inexplicably remarking, on page 13 of the same issue, that Rottingdean was west of Brighton. The nicest reproach came from Richard O'Hagan, a denizen of Sussex and former Chairman of the Society's Council, who wrote:

Oh, East is East, and West is West,  
And maybe the twain can meet;  
But if Rottingdean's west of Brighton,  
Why then – my hat I'll eat!

### SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY

One of Kipling's cardinal qualities as a writer was his realism: a realism that hardly needs mentioning, so relentlessly self-evident is it, in different ways, in stories as various as "Thrown Away" [*Plain Tales from the Hills*], "The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot" [*Many Inventions*] and "The Devil and the Deep Sea" [*The Day's Work*].

However, that attribute of realism, hallmark as it was of an exceptionally observant journalist with a particular talent for conveying evocative detail, was balanced by a highly developed capacity for fantasy; and the interplay of these two disparate yet not contradictory characteristics contributes to Kipling's singular impact as a writer.

All fiction is in a sense fantasy: but it is in the higher imaginative reaches of fantasy that Kipling excelled — in *The Jungle Books* and

*Just So Stories* and *Puck of Pook's Hill*; in " 'They' " and " 'Wireless' " [*Traffics and Discoveries*]; in ".007" and "A Walking Delegate" [*The Day's Work*]; and in other stories and verses too numerous to mention.

Since a conspicuous element in the literature of fantasy is the literature of science fiction – indeed the definitions of the two categories overlap – it ought not to occasion much surprise that the American journal *Niekas: Science Fiction and Fantasy* has devoted fifteen pages in its recent issue 44 (1994) to several short articles in appreciation of Kipling. [I mentioned this at page 62 in September 1994; the issue of *Niekas* is available for reference in our Library.]

What did surprise me, however, was the warmth of the tribute paid by Anne Braude to Kipling, as "the true father . . . of science fiction, [and] the first writer to create stories in which the main interest was the protagonist's relationship with his work – task-oriented or problem-solving fiction, the matrix of modern SF". She went on to quote approvingly from an essay on Kipling by C.S. Lewis (included in *They Asked for a Paper* [Geoffrey Bles, 1962]) –

Kipling is first and foremost the poet of work . . . With a few exceptions imaginative literature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had quietly omitted, or at least thrust into the background, the sort of thing which in fact occupies most of the waking hours of most men . . . It was Kipling who reclaimed for literature this enormous territory . . .

As Fred Lerner, the Feature Editor responsible for the *Niekas* section on Kipling, wrote:

No writer, living or dead, has had as great an impact on modern science fiction as Rudyard Kipling. We think of Jules Verne and H.G. Wells as founders of the genre; our historians trace its origins to Mary Shelley and Edgar Allan Poe; some even profess to see primitive science fiction in the Book of Ezekiel and the Epic of Gilgamesh. But how many of us have actually read these? Where can we see their influence on today's science fiction? If Verne and Wells and Shelley and Poe disappeared tomorrow from the shelves of libraries and bookstores, would the future of science fiction really be any poorer for it?

But which of Kipling's stories can truly be called science fiction? "With the Night Mail" [*Actions and Reactions*] and "As Easy as A.B.C." [4 *Diversity of Creatures*] come instantly to mind as depicting future forms of transport and their imagined implications for human

society. The former is perhaps pivotal, being arguably the first story to contain, in Lerner's words,

material extraneous to the plot but intended to help the reader understand the workings of the world of 2000 . . . Modern science fiction has sublimated this technique into a set of narrative protocols that . . . defines the genre . . .

"A Matter of Fact" [*Many Inventions*] is science fiction; so perhaps are "The Finest Story in the World" [*Many Inventions*], "The Mark of the Beast" [*Life's Handicap*] and "The Eye of Allah" [*Debits and Credits*] – though for these and several others such as "The Ship that Found Herself" [*The Day's Work*] the dividing-line between science fiction and fantasy is a hazy one.

Such haziness stems not from sloppy thinking but from the breadth and looseness of the literary field in question. The *Daily Telegraph* magazine section of 22 October 1994 published a feature on the recent inauguration of a full-time postgraduate course of study for an M.A. at Liverpool University, in 'science fiction studies' – the first at a British university. The director of the course was quoted as acknowledging general misunderstanding of the scope of science fiction, and insisting that it was *not* "all about macho supermen slugging it out in galactic wars," but was "an incredibly varied and broad literature", which tended to be "unusually speculative", by way of "thinking about going beyond the limits of scientific knowledge".

In that last regard, Kipling did indeed write a number of powerfully effective stories, including "Wireless", mentioned above, and "Unprofessional" [*Limits and Renewals*]. The blurred distinction between the realms of science fiction and pure fantasy is less important than the fact, proclaimed in *Niekas*, that the quality and range of Kipling's narratives, and the balance that at his best he sustained between the realistic and fantastical, serve as an inspiration to writers who were unborn when he died.

## 'A SAHIBS' WAR'

### REFLECTIONS ON KIPLING'S "COMPELLINGLY UNPLEASANT STORY"

by CICELY PALSER HAVELY

[ Mrs Havely was educated at Colston's Girls' School in Bristol, and at Somerville College, Oxford. She joined the Open University within months of its founding, and is now Head of the Literature Department. She has published widely on authors from Shakespeare to Victorian novelists; but finds herself "increasingly drawn towards the un-English varieties of English Literature".

She addressed us at our meeting last September at Brown's Hotel, taking as her subject "A Sahibs' War" [first published in December 1901 by the *Windsor Magazine* and *Collier's Weekly*; collected in 1904 in *Traffics and Discoveries*]. The text that follows is closely derived from her lecture on that occasion: it was a charmingly delivered and much appreciated presentation, and it stimulated a vigorous – if inconclusive – debate.

The story in question is a memorably grim and bitter one. By use of a strangely effective narrative device it is told in the words of a Sikh, Umr Singh, who recounts it in South Africa to a chance-met Briton – Kipling himself, as it were – who, it is made clear, knows the Punjab and speaks the vernacular. It is that interlocutor who ostensibly translates the story, with all its nuances and implications, and all its passion, into English.

Umr Singh, a senior and respected native officer in an Indian cavalry regiment, is bound by ties of close personal loyalty and mutual esteem to one of his British officers, Captain Corbyn or 'Kurban Sahib', whom he has known since Corbyn was a child. On the outbreak of the Boer War, the two wangle permission to visit South Africa – that is, as individuals with no defined role, not as authorised combatants. (A main point of the story is that the Indian Army was precluded from fighting in that conflict between 'Sahibs'.)

Arrived in South Africa, and joined fortuitously but usefully by a Muslim, Sikandar Khan, they contrive, with difficulty, to reach the fringes of some action. However, by a notable act of Boer treachery, Kurban Sahib gets shot, and the rest of the story is an account of Umr Singh's and Sikandar Khan's grief, and their thoughts of revenge — though the revenge they initially plan is thwarted by the appearance of Kurban Sahib's ghost, which commands them, in a "Sahibs' war", not to repay atrocity with atrocity.

Mrs Havely's talk in September was followed by considerable argument, on the part of several members of the audience, about the extent to which the ban on the Indian Army's participation in the Boer War was a reality. The same topic arose again – with equal spirit and friendly disagreement – at our November meeting. I shall hope to receive letters expressive of some of these strongly-held views, for publication in our next issue; and would only ask that they be at least loosely linked to the accuracy or otherwise of what Kipling said, or allowed to be inferred, in "A Sahibs' War". – *Ed.*

There is, in the Kipling Papers at the University of Sussex, a copy of a letter to Mrs Edmonia Hill, in which Kipling writes that

Most of the Sahibs' War . . . was taken down from the mouth of a native . . . officer up country during the war . . .<sup>1</sup>

This reiterates what the story itself enacts: it pretends not to be written by Kipling at all, and simultaneously insists on the tale's authenticity. Of course, even if Kipling had recorded every word on a tape-recorder, the story could hardly be literally 'true', because it is a ghost-story. What home-truths it may contain do not depend on what can or cannot be ascertained.

Does Kipling stand behind this compellingly unpleasant story, or aside from it? What indeed *does* he say, or let his narrator say? The letter's insistence that the story was "taken down", rather than invented, gains in significance when read alongside a curious episode which Charles Carrington reports. In 1901 an item appeared in a Swiss newspaper, alleging that Kipling had taken part in the murder of a civilian at the farmhouse at Karee Siding, during his visit to the front a year before, and then written it up with unseemly relish. Kipling retorted that the reporter was seeing the "reflection of his own face as he spied at our back-windows".<sup>2</sup>

This provides a clue to some of the complexities of "A Sahibs' War", which was written in December of the same year. The story shares the alleged relish for murder: parts of it are indeed unflinchingly sadistic insofar as they are an account of pain which gives pleasure to those inflicting it – and those reading about it. Only the ghost of Kurban Sahib (the ghost of an ideal) prevents Umr Singh from hanging the idiot boy in front of his mother. He positively gloats over details of the ceremony:

Then Sikandar Khan bore out the lamp, saying that he was a butler and would light the table, and I looked for a branch that would bear fruit. . .

The story pretends that it is a translation of Umr Singh's tale by a Sahib, "Born and bred in Hind" and nursed by "a Surtee woman from the Bombay side": rather like Kipling himself – though his *ayah* was a Goan Catholic. Umr Singh is a Sikh soldier who has been unofficially serving with an Australian unit. Until the very end, Kipling contains the story within the limits of his 'voice'; and throughout, various devices (such as the phonetic rendering of the few English words we are supposed to imagine Umr Singh using in his original narrative) remind us of this constant act of translation.

Kipling thus surreptitiously includes within the story a substitute for himself, a translator whose function is to reveal to those concerned what they could not otherwise understand.

The device might be compared with the double filter which Conrad uses to preface Marlowe's story in "Heart of Darkness" (1902) – written within a year of "A Sahibs' War". This story too looks into that darkness which innocent readers might once have located in India as much as Africa, but which "Heart of Darkness" and "A Sahibs' War" (and indeed less highly regarded literature such as Rider Haggard's "Black Heart and White Heart") reveal to be a reflection of their own murky hearts.

R.C.K. Ensor has commented that

if the Boers became united by the mistaken conviction that a British government wanted their blood, it was largely because they heard a British public calling for it . . .<sup>3</sup>

Kipling's story both responds to that call and presents a critique of it. At first glance it seems to confirm that in thought if not in deed its author was as brutal as the Swiss report suggests. But the bloodthirstiness it evokes is frustrated by the way the story ends not in triumph but in loss.

Rather than a mere glance, however, "A Sahibs' War" demands an unflinching confrontation of what the squeamish reader might prefer not to contemplate at all: the reflection of his or her 'own face'. But could Kipling have managed this without what is to most recent readers the distasteful device of hiding behind a member of another race?

In "Mary Postgate" [1915, collected in *A Diversity of Creatures*], a comparable story from a later war, Kipling also enacted for his readers the more brutal reactions of the war-bereaved; and it might seem that there he was less evasive, since Mary seems so very much 'one of us'. Yet she is a woman, "deadlier than the male" and host to passions as mysterious as any which possess the alien 'other'; and one should remember that Wynn treats her as much less than fully human.

When Prospero says of Caliban in *The Tempest*, "This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine," the word "thing" conveys his contempt for what he nevertheless owns. The narrative strategies of "A Sahibs' War" and of "Mary Postgate" allow Kipling both to own and to repudiate a "thing of darkness".

It would be wrong to emphasise the 'otherness' of Umr Singh without also considering the intimacy between him and Kurban Sahib:

"He cut his teeth on my sword-hilt, as the saying is . . . and when we were alone he called me Father, and I called him Son . . ."

This is one way of owning the darkness: Umr Singh asserts that because his father, a "Sikh of Sikhs", had "fought against the English at Sobraon and carried the mark to his death", he and Kurban Sahib are "knit as it were by a blood-tie". It is this knot which is tested in the contest for mastery which follows Kurban Sahib's death.

Although Umr Singh is Kurban Sahib's fellow-officer he speaks no English. A relationship portrayed as so intimate is therefore linguistically one-sided. Perhaps this reflects a social reality which in private the individual might challenge: it is, after all, only when they are alone that "he called me Father, and I called him Son" — an inversion of the more usual metaphor, which would have the imperial power Mother of her dependants.

But the Sikh's lack of English would have made him unable fully to understand his Sahib; while the Sahib could claim that he understood the Sikh, thus reflecting the more conventional imperial position. Father and son, or master and servant? The story is so packed with such contradictions and counter-contradictions that it is difficult to find a patch of steady ground.

One of the implications of Umr Singh's lack of English, however, is that what he is saying is unsayable in plain English — or unthinkable to a flag-waving patriot. Suggesting the unthinkable is another feature this story shares with "Heart of Darkness". Kipling was a past-master at revealing what might lie behind the words, or even the conscious thoughts, of all sorts and conditions of people.

He also contrived to be a fiery critic of the Empire's mismanagement, while simultaneously being perceived as the creator of its myths. In "The Captive" and "The Comprehension of Private Copper" (stories of the same war, in *Traffics and Discoveries*), the most pungent criticism of the official British position is allocated to an American gun-runner and an enemy soldier respectively. In "A Sahibs' War", Umr Singh is used not only to indict the way in which certain sections of the home front would have liked the war to be



fought; he also voices a powerful contempt for the way in which it was actually being conducted.

The modern reader is likely to wince at Umr Singh's blatant contempt for "these black Kaffirs", though of course such casual racism could hardly be deemed 'unsayable' at the time of writing. Yet race is an inadmissible element in a war which quite literally rendered the region's black settlers and indigenes of no account. As an Afrikaner would later write, there was

an unwritten law that this was a white man's quarrel, and that the native tribes were to be left alone.<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly, the British did not deploy their Indian troops, whose anti-guerilla tactics on the North-West Frontier might have given them a crucial advantage. Umr Singh's presence is unofficial, then, if not illegal; but it is a presence which (for the modern reader at least) draws attention to the absence of black Africans from the story — and the war.<sup>5</sup>

But it was the pitilessness, indeed the savagery, of the native Indian troops rather than their tactics, which the narrative suggests are wanted. The prospect of native troops attacking and even defeating a white enemy was another unthinkable thought which Umr Singh sets out for the reader. The Indian 'Mutiny' still cast a long shadow; and as recently as 1879 in the Zulu War the British had been defeated by Cetewayo at Isandhlwana; and in several parts of the Empire small wars were rumbling which were the harbingers of independence movements.

What the (literally) unholy alliance between Umr Singh and the Pathan, Sikandar Khan, suggests is the ruthlessness which might be turned on the white rulers, and the savage forces which would be unleashed if white rule were to be abandoned.

Yet at the same time the story says something even more disturbingly 'unthinkable': that if Umr Singh had his way the job might be completed more quickly and efficiently. It exposes the absurdity of fighting a war when one side is playing the game under self-imposed handicaps, while the other will practise any deceit to win.

Of course, as an account such as Deneys Reitz's *Commando: A Boer Journal of the Boer War* (1929) reveals, the Boers fought by their own codes; but the moral basis of their cause is completely invisible in "A Sahibs' War". All that the reader sees is that Boer settlers pretended to be non-combatants in order to ambush the British and allied troops who had taken them at their word. These duplicitous civilians, the contemporary reader would have recalled, were then

provisioned by the British; who thus gave an incalculable advantage to their enemy, because — as Reitz's account makes clear — the Boers were a raggle-taggle army, fighting off starvation as well as the enemy.

Such conduct might be seen as the white man's ethic over-extended until it becomes self-defeating; but Umr Singh reminds the reader that this ultra-high standard has not been universally applied. He compares the Boer settlers with

"such farmers as cut up the Madras troops at Hlinedatalone in Burma! Even such farmers as slew Cavagnari Sahib and the Guides at Kabul! We schooled *those* men, to be sure — fifteen, aye, twenty of a morning pushed off the verandah [hanged?] in front of the Bala Hissar ..."

But of course *those* farmers weren't white. By allocating his story to an Indian, Kipling reveals that race is as much an issue in this "Sahibs' war" as it is in any other separatist policy.

Because "A Sahibs' War" renders its Boer civilian characters as practically sub-human (the woman has "the eyes of a swine and the jowl of a swine", and her son is a syphilitic idiot), it offers no scope for a point which "The Captive" makes very pungently: that the Boer and British officers are brothers under their skin.

But it does make a wider point, more obliquely, by suggesting that Umr Singh, a Punjabi Sikh, can sink even larger differences with the Pathan Muslim, Sikandar Khan, in a common cause. That cause, of course, was the British Empire; so maybe here the implication is that only under British rule could the warring Sahibs sink their differences; but if so, the suggestion is diffused, because there is so little sense of any worthwhile British authority within the story.

The conflict, says Umr Singh, is "a war of fools armed with the weapons of magicians"; and the remote "new Sahibs" who have come "from God knows where" to direct it are, according to Kurban Sahib, "fathers of owls — all — all — all!" The traditional hierarchies of imperial government are in a state of upheaval, and the alliance between the Sikh and the Muslim is not the only difference to be submerged.

We have noted that Kurban Sahib calls Umr Singh "Father". On the ship from Bombay bound for South Africa, the Sikh takes on the role of an absconding servant, Wajib Ali —

"I say, Sahib, that I, a Sikh of the Khalsa, an unshorn man, prepared the razors ..."

but he has a cabin as good as his master's own. After reaching South

Africa, because they are officially excluded, the two are reduced to menial roles —

"Yes, I oversaw the work of sweepers — a *jemadar* of *mehtars* (headman of a refuse-gang) was I, and Kurban Sahib little better, for five months . . ."

The war also brought together troops from the self-governing dominions (it was partly to demonstrate that Britain would defend her overseas nationals that the war was fought); but though officially there to serve, the story shows them effectively taking command. Both the Canadian and the Australian contingents are amongst the story's most vivid presences.

Their vivacity makes the distant authorities even more shadowy and ineffectual; and their air of lawlessness and disdain for red tape make a bond of empathy between them and Umr Singh —

" . . . most excellent horsemen, hot and angry, waging war *as war*, and drinking tea as a sandhill drinks water. Thieves? A little, Sahib. Sikandar Khan swore to me — and he comes of a horse-stealing clan for ten generations — he swore a Pathan was a babe beside a *Durro Mut* in regard to horse-lifting. The *Durro Muts* cannot walk on their feet at all. They are like hens on the high road. Therefore they must have horses . . ."

It is the *Durro Muts* (a rough translation of the Australian watchword, "No fee-ah") who have the sense to see that Kurban Sahib is wasted, so they 'steal' him,

'as they would have stolen anything else that they needed . . .  
Thus Kurban Sahib came to his own again . . ."

Yet Kurban Sahib himself remains almost as shadowy as the High Command. He is obscured rather than brought to life by Umr Singh's rich idiom; and he is referred to as a Sahib throughout, which merges him with the very source of authority which the story questions. Thus the heroic, youthful idealism he is associated with becomes as much part of the problem as its solution. It is partly Kurban Sahib's insouciance and gamesmanship which exposes him to the fatal shot from the treacherous Boer farmhouse. Umr Singh loves the young man like a son, obeys like a good servant, and yet does not understand him.

At the climax of the story, however, it is difficult to determine



"Be still. It is a Sahibs' war." Kurban Sahib, dying in Umr Singh's arms, orders Sikandar Khan not to fire back.  
From a drawing by Leonard Raven-Hill in the *Windsor Magazine* edition of "A Sahibs' War", December 1901.

whether misunderstanding or defiance governs Umr Singh. The ghost of the young man — the ghost of a shadowy ideal — prevents him and Sikandar Khan from hanging the Boer woman and her son.

But the ghost must insist three times that "It is a Sahibs' war"; and even then it is obeyed only according to the letter, not the spirit. It is not until "after third cockcrow" that the farmhouse is attacked, and the two Indians keep "the ropes in our hand" while it burns, and the ammunition hidden in the roof explodes around them and their prisoners and the four wounded Boers who had been hiding there —

"and the captives would have crawled aside on account of the heat that was withering the thorn-trees, and on account of wood and bricks flying at random. But I said, 'Abide! Abide! Ye be Sahibs, and this is a Sahibs' war, O Sahibs. There is no order that ye should depart from this war.' They did not understand my words. Yet they abode and they lived."

When relief arrives, Umr Singh gives over "to the justice of the Sahibs these Sahibs who have made me childless". He has been betrayed by a collusion between the white men. But a more brutal sense of justice has been partly satisfied, not by the aborted hangings, but in an ordeal by fire which is tantamount to torture. This is what the native might do, the story implies, if the authority which restrains it is half-hearted and muddled.

At the same time, the scene gives some grisly satisfaction to the reader calling for blood, by showing him (or her) the reflection of such atavistic emotions in an alien consciousness, which can express what the Sahibs themselves find unthinkable. A *jemadar* of sweepers will torture a Sahib's killers because that is another of the dirty jobs which a good native servant will perform for his master.

It might seem that "A Sahibs' War" endorses Umr Singh's 'methods': after all, he survives. But the story's final page provides yet more inversions. On his memorial, Kurban Sahib becomes

WALTER DECIES CORBYN  
Late Captain 141st Punjab Cavalry.

So effective has been the transforming power of Umr Singh's idiom that we hardly recognise him. The moment of change from shadowy evocation to letters carved in stone is a powerful jolt. A story which has depended on a pretence of *hearing* now demands that the reader's *eye* should register the capitals, the indentations and the varying scripts on the monument.

The stone records the *official* story, but it cannot replace the unofficial, unauthorised, indeed virtually *illegal* version that precedes it. The tombstone names the Boer minister and his son — one barely a presence at all in Umr Singh's narrative, the other a congenital idiot.

The official version may get the facts right, but it leaves out so much that the reader feels he or she is not being told the same story. This difference between the two versions makes almost literally concrete that crucial gap between the darkest instincts of war-faring and its civilised management — a gap which it was Kipling's object to express in this story.

Another gap or absence gives the story its closing note. The inscription on the monument concludes:

*Si monumentum requiris circumspice.*

Though Latin might be the *lingua franca* of the Sahib, its understatement appeals to Umr Singh, since

"the house is not there, nor the well. . . nor the little fruit-trees, nor the cattle. There is nothing at all, Sahib, except the two trees withered by the fire. The rest is like the desert here — or my hand — or my heart. Empty, Sahib — all empty!"

It is typical of Kipling that although the complexities of his art can reveal the inconsistencies of a public ideal and the emptiness at its core, he can nevertheless move his readers to grieve for things that he himself has shown to be impossible.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. It was Mrs Lisa Lewis who pointed this out to me. I am grateful to her — and for her invitation to address the Society on 14 September 1994. Many of the revisions in this paper are due to the invigorating discussion on that occasion. Any remaining misconceptions are of course only my own.
2. C.E. Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling: his Life and Work* (Macmillan, 1955). The quotation is from a Penguin reprint of 1986.
3. R.C.K. Ensor, *The Oxford History of England*, vol XIV (Oxford University Press, 1936), pp 250-251.
4. Deneys Reitz, *Commando* (Faber & Faber, 1929).

5. Mr Shamus Wade, of the Commonwealth Forces History Trust, drew the meeting's attention to the remarkable total of over 10,000 campaign awards to Indian soldiers and followers such as grooms and ambulance bearers during the South African War. The Trust also holds records of 275 African or part-African units which fought in the war. Although this would only represent a small proportion of the troops and personnel deployed, it does suggest a significant non-European presence. But in what capacity?

Mr R.J.W. Craig, also of the Society, points out that W.H. Hammond, the biographer of Field-Marshal Lord Roberts (who turned the tide in the Boer War) states categorically that "Sepoy regiments were not permitted" (*Bobs: Kipling's General*, London, 1972). This is certainly the text-book version. Mr Craig's research also discovered an image of Indian non-combatants quite different from Kipling's ruthless Sikh: a contemporary print which shows two turbaned figures under fire. One is sheltering a wounded white man, whilst the other, a picture of outrage, defies the bullets.

On the other hand, Mr Wade refers us to *Abraham Esau's War: A Black South African War in the Cape, 1899-1902* (Bill Nasson, C.U.P., 1991); to *Black People and the South African War* (Peter Warwick, C.U.P., 1983); and to *The Boer War Diary of Sol T. Plaatzje, an African at Mafeking* (ed. John L. Comaroff, Macmillan, 1973). So was the conflict not so exclusively a Sahibs' war after all?

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## COLD IRON'

by PHILIP MASON

[ Philip Mason, author of *Kipling: The Glass, the Shadow and the Fire* (Cape, 1975) and of other valuable books – both under his own name and using the pen-name 'Philip Woodruff' – is one of our Vice-Presidents, and is well known to readers of the *Kipling Journal*. He was Guest of Honour at our Annual Luncheon in 1988, and featured largely in our June issue of that year.

"Cold Iron", perhaps the most enigmatic of the 'Puck' stories, has long interested him, and was helpfully dealt with in his 1975 book. Here he takes his study of it somewhat further, in a perceptive and persuasive analysis of the complex implications of the story.

Some typographical distinctions on the part of Philip Mason are worth pointing out in advance. When he uses the unadorned words **Cold Iron**, they should be understood literally to mean iron objects such as a horseshoe, a sword, a "swop-hook or spade", or

whatever. (By the way, in the sense of wrought metal, and in the context of the initiation of Canadian engineers, the term may be found at pages 61-62 of our issue of June 1994, and again at page 46 in September.)

When the same words are enclosed in single inverted commas, '**Cold Iron**', they symbolise 'compulsion' – the idea which, as Philip Mason shows, runs through the whole story. By contrast, "**Cold Iron**" in double inverted commas signifies the title of the story in *Rewards and Fairies* — or likewise the title of the poem which immediately follows the story in that book, and which is also published separately in the Definitive Edition of Kipling's Verse. – *Ed.*]

I have asked if I might share with members of the Kipling Society some thoughts about "Cold Iron", the first story in *Rewards and Fairies*, and the one that states the theme for those that follow. In chapter VII of *Something of Myself*, Kipling said of this book, and of this story in particular,

I worked the material in three or four overlaid tints and textures, which might or might not reveal themselves according to the shifting light of sex, youth and experience.

He wanted people of all ages to read these stories, and to keep on finding something fresh – and that is what has happened to me.

My copy is inscribed with the date 1918, which means that I was twelve when I first read it, about the age when Kipling's two surviving children must have heard it told. At that age I did not stop to think about it, any more, I suppose, than they did. I enjoyed the background — the dew of early morning, the startled fox, the home-baked bread, old Hobden's "simple breakfast of cold roast pheasant".

I think – but I am not sure – that I took in enough of the meaning of 'Cold Iron' — the expression that recurs throughout the story — to understand that it stood for the business of growing up, the compulsions of life — in my case boarding school, Latin, Greek and maths. But it was by no means my favourite story, and I do not think I was aware that it introduced the theme of the other stories in that book, and might be regarded as a dominant theme – if not *the* dominant theme – in the whole of Kipling's work.

You remember the story; but I will remind you of the outline, though it loses a great deal when ruthlessly condensed.

Sir Huon, successor to King Oberon, and his Lady want to



influence "folk in housen", or "Flesh and Blood", as Puck sometimes calls mortal men. They think they might do this if they could obtain a human child, a "cradle-babe", and bring him up to their own way of thinking, "on the far side of Cold Iron" – that is, away from all human influence. Then they would return him to the world of men, and give him "a splendid fortune" — that is, riches and influence. But he must have been born "on the far side of Cold Iron", and been obtained without doing harm to any mortal.

Puck is able to oblige them; he finds a new-born baby whose mother, a slave-girl, had died in childbirth on Terrible Down, on the way to the slave-market. No one had wanted him; he had been left on the steps of a church.

Now of course Sir Huon and his Lady – like any human couple – wanted to bring the boy up *their* way, and they had to keep him from touching Cold Iron till they were ready to let him go. Puck thought that if the boy was to influence "folk in housen" he should go among them – though he must not touch Cold Iron. But he was overruled, and he grieved over the boy's lonely unhappiness as he pored over great black books of Magic, and played with "boy's Magic" – his own creative powers.

Puck had seen a Smith at work in a forge, on the night he had brought the boy home to Sir Huon and his Lady. The Smith had made *something* out of Cold Iron, and "tossed it from him a longish quoit-throw down the valley"; and some day someone would find that something, and it would determine his fate — because that Smith was Thor, the Smith of the Gods.

Of course it was the boy who eventually found it; and it was not a sword or a sceptre, but a slave-ring such as his mother had worn; and he snapped it home on his neck; and went to live with "folk in housen"; and had "bushels of children, as the saying is"; and no one ever heard of him again.

Now this is clearly a fable about growing up and accepting responsibility, and the losses that that entails. That is also the theme of Wordsworth's Immortality Ode, in which

Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing boy . . .

It is also a warning to over-possessive parents who cannot let go, and who bring up children in a sheltered world, with little contact with the hard world they are sooner or later likely to encounter. That was a



"HE CAN STILL COME BACK. COME BACK!"

"The Boy could have taken it off, yes. We waited to see if he would, but he put up his hand, and the snap locked home." From an illustration by Charles E. Brock, R.I., to "Cold Iron" in the standard Macmillan Pocket Edition of *Rewards and Fairies*: its implications are discussed in the accompanying article.

theme Kipling had incidentally touched on, rather superficially though very movingly and vividly, in the story "Thrown Away", in *Plain Tales from the Hills*.

Up to a point, then, I think the story is sufficiently clear. 'Cold Iron' stands for growing up and taking responsibility and living in the real world with other people. I think I saw this from the start, and as soon as I knew a little more of Kipling's life I realised that there was an autobiographical element in it. He had snapped home 'Cold Iron' on his own neck, and become "folk in housen", when he married. Carrie Balestier was a practical soul who counted the pennies and ordered him new clothes when he needed them. She liked to know where her husband was, and he could no longer sit in the bar listening to stonies all night.

I wrote at some length about the meaning of 'Cold Iron' in my book about Kipling, published in 1975 – more than half a century after my first reading – and I do not now disagree with what I then wrote; but I see a little more.

I saw then that the phrase that recurs right through the book,

"What else could I have done?"

was the key to the whole – the compulsion of a man's own integrity, his obedience to the law of his being. (Sir Thomas More would have been a suitable hero for one of these stories.) But I do not think I paid close enough attention to the poem, also called "Cold Iron", which accompanies the story as an epilogue; and I did not see the contradiction at the heart of both. The refrain to this song or ballad is

Iron – Cold Iron – is master of men all.

But the symbolism changes as the plot of the ballad unfolds. The Baron rebels against his King because he thinks that 'Cold Iron' – by which he means military force – is master of men all, and he thinks that he has the military strength to win. But he has not. He is defeated by 'Cold Iron', which is still military force. He expects death by execution. But his King offers him bread and wine and forgiveness, and shows him hands pierced by nails – that is to say by 'Cold Iron', which has now become something more than military force.

The symbolism has surely changed in the course of the ballad. But it is the integrity of his own being which has sent Christ to the Cross, and which is ready to forgive. That Christian imagery is a long step

beyond what is visible on the surface of the story: and that step is a key to the phrase, "What else could I have done?"

Art is not algebra, in which the symbols are constant. They change like the colours in shot silk. But there must be some continuity. 'Cold Iron' always means compulsion. The change is from *outside* compulsion — the schoolmaster who tells you what to do and, in Kipling's day and mine, canes you if you don't do it — to *inner* compulsion, the law of your own being.

This applies in the story as well as in the ballad. Una hates her boots, which contain Cold Iron; but she would not go back to running barefoot. "I'm growing up, you know," she says. She sees that she has to accept 'Cold Iron'. And the boy snaps the slave-ring home on his *own* neck.

But there is all the same a contradiction. We feel in this story that 'Cold Iron' is something hostile. It is "all that is at enmity with joy" — as Wordsworth said. Puck's magic is "delight and liberty, the simple creed of childhood". Puck can't 'magic' Una into an otter when she has her boots with their 'Cold Iron' slung round her neck — nor when she *trusts* him. 'Cold Iron' means "folk in housen" and duty and hard work. And as we read this story we are on the same side as Puck and the children, and for the moment we are hostile to boots and regular meal-times, the governess and the school-room.

Here is the contradiction. What does Kipling stand for, in the minds of most people who have heard of him but not thought deeply about him?

In Kipling's own lifetime, G.K. Chesterton (who had certainly thought about him) said that *discipline* was the essence of what he was preaching. C.S. Lewis, who had not gone so far, thought it was *work*. Both discipline and work are certainly a part of what Kipling meant by 'Cold Iron' — and they do figure very largely in a great deal of what he wrote. Consider "The Sons of Martha", or "The Gods of the Copybook Headings"; consider almost everything in *The Day's Work* — one could go on to outlive patience. All this is in praise of 'Cold Iron', discipline, work: it is what he believed in with his conscious brain for most of the time.

But in the story, "Cold Iron", we are on the other side. How many young couples on their honeymoon, I wonder — or on that extended honeymoon which is a happy marriage — have talked about their childhood, and recognised the child in each other, and been on the side of Puck and the children? How many, I wonder, have perhaps feared the day when they would grow up and become "folk in

housen" — and perhaps in their private vocabulary called everyone but themselves "folk in housen"?

That vein was strong in Rudyard — who sometimes wanted to be off with the raggle-taggle gipsies — but not, I think, in Carrie. Mowgli and Puck and Kim belong to the far side of 'Cold Iron', and have not much to do with "folk in housen". But both Mowgli and Kim become "folk in housen" in the end. So did Diego Valdez —

To me my King's much honour,  
To me my people's love . . .

but he longed for "The old careening riot" of his youth ["The Song of Diego Valdez"].

We are forgetting Thor. In some of the later stories — notably "The Wish House" [*Debits and Credits*] — there is a strain suggesting that in his last phase Kipling felt that suffering on behalf of someone else had taken the place that discipline had once held in his view of life. As in the ballad "Cold Iron", a personal undogmatic form of Christianity seems to reveal itself. That is not incompatible with the theme of growing up and accepting 'Cold Iron' as a personal responsibility, a self-discipline that becomes the law of one's being.

But Thor has nothing to do with this: he is altogether pagan. He has nothing to do with compassion or inner integrity, but dispenses a destined fate: there is no room for human will, except to pick it up. I have rather reluctantly to accept that Kipling seems usually to have acknowledged some such element in human affairs. Thor is stronger than Puck, who acknowledges his suzerainty whenever he is mentioned. He stands for a mysterious and unexplained dispenser of destiny.

But it is no use trying to make Kipling consistent: he was too big for that. His was a Protean personality, comprising many different elements and beliefs. For my part, it is Mowgli and Kim and Puck who draw me — but, like Una, I do see that we have to grow up and accept 'Cold Iron', and turn into "folk in housen".

## KIPLING'S " 'WIRELESS' "

## AND THE NATURE OF POETIC INSPIRATION

by EILEEN STAMERS-SMITH

[ Having read with interest John McGivering's article in our September 1994 issue on the story " 'Wireless' " [*Traffics and Discoveries*], Mrs Stammers-Smith has offered the following supplementary thoughts of her own. She modestly describes herself as "a student of both Kipling and Keats", and is in fact a very experienced teacher of English Literature, at both school and university levels. — Ed. ]

The real significance and interest of this story lie in its exploration of poetic inspiration. Kipling often refers to his prose work as "craft", with all that that implies; but when it comes to poetry, he equates inspiration with a form of possession.

He describes his own Muse as a "Daemon" in *Something of Myself*, where, in chapter VIII, having given some examples of how it has worked on him, he writes:

*Note here.* When your Daemon is in charge, do not try to think consciously. Drift, wait, and obey.

He evidently believes that there is an element of the 'given' in creative writing, which must precede and accompany the conscious struggle towards expression. " 'Wireless' " uses the Marconi metaphor to show the Daemon at work at one remove.

The Muse or Daemon is a mysterious force, like the Marconi signals; it is not fully intelligible to the receiver, who suffers agonies as he tries to 'clear the signal'; it is intermittent and elusive; the poet, not knowing whence it comes, is always fearful of its loss, since he is only the vehicle for something beyond and greater than himself.

So Shaynor — whose name is John, as Keats's was — gets on to Keats's wavelength because of his own life's similarities with that of Keats. Shaynor is a commonplace man: Keats's snobbish reviewers and aristocratic contemporaries such as Byron dismissed *him* as a cockney rhymester. Shaynor is a druggist: Keats trained as a surgeon, and was licensed to practise as an apothecary, when pharmacy was a large part of medicine. Shaynor is consumptive, though unlike Keats

he conceals from the narrator — and possibly from himself — the end that Keats knew was inevitable once he began to spit blood.

Shaynor is in love with a girl called Fanny Brand who, present or absent, seems to dominate him, and who "resembled the seductive shape on a gold-framed toilet-water advertisement" in the chemist's shop where the main action takes place. Kipling-as-narrator adopts a conventional view of Fanny Brawne, though Keats's artist friend, Joseph Severn, had written that she "strongly resembled the splendid figure (in a white dress) in Titian's picture of sacred and profane love".

However, Shaynor is not Keats. His basically commonplace cast of mind is indicated by his comment on the "new and wildish drink" the narrator offers him, which precipitates his trance: "grateful and comforting" was a cliché of cocoa advertisements. But he is linked for a brief while with some of the richest of Keats's poetry, humming about the universe like the music of the spheres — or the radio-waves of Marconi.

Kipling-as-narrator (perhaps Kipling-as-author, too) states categorically that five lines of Romantic poetry are "the pure Magic" and "the clear Vision". These Shaynor significantly receives only in an imperfect form. Two are from the "Ode to a Nightingale":

Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

The other three lines are not from Keats at all, but from Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" — deliberately introduced here, since this poem was conceived in an opium trance, and remains unfinished because, as Coleridge was writing it down when he awoke, "a person from Porlock" interrupted him, and he could recall no more. These lines form another demonstration of the Daemon at work, of the mystery at the heart of creative writing.

The setting of " 'Wireless' " parallels in deft prose the description of a winter's night in the first verse of "The Eve of St. Agnes"; and there is another link in the narrator's comment on the drugged Shaynor, who "looked through and over me with eyes as wide and lustreless as those of a dead hare".

The verses which preface the story ["Kaspar's Song in 'Varda' "] seem to bear out the theme of the commonplace transfigured, in their story of the "Dull grey eggs" which, "by way of the worm", become "Radiant Psyches" — butterflies.

## KIPLING AND THE ECHO CLUB

by ANDREW RUTHERFORD

[Professor Andrew Rutherford is one of our Vice-Presidents, and hardly needs introducing to our readers, many of whom are familiar with his invaluable edition of *Early Verse by Rudyard Kipling, 1879-1889* – to name but one of the various volumes of writings by Kipling or of critical studies about him which he has edited. He has had a long and distinguished career as a university teacher and administrator, and was recently appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University of London.

In the article below, Professor Rutherford throws new light on a literary link between Kipling and a once highly regarded but now largely forgotten American, Bayard Taylor. Taylor was a traveller and diplomat – he died *en poste* as the United States Minister to Germany – who cherished literary ambitions which despite a considerable written output were sadly never fulfilled. It is agreeable to see his name resuscitated in connection with the widely eclectic reading of the youthful Kipling. – *Ed.*]

One of Kipling's teen-age enthusiasms was for a book which has gone largely unnoticed by scholars — it is not mentioned, for example, in Ann M. Weygandt's admirable *Kipling's Reading and its Influence on his Poetry* (Philadelphia, 1939) — although it had a considerable influence on his early verse. This was Bayard Taylor's *The Diversions of the Echo Club*. First published serially and anonymously in the *Atlantic Monthly* for 1872, its instalments were collected and published in London the following year as *The Diversions of the Echo Club*, still without the author's name; but he acknowledged his authorship – which was a very open secret – in *The Echo Club and other Literary Diversions* (Boston, 1876), and in *The Diversions of the Echo Club: A New Edition*, which appeared in London in 1877.

Bayard Taylor (1825-78) was an American man of letters with an established reputation as a travel writer, novelist, poet and translator (especially from German). In *The Echo Club* he purports to record the conversations of a group of poets meeting regularly in the back room of a lager beer-cellar in New York, to discuss the works of their contemporaries and predecessors, English and American. He tries, not unsuccessfully, "to report the mixture of sport and earnest, of satire and enthusiasm, of irreverent audacity and pure aspiration, which met and mingled at their meetings" (1877 edn., p.11); and at these meetings they composed critiques in the form of parody and imitation of authors whose names they drew by lot on each occasion. The identity of the "contributors" is not revealed — they are referred



to only by pseudonyms – but the poets parodied, whether living or dead, well-established or lesser-known, are all identified. They include Morris, Poe, Browning, Mrs Sigourney, Keats, Swinburne, Emerson, E.C. Stedman, T.H. Chivers, Barry Cornwall, Whittier, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, T.B. Aldrich, W.C. Bryant, Oliver Wendell Holmes, N.P. Willis, Tennyson, H.T. Tuckerman, Longfellow, R.H. Stoddard, Mrs Stoddard, Lowell, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Bayard Taylor himself, G.H. Boker, Jean Ingelow, Buchanan Read, Julia Ward Howe, J.J. Piatt, William Winter, Mrs Piatt, Whitman, Bret Harte, John Hay, and Joaquin Miller.

The impact this highly entertaining volume had on Kipling is acknowledged in a letter he wrote on 21 July 1894 to one of the authors parodied, a New York poet and journalist called Edmund Clarence Stedman, agreeing to the latter's request for permission to include some of Kipling's poems in *A Victorian Anthology*:

Curiously enough, before your letter came, I was re-reading "Diversions of the Echo Club" (wasn't it Bayard Taylor?) in the little limp paper-back pirated copy that I can remember led me to the joyful labour of writing parodies on every poet between Wordsworth and Whitman. I used to know whole pages of it by heart. (*The Letters of Rudyard Kipling*, ed. Thomas Pinney, London, 1992, II, p.140)

Clearly *The Diversions of the Echo Club* inspired Kipling's own parodies, beginning in his schooldays and culminating in, though not concluding with, *Echoes* in 1884. This was its main importance for his early development as an author. It appealed to his sense of fun, while contributing very significantly to his youthful awareness of the *craft* of poetry.

The volume may also have introduced him to some of the American authors like Joaquin Miller whom he was himself to imitate. By his own account this was certainly the case with Emerson. In *Letters of Travel* he writes of the associations of the name Monadnock, the mountain whose peak he could see from Naulakha in Vermont:

I had met Monadnock on paper in a shameless parody of Emerson's style, before ever style or verse had interest for me. But the word stuck because of a rhyme, in which one was

. . . crowned coeval  
     With Monadnock's crest,  
 And my wings extended  
     Touch the East and West.

Later the same word . . . led me to and through Emerson, up to his poem on the peak itself – the wise old giant "busy with his sky affairs," who makes us sane and sober and free from little things if we trust him. ("In Sight of Monadnock", *From Tideway to Tideway* (1892), in *Letters of Travel*, London, 1920, p.13)

The parody cited is a quotation (slightly inaccurate since "crowned coeval" is from a different stanza) from *The Echo Club* (1877 Edn., p.51).

Another point of interest, especially for those concerned with establishing the Kipling canon, is a quotation which obviously took his fancy, and which he used more than once in his journalism of the Indian years:

The sky is an inkstand, upside down,  
It splashes the world with gloom;  
The earth is full of skeleton bones,  
And the sea is a wobbling tomb.

This has sometimes been taken for Kipling's own work. It is one of a good many misattributions — traps for the unwary — in R.H. Harbord's poetry volume of *The Readers' Guide to Rudyard Kipling's Works*; but it is in fact the last stanza of a parody of Richard Henry Stoddard in *The Echo Club* (1877 Edn., p.123).

One very specific echo from the proceedings of this Club occurs in Kipling's poem "The Files". A poet mentioned with derision in one evening's discussion was "Dr Thomas Holley Chivers, of Georgia, author of 'Virginalia', 'The Lost Pleiad', 'Facets of Diamond', and 'Eonchs of Ruby' ." An actual example of his work is quoted:

The refrain to a poem called "The Poet's Vocation" in the "Eonchs of Ruby," is:

In the music of the morns,  
Blown through the Conchimarian horns,  
Down the dark vistas of the reboantic Norns,  
To the Genius of Eternity,  
Crying: "Come to me! Come to me!"  
(1877 Edn., p.65)

The pretentious absurdity lingered in Kipling's mind, to resurface when he wrote of other kinds of pretentious absurdity in "The Files":

When the Conchimarian horns  
 Of the reboantic Norns  
 Usher gentlemen and ladies  
 With new lights on Heaven and Hades,  
 Guaranteeing to Eternity  
 All yesterday's modernity . . .  
 When of everything we like we  
 Shout ecstatic: "*Quod ubique,*  
*Quod ab omnibus* means *semper!*"  
 Oh, my brother, keep your temper!  
 Light your pipe and take a look along the Files.

(*The Definitive Edition of Rudyard Kipling's Verse*, p.353)

The link between these lines and Chivers's was noted by Ann M. Weygandt (*op. cit.*, p. 148); but it was a link originally established by *The Echo Club*, which is also the most likely source (see 1877 Edn., p.81) for his quotation, in a note to "In the Matter of a Prologue" of Oliver Wendell Holmes's satiric Bostonian comment on New York poets,

Whose fame beyond their own abode,  
 Extends — for miles along the Haarlem Road.

(See my edition of *Early Verse by Rudyard Kipling*, Oxford, 1986, p.376)

The prosaic conclusion is that the student of Kipling must track him through his reading as well as through his life experience ("What do they know of Kipling who only Kipling know?"). But more fundamentally, his enthusiasm for Bayard Taylor's volume underlines Kipling's sheer delight in literature as a Great Game. As a poet he is a sage, a moralist and a prophet, but also a notable example of the artist as *homo ludens*. (Cf. Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture*, trans. R.F.C. Hull, London, 1949.)

## MUSIC REVIEW

CHARLES KOECHLIN'S *THE JUNGLE BOOK*

reviewed by BRIAN MATTINSON

[In our September 1994 issue, at page 62, there was a brief notification of two recent recordings of Koechlin's music inspired by Kipling's *Jungle Books*. At the end, I said we planned to review them shortly: here, then, is that review, a perceptive and eloquent account kindly provided, together with a helpful tabulation of the respective contents of the two recordings, by one of our members, Mr Brian Mattinson. – Ed.]

**THE JUNGLE BOOK**

by Charles Koechlin (1867-1950)

<i>The Law of the Jungle</i> [Op.175, 1934-40]	RCA	MP
<i>The Bandar-Log</i> [Op.176, 1939-40]	RCA	MP
<i>Three Poems</i> [Op.18, 1899-1910]		
<i>Seal Lullaby</i>	RCA	—
<i>Night-Song in the Jungle</i>	RCA	—
<i>Song of Kala Nag</i>	RCA	—
<i>The Meditation</i> [sic] <i>of Purun Bhagat</i> [Op.159, 1900-36]	RCA	MP
<i>The Spring Running</i> [Op.95, 1908-27]		MP
<i>Spring in the Forest</i>	RCA	*
<i>Mowgli</i>	RCA	*
<i>The Running</i>	RCA	*
<i>Night</i>	RCA	*

**KEY**

**RCA** RCA Victor/BMG Classics 09026 61955 2, 1994. Playing time 89 mins. Recorded in Berlin, June 1993; Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra; David Zinman, conductor; Iris Vermillion, mezzo-soprano; Johan Botha, tenor; Ralf Lukas, baritone; RIAS Kammerchor.

**MP** Marco Polo 8.223484, 1993. Playing time 72 mins. Recorded in Ludwigshafen, April 1985; Rheinland-Pfalz Philharmonic; Leif Segerstam, conductor.

\* Continuous.

Charles Koechlin was fascinated by the *Jungle Books*. He began to study music seriously only when tuberculosis made him unfit for the military career intended for him by his father. Well-intentioned parents may steer their children, deliberately or subconsciously, towards unsuitable occupations, and Koechlin made good use of the necessity, in his early twenties, to reconsider his future.

It is interesting that Rudyard Kipling's poor eyesight saved him from time-consuming games at boarding school and perhaps from public service in India, so facilitating the development of his literary interests. As he later wrote in connection with British troops in the South African War, "I have an inferior pair of eyes, and a more inferior pair of lungs and so am out of it all". [Lord Birkenhead's *Rudyard Kipling* (Weidenfeld, 1967), page 205.]

Many people remember vividly their first encounter with Kipling's writings. My introduction at the age of six is recorded by my mother's inscription, 'Xmas 1937', in my copy of *Toomai of the Elephants* [Macmillan, 1937], illustrated with photographs from Alexander Korda's film, *Elephant Boy*: photographs keep memories fresh. With appetite whetted, my next acquisition was *The Jungle Book*, a 1939 edition with illustrations by Lockwood Kipling and W.H. Drake.

I was steered into an industrial career, and my limited non-scientific activities were musical rather than literary. However, renewed interest in Kipling was inevitable: in 1951 I joined George Webb at King's College, Cambridge, although it was 1980 before he 'invited' me to join the Kipling Society. I now welcome this opportunity to review two recently issued recordings of Koechlin's extraordinary cycle based on selections from the *Jungle Books*.

Composition, revision and lavish orchestration of the four symphonic poems, plus three songs, occupied Koechlin, on and off, from 1899 to 1940. His imaginative responses to both natural and literary stimulation are combined in the condensation of his life's work into a surprisingly homogeneous ninety-minute cycle.

The RCA recording is complete, presenting the works in roughly chronological order of composition. The single MP CD includes the four orchestral works only, but in the logical order later adopted by the composer himself and strongly recommended for listening. Both orchestral performances are excellent; I found the newer RCA sound more atmospheric and, with two CDs for the price of one, would choose it if only to include the songs.

So we begin with an arresting monodic statement of *The Law of the Jungle*, introduced by brass underlined by cymbals and gong, then

repeated in different colours and dynamics rather than developed, reflecting the strophic nature of Baloo's lessons. There is something of the relentless heat "when the winter Rains failed", with drumming like thunder "rolling up and down the dry, scarred hills". The huge climax, the first of many in the cycle, may be the call to "Obey!" – and one strains in the ensuing quiet to make out the "noises that, taken together, make one big silence". The theme returns, ending on spacious fifths which prepare the way for the harmony creeping into the short-lived calm at the beginning of *The Bandar-Log*.

Soon comes the explosive entry of the monkeys. "They have no law." The polyphony, the chromatics, the instrumentation all combine to mimic their "bounding and crashing and whooping and yelling", and the double bassoon initiates the mocking of Baloo, Disney-style, for restraining Mowgli.

But the music is more; just as the monkeys "use the stolen words which they overhear when they listen", so Koechlin exploits musical fashions. For example, the basses start an awkward fugue (the lifelong influence of J.S. Bach), which falters drunkenly between strings, woodwind and brass, and finds a second subject before being swamped. The discordant shrieking climax, "a howl of fright and rage" in *Cold Lairs*, subsides gradually into the former calm.

The *Three Poems* are sung in French, and comfortably come next. The first two form a contrasting pair. In *Seal Lullaby*, Iris Vermillion's rich expressive mezzo-soprano rises above the swell of orchestral arpeggios and soothing "Ah" from the chorus to induce sleep "where billow meets billow".

In *Night-Song in the Jungle*, which opens *The Jungle Book*, she joins the well-matched baritone Ralf Lukas to wake the restless jungle to its night's hunting, the chorus augmenting their rousing call and recurrent exhortation, "Good hunting all that keep the Jungle Law!".

The *Song of Kala Nag* is powerfully sung by tenor Johan Botha; I just do not think of an elephant as a tenor, but the urge to escape is compelling as each verse builds up to its climax, the second one ecstatically trumpeting determination to "revisit my lost loves and playmates masterless". Peace returns; "the morning broke in one sheet of pale yellow behind the green hills, and the booming stopped with the last ray, as though the light had been an order."

In *The Meditation of Purun Bhagat* he, like Mowgli, is discovering himself; he "salaamed reverently to the Law, because he knew the value of it, and was seeking a Law of his own". Even the animals' role is not entirely passive. This time the monody is calmer, a drone, brass

later, then a gradual polyphonic purposefulness as we trace his long climb. Thin strings carry "the cool wind of the Himalayas", but no sooner is there peace – "Here shall I find peace" – than the orchestra stirs again, building up through swirling strings to the crashing cacophony of the landslide. A strange serenity creeps back, as it did finally to the cross-legged Bhagat.

*The Spring Running* ends *The Second Jungle Book*, ends this cycle, and is the longest and finest of the symphonic poems. There is no mistaking *Spring*, with misty harmonies, bird calls and "a deep hum. That is the noise of the spring". Then comes a rhythmic stirring, "a noise of growing", which *Mowgli* disturbs savagely, harsh note pairs from the basses signalling his unhappiness before "he settled into his stride".

*The Running* contains a unique series of busy episodes, part wistfully beautiful, part harsh, struggles with terrain, animals or mood, each ending in a breathless silence before setting off again. After his arrival at Messua's house, where "his instincts, which never wholly slept, warned him there was nothing to fear", trumpet calls draw him back to the jungle where Bagheera, with "a roar and a crash", finally kills "the Bull that frees thee, Little Brother"; the music too is suddenly freed to "follow new trails". In the calm of *Night*, the strings remind us of the opening monody, of all that has gone before.

Whatever each listener may hear in this exciting cycle, as in other situations the music enriches the words, and vice versa. For a composer so unjustly neglected both during his lifetime and since, it is fitting that the RCA recording has won the 1994 *Gramophone* Award for the Best Orchestral Recording – "a unique, highly atmospheric work, dazzlingly well played and vividly recorded" [*Gramophone*, November 1994]. Perhaps this will not only stimulate interest in Koechlin's music but also serve as a reminder that the *Jungle Books* are not just children's stories about Mowgli and Toomai, but universal allegories of self-discovery which inspired Koechlin for over forty years.

In passing, it is interesting to note that the 1994 *Gramophone* Artist of the Year is John Eliot Gardiner. In October 1982, in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, he conducted the performance of Kipling's *Jungle Book* Cycle and other Songs, set to music by Percy Grainger who, like Koechlin, was much influenced by Kipling [see the *Kipling Journal*, December 1982, pages 37-39].

## BOOK REVIEWS

*NARRATIVES OF EMPIRE: The Fictions of Rudyard Kipling* by Zohreh T. Sullivan (Cambridge U.P., 1993); xiii + 199 pp including notes, bibliography & index; ISBN 0 521 43425 4; hardback, £27.95 (in U.S.A., \$49.95).

[This book was reviewed by Ann Parry in our issue of September 1993. Later, another review was submitted by one of our American readers, Professor David Stewart; it had already appeared in the U.S.A. in *English Literature in Transition* 37 : 4 1994, and I have received the kind approval of the Editor of *ELT*, Professor Langenfeld, to reprint it in the *Kipling Journal*. – Ed.]

This book is a cogent and sustained indictment of Kipling's imperialist message in his Indian fictions. It confirms the importance of literary theory as a facilitator of criticism. Just as Northrop Frye's myth-theory precipitated countless dissertations and books a generation ago, so post-modernism generates an even greater volume of commentary because it incorporates a variety of "isms," each with its own emerging agenda or "armature" (to use George Steiner's label). Post-modernist theory produces offspring of many classes, colours and genders all bearing a strong resemblance to their grand-sires, Freud and Marx, for whom "power drives" determine not only human behaviour but human cognition and imagination.

Sullivan's index bespeaks her pedigree by citing virtually every fashionable name in the business: Bakhtin, Eagleton, Fanon, Foucault, Gramsci, Jameson, Kristeva, Lacan, Macherey and Said illuminate her way. Even Lenin receives favourable mention, but two books by less famous authors govern her inquiry: Daniel Bivona's *Desire and Contradiction: Imperial Visions and Domestic Debates in Victorian Literature* (1990) and especially Ashis Nandy's *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (1993).

Combining "psychohistory" with socio-ideological history, Sullivan finds a pattern in Kipling's childhood. Rejection, fear and compensatory retreat into a private dreamworld must be suppressed to comply with the harsh dayworld of pragmatic Victorianism based on boy scout masculinity, marginalised femininity and the work ethic. The inner tensions caused by the collision between these polarised value systems are then magnified in an imperial setting: "Kipling displaced into India what he feared in his dreams and displaced onto his dreams what he most feared in India." A destructive reciprocity occurs when Kipling the individual writer and the ideology of the Raj



try to confront the contradictions and failures of their "journeys into psychic interiors or into alien cultural or political interiors." "The wounds of India mirror concealed wounds in Englishmen that, formed in childhood, reopen in India."

These observations explain why Sullivan divides her book as she does: an introduction on "Kipling's India", an analysis of Kipling's autobiography written during the last year of his life, three chapters examining a variety of Kipling's stories about India, and a concluding analysis of *Kim*. She justifies this sequence by postulating a mutilated psyche from Kipling's loss of family and identity when his parents abandoned him in England.

Sullivan is a careful and sensitive reader. She has an unerring ear for discrepancies or contradictions between the "embedded tale" and the narrative frame. She describes such contradictions in several ways. "Western knowledge" itself creates a "self split between its construction as master and as victim" of the imperial project. Kipling vacillates between an "Official View" and a subversive "personal" view of the events he narrates.

For example, "The Strange Ride of Morrowbie Jukes" [*Wee Willie Winkie*] discloses "a black hole in Imperial reality" and becomes a nightmare 'carnival' that encodes hysteria in mimicry and fantasy"; and the narrative frame and closure that Kipling added to the story after first publication "serve as ideological screens that mediate the extremity of colonial hysteria". For Sullivan, this pattern emerges in story after story. Impermissible longings for racial equality or homophile relationships or miscegenation erupt in the "embedded tale", but Kipling blurs and deflects them with his narrator's voice, leaving unresolved and unsatisfying ambiguities.

"If all knowledge is political" (as Sullivan believes), then Kipling's (and his narrators') knowledge is a prolonged power-play to crush their own attractive "night selves" and denigrate the appealing features of India by embracing "orientalist" stereotypes or by outright misrepresentation. For example, "The Bridge Builders" [*The Day's Work*] contains a "political fantasy that imperialism can spawn such happy hybrids as Peroo and Gunga Din". Kim's dedication to the Raj belies his love for the lama, which "creates a Marxist paradigm of bad faith and alienation"!

One would prefer not to dilute praise for Sullivan's shrewdly argued book with criticism, but criticism is unavoidable when the entire post-modernist enterprise that defines her approach seems problematical. Its preoccupation with politics and power based on Freudo-Marxist premises yields lines of argument and conclusions reminiscent of the 1930s when Oedipal Complexes and Proletarian Orthodoxies dominated literary study. It leaves too much unsaid

about literary quality. To scan fictional texts seeking only evidence of power-relationships between characters or cultures illuminates one area of literary experience, but it impoverishes the total experience.

Little effort is required to prove that Kipling suffered from an oppressive childhood in England, or that he exploited subconscious impulses and bizarre intuitions dictated by his "Daemon", or that commitment to empire and distaste for liberal alternatives coloured his judgment about India. After all, in a letter to his old schoolmate, General Lionel Dunsterville (9 July 1919) he wrote: "But I have made enemies (Allah be praised) for thirty years and, just now, they are pretty thick upon the ground inasmuch as neither R.C.'s, Irish, Jews, 'Labour', socialists or Liberalism at large are penetrated with any great love of me. (If they were my work since 1890 would have been a failure.)"

By such admission, Kipling invites criticism imitating Soviet "socialist realism" of the 30s that converted writers into philosophers manqués, political power-brokers or infantile romantics and ignored language mastery and imaginative originality which are the crucial determinants of literary excellence. In addition, power-obsessed critics fail to acknowledge Kipling's saving sense of humour. They discredit it as an evasive strategy aimed at beguiling readers and forestalling our obligatory abhorrence of imperialism. But for Kipling, as for Mark Twain, humour was indispensable in both literature and life. In "The Puzzler" [*Actions and Reactions*] Kipling noted "the inopportune mirth of the artistic temperament".

Sullivan makes a plausible case for judging Kipling's Indian fictions as "narrative interventions between past anxieties of the self and present crises of empire," but the case is flawed for two reasons. First, in the 1880s and 90s many Anglo-Indians, including Kipling, had premonitions of the Raj's end; but to interpret these premonitions as signs of hysteria or imminent crisis is an exaggeration created by hindsight.

Another flaw becomes evident when one asks: Are Kipling's "eerie" stories (e.g. "The Mark of the Beast" [*Life's Handicap*] or "At the End of the Passage" [*Life's Handicap*]) produced exclusively by the "horror of empire" reinforced by Kipling's uncontrollable psychic terrors, or can they be attributed to the influence of Gothic fiction, especially Edgar Allan Poe? Judging by the jovial letters he wrote to friends and relatives, one suspects he accumulated shocking details to heighten the overall ghastly effect of certain tales. India (from hovel to temple, from bazaar to hill station) supplied Anglo-Indians with gruesome and grotesque scenes aplenty, and Kipling hyperbolised their spookiness to entertain readers.

Kipling was the premier spokesman for British national interests that have lost their international importance since 1945. If the imperial dimension of his work describes the limit of his appeal, then his significance shrinks within the area of England alone and feeds an indulgent nostalgia. But if his work re-enacts recurrent human problems in a powerful and original style accessible to all Anglophones, then it retains the same currency that every important writer enjoys. Critical efforts that emphasise only imperial power relationships do both Kipling and readers a disservice.

D.H. STEWART

*THE SAYINGS OF RUDYARD KIPLING* edited by  
Andrew Rutherford (Duckworth, 1994); ISBN 0 7156 2621  
3; 64 pp; paperback, £4.95.

This is one of a series, numbering 25 or so, ranging from *The Sayings of Jesus* to those of Jane Austen, Ezra Pound and Somerset Maugham. For Kipling, the publishers could not have chosen a better selector than Professor Rutherford, whose knowledge of Kipling's prose and verse is exhaustive – and who is incidentally the author of an article in this present issue of the *Journal*. His introduction to this small volume is masterly, reminding the reader, among much else, that Kipling was for some thirty years after 1890

the most popular writer in English . . . throughout the English-speaking world. He was the last British author to appeal to readers of all ages, all social classes, and all cultural groups . . . also the last poet to command a mass audience.

It is a truism, that Kipling added many popular phrases to the language, and has been a massive contributor to dictionaries of quotations. But this book is much more than a collection of quotations, or for that matter 'sayings'; to that extent the title is a misnomer. The field of choice is vast, and no two *aficionados* of his prose and verse would go for the same selection. What Professor Rutherford has done is to rationalise and categorise his chosen pieces, many of them quite long; and to let them speak for themselves with all the pith and energy that marked Kipling's style.

The result is an anthology that should satisfy the Kipling enthusiast, and will surprise and enlighten the intelligent reader who is as yet unfamiliar with the diversity of Kipling's mind and the terseness of his writing. — *Ed.*

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

### NEW MEMBERS

We welcome Major G.A. Bennett (*Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*); Mlle B.C.J. Bureau (*Montpellier, France*); Mrs P.D.J. Commin (*East Sussex*); Mr T.J. Connell (*Surrey*); Ms MT. Coughlin (*London*); Mr A.M. Dodsworth (*London*); Mrs J.V. Harding (*Dorset*); Professor M. Hashimoto (*Saitama, Japan*); Dr J.F. Johnson (*West Sussex*); Maggs Bros, Ltd (*London*); Miss M.S. Morison (*London*); Mr J. Ormiston (*Surrey*); Mr S.D. Vigar (*Essex*).

### NEW VICE-PRESIDENTS

We congratulate two of our members on becoming, by Council's invitation, Vice-Presidents of the Society – for each of them a very well deserved honour.

One is **John McGivering**, whose article on Kipling's " 'Wireless' " was incidentally a major feature in our last issue. In the note prefacing that item we summarised his biographical particulars and mentioned his many years of practical service to the Society, so we need not repeat all of that here. As the editor of *A Kipling Dictionary*, and a consultant to the *Readers' Guide*, he has made a substantial contribution to 'Kipling studies', and he is always among the first people to whom the Editor of the *Journal* turns for help in tracing elusive references.

The other new Vice-President is **Margaret Newson**, who joined the Society in 1960, when the *Readers' Guide* was beginning to be compiled. She was recruited to the team, and given *The Light that Failed* to annotate – a work with which she was then unfamiliar but on which she became an authority. Her research was mentioned approvingly by Carrington in Appendix 2 to his biography [1978 edition], and her notes have since been warmly praised by other scholars. She gave a fuller account of the novel's historical and literary background in a series of articles in the *Journal* [June & September 1965; December 1975; March 1976]. She was our Honorary Librarian from 1976 to 1990, devoting much time and labour to her task. She recruited a number of members to help her; two went on to become Secretary and Meetings Secretary; a third is the present Librarian. Her ready assistance to Kipling scholars during those years has been acknowledged in the prefaces of many books. Her quietly expert voice still makes a welcome contribution to our discussion meetings.

### LIBRARIAN: ANOTHER TELEPHONE NUMBER

Those who wish to consult Mrs Schreiber, our Honorary Librarian, about the resources of the Library may find it useful to know that in addition to the London address and telephone number (071-708 0647) cited at page 41 in our issue of June 1994 she may be contacted, when in Norfolk, on 0603 701630.

**OBITUARY: MR L.A. CROZIER**

We have heard, with sadness, of the recent death of Laurie Crozier, a Vice-President of our Melbourne Branch. He was a great enthusiast for the works of Kipling, especially those with an Indian setting. He himself had extensive knowledge of India, Pakistan and Burma; in his travels, often far off the beaten track, he was always assiduous and imaginative in his pursuit of clues relating to places mentioned by Kipling.

We have been glad to publish two very characteristic articles by him — one with a Burmese setting ["The Pagoda", September 1981], the other with an Indian ["My Search for the River of the Arrow", September 1991]. Both are highly evocative and eminently readable.

Born in Australia in 1913, but educated partly in England, he was by profession a mining engineer. As such, his work took him to remote parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America, and he had an uncommonly varied and adventurous career. He was also a man of high ideals, and in his later years he devoted much time and energy to co-ordinating practical aid and community development in India and elsewhere.

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## "STALKY" ON *STALKY & CO.*

### BEING A REPRINT OF AN ARTICLE IN AN OLD INDIAN NEWSPAPER

by MAJOR-GENERAL DUNSTERVILLE

[One of our members, Mr Frank Moor of Hornchurch, Essex, has found and sent to us in photocopy a cutting from the *Darjeeling Times* – undated, but loosely attributable to a date between 1925 and 1933. (Anyone with a lust for accuracy and a taste for detective-work could almost certainly establish the year by following a clue on the reverse of the same cutting, where, among sundry photographs of British sporting events, is one of a football match between Arsenal and Leicester City at Highbury, won by Arsenal, 8-2.)

The main item in the cutting is an article, "At School With Kipling", by Major-General L.C. Dunsterville, C.B., C.S.I., who of course was "Stalky". The sub-heading reads "The Truth About *Stalky & Co.* . . . 'My Sorrows As A Hero Of Fiction' . . . Romantic Stories Of A Great Author's Early Days". There is also a photograph of Kipling as an old man. The text is as follows. – *Ed.*]

Kipling's old school at Westward Ho! was founded in about 1870 [actually 1874 – *Ed.*] by a group of retired naval and military officers who wanted a good and inexpensive school for their sons, who were mostly designed for the Navy or the Army.

I must have joined the school about October 1875 [January 1876, according to the College Register – *Ed.*], just before my tenth birthday [9 November 1875]; and I left when I entered Sandhurst in the summer of 1883, having spent seven-and-a-half years of my life there.

In 1875 there was no preparatory school, so I found very few companions of my own age — the majority of the boys being fourteen and over. This rather naturally led to the little ones having a bad time. Kipling described the school as "That long white barrack by the sea".

The town of Westward Ho! was entirely composed of residential houses, many of them empty. The famous old town of Bideford lay a few miles inland, out of bounds but frequently visited. Other smaller towns within reach were Instow, Appledore and Northam.

The school buildings faced the West, looking over Bideford Bay and Lundy Island, eighteen miles away – the northern arm of the Bay consisting of Baggy Point, and the southern of Hartland. The main portion of the property was at sea level, and only protected from the inroads of the Atlantic breakers by the famous Pebble Ridge. The protection was not adequate, and most of the low-lying portion that I remember is now beneath the waves.

At the time I joined the school in 1875, there were about twelve masters and something under 200 boys. It is peculiar what trifling things stick in one's memory. Fifty years later, I can recall the top of the school roll — Widdicombe, Empson, Kysh, D'Oyley, Pakenham, Mardall, Carleton. And I remember that Widdicombe's number was 1, the first boy to join the school. [Confirmed by the College Register: William Sutherland Widdicombe, born in December 1856, was at Westward Ho! from September 1874 to July 1876, so was nearly twenty when he left. He "came from Haileybury College with Mr. Cormell Price, and was the first Head Prefect of the College, having previously been Head of the Modern Side at Haileybury." As a Lieutenant in the Indian Army, he died in 1881 of enteric fever at Kandahar, Afghanistan. — *Ed.*]

The masters I can remember were Cormell Price, Campbell, Jacquot, Marnier, Thomas, Green, Haslam, Crofts, Pugh, Evans, Willes (the Padre), Stevens, Ryder, Watson, Bode and Carr.

The most notable of the servants were John Short, whose chief duty was that of bellringer, Hutchins the carpenter, Otway, Richards and Gumbley, the house servants, Oke the common-room butler, and

Lena, one of the maids. Sergeant Schofield ("Foxy") succeeded Sergeant Kearney about 1877,I think. [1878]

\* \* \*

Owing to my joining the school at an age so much below the average, I had rather a rough time of it at the start, and endured a good deal of bullying, which fortunately did no harm to a boy of my robust temperament.

Kipling and Beresford joined a year or two later, and we formed an alliance that remained unbroken till we were dispersed to seek our fortunes in the world. We eventually shared a study together, but the combination was not entirely permanent; and two of us may have been at one time or another with any third. But details of that nature have entirely receded from my memory after fifty years.

If you ask any man of my age the details of his early life, you will probably find that he has a wonderfully precise recollection of all that happened in those early years of boyhood. But if you have any means of checking his record, you will probably find that the old gentleman is — quite unconsciously — a liar. He has a vivid recollection of things that never happened, and has quite forgotten remarkable events that his contemporaries have remembered. Still, although he unconsciously errs in detail, it is quite likely that he is giving a truthful picture of his early life in the same way as an artist paints a portrait or a landscape.

\* \* \*

Mr. Rudyard Kipling wrote *Stalky & Co.*, the story of his school life, and incidentally mine, when he was about thirty-two, before his memory had become blurred. Kipling and myself have a general agreement in our recollections — though it is natural that certain incidents are more deeply impressed on his mind than on mine.

*Stalky & Co.* has been very widely read in England and America, and I find that most readers make two mistakes. In the first place, they seem to forget that Kipling is a writer of fiction and not history; and in the second place, some of them seem to believe that it was his intention to give a typical picture of public school life in general.

I have suffered a good deal from the first error. I have been identified with "Stalky", and have to accept the praise or blame attached by the reader to that character. I have met people who, assuming me to possess the astuteness and ability of Stalky, have placed me on a pedestal far above my merits. They have been bitterly disappointed at my not giving an immediate display of my supposed

talents. On the other hand, an old lady friend wrote to me not long ago: "I have read *Stalky and Co.* I wish I had not!"

It must be remembered that neither Kipling nor I have ever stated that I was Stalky. My own recollection of myself (which may be faulty) is that of a nice clean little boy, always spotlessly turned out, and with his hair parted neatly in the middle, who was always an example to the race of schoolboys, and who failed for seven-and-a-half years to receive the prize for good conduct, owing to circumstances over which he had no control.

The truth of the matter is this. Kipling, Beresford and myself, the triumvirate of *Stalky & Co.*, were very closely associated during our school careers. The incidents recorded in the book are of the nature of actual incidents, but cannot be regarded as history.

The later life of Stalky is on the lines of my own experience serving with Sikhs, Dogras and Pathans on the North-West Frontier of India, where the barren mountains of the Seleiman Range separate an ordinary civilisation from the haunts of the fierce and independent Pathans; but the heroic episodes of that portion of the book may be taken with a whole cellarful of salt. The picture is realistic, but the incidents are either purely imaginary or collected from various sources.

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To return to the 'traditional' characters of the book. It is quite true that we three were leagued together in every sort of evil-doing, though I hope our 'evil' may have been tempered with what appeared to our youthful minds to be a feeling of justice; and the sketches of character are not untrue to life.

I will ask you to consider as strictly true all the incidents that you consider exhibit the better traits; and as pure fiction anything you don't like about the trio. It is certain that none of the three were quite normal boys, and that the actual three did not make themselves quite as obnoxious to both masters and boys as the three characters in the book.

Admitting then that the three characters of Beetle, M'Turk and Stalky are based upon the individualities of Kipling, Beresford and myself, I will tell you that we were not successful in all our enterprises; and I might almost add that I bear on my back the proofs of this assertion – the honourable scars of war!

Certainly I bore no grudge against the beater, whether master or prefect, feeling a secret exultation in the thought that if I was getting six for a crime discovered, I was escaping fifty-six overdue for



undiscovered breaches of the law.

As regards the question of Kipling's intention to hand" down to posterity a true picture of normal boys' life in a normal school, no careful reader could make such an assumption. The clear facts are that the boys were not normal boys; the masters (though in many cases highly gifted) were not normal masters; and the school in general was not of a normal type.

I remember, soon after its publication, reading in the papers letters of protest from better-behaved youths of bigger and more famous public schools, in which they complained that the book was a travesty of public school life. Perhaps such letters did good, by accentuating the very fact that Kipling wished to bring out – that this was a story of three rather odd boys in rather odd circumstances.

Do not think that I am maintaining that there is any merit in abnormality. If God made you that way, you will stay like that. That is to say, the 'abnormality' will remain; but there is nothing to prevent an abnormally bad boy from becoming an abnormally good one. Abnormal people are generally interesting; but it is the normal ones who are the salt of the earth.

Kipling is said to have written on the fly-leaf of a presentation copy:— "It is in the nature of a moral tract — only a perverse generation insists on calling it comic, and a boys' book, and a lot of other things which it isn't."

Regard it if you like as a confession – a rather candid one. Then, if you highly disapprove of it, just try to imagine what your own confession of those early years of boyhood would be like, if you had the courage to make it. If you want to get a moral out of it, it might be: – "Don't despair. A bad start doesn't mean that you are out of the race."

As Kipling says, it is not a boys' book; yet alas! it is eagerly devoured by both boys and girls. I hope they get no greater harm from it than a little-needed incentive to plague their masters. The fact of my own family having read it makes it rather hard for me to apply the ordinary rules of discipline. But masters and grown-ups can perhaps get by its means some help in judging boys' characters and realising that, right or wrong, there is a child's point of view that must be considered, if you want to get real control – not the control that is based on endeavours to terrorise.

\* \* \*

When Beresford and myself were boys, we could not have the necessary perspective to realise to the full what a marvel Kipling was,

even in those days. Cornell Price [the Head] knew what was coming, but I doubt if any of the other masters read the signs aright, though Crofts ["Mr King"] may have had an inkling.

I can certainly remember Kipling writing startlingly good prose and poetry at the age of fifteen. He seemed to have been born with a wonderful intuition that was the equivalent of a long life of experience. Though thoroughly boyish in his pranks, he was mentally on a par with a middle-aged man, and intellectually superior to most of the grown-ups who had the difficult task of controlling or guiding his early youth.

His sight was always hopelessly bad; in fact without his glasses he was practically blind. I meanly took advantage of this; and in our frequent combats I always made a point of darting for his spectacles and removing them, after which victory was easy for me. This gave me a great advantage, as, although Kipling was no athlete, he was particularly tough and muscular.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### KIPLING ON CANADA

*From Dr James F. Johnson, Bell Cottage, Bonfire Lane, Horsted Keynes, West Sussex RH17 7AJ*

Dear Sir,

The Kipling Papers at the University of Sussex include a letter of November 1911 to Kipling from the Duchess of Connaught, warmly thanking him for an account of Canada he had written for the Duke and herself as they had prepared to go to take up their 'viceregal' duties there.

It appears from the correspondence that the document had been delivered in October 1911. Has anyone since then seen this "account of Canada"? Does it still exist? Where might it be found? Any help in locating it would be appreciated.

Yours sincerely  
JAY JOHNSON

[ Dr Johnson is a Canadian, currently engaged in research in this country; he has a post

at Medicine Hat College, Medicine Hat, Alberta, and has submitted an article relating to Kipling and Medicine Hat, which we shall publish in 1995.

H.R.H. Prince Arthur William Patrick Albert, Duke of Connaught and Strathearn (1850-1942), was the third son of Queen Victoria, and in 1879 married Princess Louise of Prussia. After a diverse and not undistinguished military career he served as Governor-General of Canada, 1911-1916. – *Ed.*]

## CHIL AND RANN, ETC

*From Mr EA. Underwood, 44 Station Road, Winterbourne Down, Bristol BS17 1EN*

Dear Sir,

There is no complete answer to Major Thornton's query [September 1994, page 48] about the change from Chil to Rann for the name of the kite in *The Jungle Book*.

A comparison of various editions shows where Rann originated in the American text; but does not explain the difference in the first place; and also reveals further complications.

There are numerous small differences between the First American and First English editions, some of which are noted in the *Readers' Guide* and the Penguin Classics edition. For some reason the early Macmillan Uniform (1899 onwards) and Pocket editions followed mainly the First American rather than the English (blue) editions of 1894 and 1895; and a few animal names were altered accordingly.

The First American edition of *The Jungle Book* had Rann, and the First English had Chil, for the kite; and so Rann was used in the Uniform edition. The American text had Ikki for the Porcupine, and Mao for the peacock; whilst the English had Sahi and Mor; so the Uniform edition ended up with Ikki and Mao.

*The Second Jungle Book* followed the Sahi-Ikki-Ikki pattern in one place, but had Sahi-Sahi-Sahi in another. (Sahi, by the way, is not to be confused with the ex-member of the Seonee Pack mentioned in the preface to *The Jungle Book*.) The Detmold and Folio editions evidently used the Uniform text.

Later Uniform and Pocket editions reverted to Chil at some time between 1919 and 1926, to judge by copies I have by me; and the Sussex and some combined editions also had Chil. *Songs from Books* (1913) already had "Now Chil the Kite brings home the night . . ." I suspect that the change was made to bring the name into line with the consistent use of Chil in all editions of *The Second Jungle Book*.

Yours truly  
F.A. UNDERWOOD

## THE GEOGRAPHY OF "MANDALAY"

*From Sir George Engle, K.C.B., Q.C., 32 Wood Lane, Highgate, London N6 5UB*

Dear Sir,

I have been familiar with "Mandalay" for well over sixty years – a gramophone record of it being sung was a feature of my childhood; but never having visited Burma, I now find the poem's topography distinctly puzzling.

The "Burma girl" sits by the "old Moulmein Pagoda" (presumably the Kyaithanlan, from which, according to Murray's *Handbook to India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon* [1949 edn.], a wide river can be seen "making its last progress in loops and curves to the sea"). The temple-bells say:

"Come you back, you British soldier; come you back to  
Mandalay!"

and in his thoughts (as the absence of inverted commas shows) the ex-soldier expands their message to mean:

Come you back to Mandalay,  
Where the old Flotilla lay:  
Can't you 'ear their paddles chunkin' from Rangoon  
to Mandalay?

But the city of Mandalay is 400 miles north of both Moulmein and Rangoon, and a good 200 miles inland.

The refrain runs:

On the road to Mandalay,  
Where the flyin'-fishes play,  
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China  
'crost the Bay!

My childhood image of this was of a seaside road leading to a place called Mandalay, with a pagoda on the landward side of it and flying-fishes "playing" (an important word for a child) close inshore in the bay. But I now wonder whether Kipling was using "road" to mean "a sheltered piece of water near the shore where vessels may lie at anchor in safety; a roadstead" (*O.E.D.*). This would fit the Flotilla and the flying-fishes; but what possible connection is there between a "road" of this kind near Moulmein, and the distant inland city of Mandalay?

The only clues are in the first and last stanzas. In the first, the

Flotilla's paddle-ships are recalled as "chunkin' from Rangoon to Mandalay", which might suggest that the Mandalay of the poem was on the same stretch of coast as Moulmein. (Could there have been another Mandalay there?) In the last stanza, the soldier says:

...it's there that I would be –  
 By the old Moulmein Pagoda, looking lazy at the sea;  
 On the road to Mandalay,  
 Where the old Flotilla lay,  
 With our sick beneath the awnings when we went  
 to Mandalay!

This suggests that Moulmein may have been a staging-post for troops on the way to Mandalay (occupied by the British in 1885).

However, as the *O.E.D.* confirms, ships are always said to be *in*, not *on*, a road in the watery sense. Was the soldier perhaps "on the road to" Mandalay in the general sense of being *en route* thither? If anyone can clear up this mystery, I would be most grateful.

There is a subsidiary puzzle, about dawn coming up "outer China 'crost the Bay", since the Bay of Bengal and China lie respectively to the *west* and *north* of Moulmein. I take it that "comes up like thunder" likens the sunrise to a sky full of thunder-clouds; but to an observer in Moulmein dawn would surely have come up overland from the east, out of Siam.

That Kipling was disorientated is confirmed by the fact that, in the original version of the poem, the first line read:

By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to the sea,

on which the passage in Murray's *Handbook* [page 710] mentioning two pagodas at Moulmein comments drily in parenthesis, "(not 'looking eastward to the sea')". As printed in the *Definitive Edition of Kipling's Verse*, the first line has been altered to "... lookin' lazy at the sea", to match the corresponding line in the last stanza, which had always had "lazy". It looks as if Kipling changed the first line, but left the dawn coming up in the wrong direction.

Yours faithfully  
 GEORGE ENGLE

[Sir George is quite right, in that the geography in this famous poem is more than questionable. That it was frequently challenged, from the outset, is apparent from chapter VIII of *Something of Myself*, where Kipling conceded that Moulmein was "not on the road to anywhere", and did "not command any view of any sun rising across the

Bay of Bengal". The same passage makes clear that "the song was a . . . mix-up of the singer's Far-Eastern memories against a background of the Bay of Bengal as seen at dawn from a troopship" – the "road to Mandalay" being his "golden path to romance".

Certainly, the period under review is the Third Burma War, of 1885; and the "old Flotilla" was the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company's paddle-steamers that carried the army - 10,000 troops, 7,000 followers, 500 mules and two mountain batteries – up-river from Rangoon to the capture of Mandalay. (See a valuable article, "Kipling's 'Old Flotilla' " by Alister McCrae, in September 1987.)

There may well be more to say about the confused geography of "Mandalay". I hope this letter brings it forth. I also hope that anyone contributing to the debate will do so in the light of the references cited above, and will also take into account an ingenious and not too implausible article by the late Laurie Crozier ("The Pagoda", in our issue of September 1981), suggesting that the "old Moulmein Pagoda" was actually in Rangoon. - Ed.)

## KIPLING, FEILDEN AND LANDON

*From Mr R.R. Feilden, Chartridge, West Street, Mayfield, East Sussex TN20 6DS*

Dear Sir,

I recently joined the Society, and feel you may be interested in the following information.

I own a copy of Perceval Landon's *The Story of the Indian Mutiny*, written in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary in 1907. The book belonged to my great-uncle, Colonel Henry Wemyss Feilden, C.B., a great friend of Kipling's — as of course was Landon. My great-uncle is mentioned in *Something of Myself*, and in several places in Carrington's biography of Kipling.

At the beginning of Landon's book, my great-uncle inscribed the following note, signed and dated 23 December 1907:

I attended the parade and inspection by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, and afterwards the banquet given by the Daily Telegraph to the veterans of the Indian Mutiny, in the Albert Hall on the 23rd December, 1907. The proprietors of the Daily Telegraph placed a copy of this sketch of the Indian Mutiny on the table for each guest. Among the few non-veterans dining were Lord Curzon and Rudyard Kipling.

R.K. and I went up together from Burwash. Returning in the

evening, I mentioned to him that I had lost my copy of Perceval Landon's book.

'Take mine,' said he, 'it is of more interest to you.'

I never knew a man who could assimilate print so rapidly and correctly as Kipling. At page 105 he has pencilled a note of correction, so that during the dinner and in the intervals between the speeches he must have run his eye over the pages.

In his final chapter, "The Second Relief of Lucknow", Landon had written:

Man after man fell at the guns, but the work went on, "each stepping where his comrade stood the moment that he fell".

Having crossed out the word "moment", Kipling had written in the margin, "instant, verify your quotation."

Yours sincerely  
RICHARD FEILDEN

[That is indeed a collector's piece. As for the corrected quotation, it comes from Sir Walter Scott's "Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field":

The stubborn spear-men still made good  
Their dark impenetrable wood,  
Each stepping where his comrade stood,  
The instant that he fell.

- Ed.]

## "ALDERSHOT IT"

*From Mr T.J. Connell, 32 Southwood Gardens, Hinchley Wood, Esher,  
Surrey KT10 0DE*

Dear Sir,

Mr J. Whitehead (September 1994, page 48) mentions a number of curious military phrases. I think that "an' you're sent to penny-fights an' Aldershot it" must refer to the exercises and war-games that troops would have gone through in the Aldershot area before being sent overseas.

Could I cite John Masters, who in chapter 19 of his autobiographical *Bugles and a Tiger* (1956) refers to:

an immortal remark made . . . by a British soldier listless from

too many years of manoeuvres, *too much Aldershot* [my italics], too much make-believe with blank ammunition on the plains of India and in the more peaceful outposts of Empire. As the first bullets smacked into the rocks over his head, he said in outraged astonishment, "Look 'ere Sir! Them b\*gg\*rs is using ball!"

I can just see Private Learoyd removing his pipe and nodding in sage agreement.

Yours sincerely  
TIM CONNELL

## POINTS FROM OTHER LETTERS

### BLUNDEN ON KIPLING

*From Mrs Helen Greenwood, 26 Great Bounds Drive, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 0TR*

Mrs Greenwood writes with the text of a sonnet, partly about Kipling, which she has found in an anthology. It is by Edmund Blunden (1896-1974), a substantial poet, critic and teacher, though probably best remembered today for his stark prose account of trench fighting in 1914-18, *Undertones of War*.

### THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

There were magicians when my life began  
By tales and ballads working their wide spells,  
As, Rider Haggard, Conan Doyle and Wells –  
And Rudyard Kipling. Their inventions ran  
True to the light of the age, their spirits called  
The wonderful into our quiet lives: and still  
The human touch was there, heroic will  
Was heard sustaining: and we read enthralled.

How Kipling out of rough-cast natures drew  
The song of greatness, from things commonplace  
Showed the unknown, and in the modern race  
Of Progress hailed Romance for ever new,  
We tell. Without his genius in its prime,  
Can we imagine England at that time?



## KIPLING AND HENTY

*From Mr E. P. T. Roney, C.B.E., Ingledew Brown Bennison & Garrett,  
82/84 Fenchurch Street, London EC3M4BY*

Mr Patrick Roney, a newly joined member with vivid recollections of the Indian and other works of G.A. Henty (1832-1902), writes to ask what evidence may exist of Kipling's and Henty's opinions of each other. Though Kipling was much the younger man, his reputation was at its height at the turn of the century – when Henty was still highly productive and hugely popular. The themes chosen by the two writers have some obvious similarities, and it may be supposed that politically they were not far apart.

## BRIEF ENCOUNTER

*From Mrs Mary Heron, Brockenhurst, Golf Lane, Aldeburgh, Suffolk*

At the instance of an Aldeburgh neighbour who is a member of the Society, Mrs Heron has kindly sent us a note describing an unusual encounter that she had with the Kiplings in the 1920s. She rightly feels that, slight though the event was, it is worthy of record, and notes that with the passage of time the number of people who can remember meeting Kipling has become rather small.

"A friend and I," she writes, "were driving one morning through Burwash in Sussex – going rather slowly as one would in such a beautiful village – when I saw two people walking towards us, and recognised one of them as Rudyard Kipling.

"So I said to the girl I was with, 'Quick! Think of something to say! Here comes Kipling, with Mrs Kipling!'

"Well of course there was no time to think what to say: we felt you could hardly be 'lost' in so small a village. There was nothing for it but to stop the car, lean out of the window, and politely say, 'Excuse me; could you tell me the time?'

"The great man, quick as lightning, put his entire head through the car window, pointed at our dashboard clock and said with a smile, 'Oh yes. Look, it's ten minutes to one.' He then withdrew his head, smiled at his wife, and they strolled on, laughing.

"We were so amazed at our stupidity: we did not even have time to say 'Thank you'."

## STALKY'S LITERARY NEPHEW

*From Professor Thomas Pinney, Department of English, Pomona College,  
140 West Sixth Street, Claremont, California CA 91711-6335, U.S.A.*

Professor Pinney, preparing future volumes in his series of *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling*, asks if any reader can supply an answer to a query arising from a letter from Kipling to General L.C. Dunsterville ('Stalky') dated 9 July 1919.

In it Kipling had referred to "your young nephew" (and there was an inference that the nephew had attended the United Services College); the young man had "been writing too", and Kipling had advised him "to go on and trust to his cheek".

Who was this nephew, and what did he write?

## KIPLING AND THE EARLY CINEMA

*From Mr Stephen Bottomore, 27 Roderick Road, London NW3 2NN*

Mr Bottomore is writing a book about the early years of the cinema (roughly from 1895 to 1914), and is interested in the reactions of leading artists and writers to the new medium – whether in their own persons or, in the case of writers, through their fictional characters visiting the cinema (or 'bioscope' or 'moving picture show') and commenting on it.

Kipling is among those on whom he would welcome information. He is aware of the classic references to the early cinematograph in "Mrs. Bathurst" [*Traffics and Discoveries*]; but he wonders if any member of the Society knows of other allusions, either in the published works or correspondence or diaries.

Any contributions should be sent to him at the above address (and copied, please, to me): Mr Bottomore will gratefully acknowledge any help he receives.

" 'FUZZY-WUZZY' "

*From Mr T.J. Connell, Director of Language Studies, City University,  
Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB*

Mr Connell has written to draw attention to newspaper reports of the recent sale by auction, for £29,700, of the Victoria Cross awarded to Lieutenant Percival Scrope Marling for outstanding gallantry at the Battle of Tamai in the Sudan on 13 March 1884.

The *Daily Mail* of 9 November 1994, under a heading, "Kipling hero's V.C. under the hammer", had a brief and in one respect confused article, which stated that the courage of "the Queen's forces" at the battle had "inspired Kipling's politically incorrect Barrack-Room Ballad, 'Fuzzy-Wuzzy' ". In fact it was the courage of the *enemy* – the spear-wielding Sudanese pitted against modern firearms – which the poem celebrates. As for "political incorrectness", it may be in the eye of the beholder, but as Mr Connell says, ' *autres temps, autres moeurs* – the whole poem resounds with admiration for 'a first-class fighting man' ".

*The Times*, also of 9 November 1994, likewise asserted that it was the Battle of Tamai, "and the success of the Sudanese in breaching the British square" on that occasion, that were commemorated by " 'Fuzzy-Wuzzy' ". But this was challenged by a letter on 21 November, the writer of which said he had "always understood" that it was the breaking of the square at Abu Klea on 17 January 1885 which had inspired Kipling's particular tribute to the Sudanese in that "wonderful poem".

Carrington, in his *Complete Barrack-Room Ballads*, favours Abu Klea, though he mis-dates the battle as 24 December 1884. Perhaps one of our readers will produce a convincing argument for one action or the other. – *Ed.*

## VETERAN MEMBERSHIP

*From Mrs R.E. Hobbs, Cramer 1434, 1:B, 1426 Buenos Aires, Argentina*

Mrs Hobbs, writing principally to tell the Secretary about her recent change of address – from the rural hills of Córdoba to metropolitan Buenos Aires – reflects on her long connection with the Society.

"I and my sister, Barbara Santa Cruz, must be the two members of longest standing: our father made us associate members in 1928. We were brought up on Kipling stories – my mother used to read aloud beautifully — and we learned his poems by heart for our own pleasure. As we lived in Patagonia we never went to school – being 'home-taught', and nurtured by a love of literature, encouraged by our mother's reading aloud of Dickens, Smollett, Shakespeare, Austen – you name it, she'd read it to us.

"I always enjoy the *Kipling Journal*. It takes me a long time to read; I am side-tracked again and again, because whenever a story is mentioned I take it down from the shelf and re-read it before carrying on with the *Journal*..."

# THE KIPLING JOURNAL

## AN EXPLANATORY NOTE

The *Kipling Journal*, house magazine of the Kipling Society, is sent quarterly to all members. Its contributions to learning since 1927 have earned it a high reputation. It has published many important items by Kipling not readily found elsewhere, and a vast quantity of valuable historical, literary and bibliographical commentary, in various shapes, by authorities in their field. In the academic study of Kipling, no serious scholar overlooks the *Journal's* wealth of data, soon to be re-indexed. Over two hundred libraries and English Faculties, in a dozen countries, receive it as corporate members of the Society.

However, though scholarly in general tendency, it is not an austere academic production. It aims to entertain as well as to inform. This is both necessary and easy. Necessary because our membership is as representative of the ordinary reader as of the university researcher. Easy because there exists an inexhaustible reservoir of engrossing material – thanks to the great volume and variety of Kipling's writings; the scope of his travels, acquaintance and correspondence; the diversity of his interests and influence; the scale of the events he witnessed; the exceptional fame he attracted in his lifetime; and the international attention he continues to attract.

The Editor is glad to receive, from members and non-members alike, articles or letters bearing on the life and works of Kipling. The range of potential interest is wide, from erudite correspondence and scholarly criticism to such miscellanea as justify attention, e.g. reports of new books or films; press cuttings; sales catalogues; unfamiliar photographs; fresh light on people or places that Kipling wrote about; and of course unpublished letters by Kipling himself, particularly ones of any biographical or bibliographical significance.

Authors of prospective articles should know that length may be crucial: the volume of material coming in steadily exceeds the space available. A page holds under 500 words, so articles of 5000 words, often requiring preface, notes and illustrations, may be hard to accommodate quickly. Even short pieces often have to wait. Naturally, as with other literary societies, contributors are not paid; their reward is the appearance of their work in a periodical of repute.

The Secretary of the Society arranges distribution of the *Journal*, and holds an attractive stock of back numbers for sale. However, items submitted for publication should be addressed to **The Editor, *Kipling Journal*, Weavers, Danes Hill, Woking, Surrey GU22 7HQ, England.**

# THE KIPLING SOCIETY

## AN EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Kipling Society exists for anyone interested in the prose and verse, and the life and times, of Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936). When founded in 1927 by J.H.C. Brooking and a few enthusiasts, it met with vehement and predictable disapproval from Kipling himself; but it quickly gained, and thereafter retained, a substantial membership. It remains today one of the most active and enduring of the many literary and historical societies in Britain. Moreover, being the only one in the world that focuses specifically on Kipling and his place in English literature, it also attracts members from many other countries, who all receive the quarterly *Kipling Journal* (subject of a descriptive note on the previous page).

As an essentially non-profit-making literary organisation, run on a voluntary basis to provide a service to the public as well as to its members, the Kipling Society is a Registered Charity in Britain. Its overall activities are controlled by its Council, though routine management is in the hands of the Secretary and the other honorary officials. However, its large membership in North America is mainly co-ordinated from Rockford College, Illinois, and there is also an active branch in Melbourne, Australia.

For fuller particulars of its organisation, and a list of impending meetings, see pages 4 and 5 of this issue. The Society's main London activities fall into four categories. *First*, maintaining a specialised Library which scholars may consult, and which is located in City University, London; *second*, answering enquiries from the public (e.g. schools, publishers, writers and the media), and providing speakers on request; *third*, arranging a regular programme of lectures, usually but not exclusively in London, and a formal Annual Luncheon with a distinguished Guest Speaker; *fourth*, publishing the *Kipling Journal*.

Kipling, phenomenally popular in his day, appeals still to a wide range of 'common readers' attracted by his remarkable prose and verse style, his singular ability to evoke atmosphere, and his skill in narrative. These unacademic readers, as well as professional scholars of English literature, find much to interest them in the Society and its *Journal*. New members are made welcome. **Particulars of membership are obtained by writing to the Secretary, Kipling Society, P.O. Box 68, Haslemere, Surrey GU27 2YR, England** (or, for those living in North America, to the address at the foot of page 4).

The annual subscription rate is £20 – both for individual and corporate members, whether in Britain or abroad. This remains the 'minimum' rate: many members very helpfully contribute more.

