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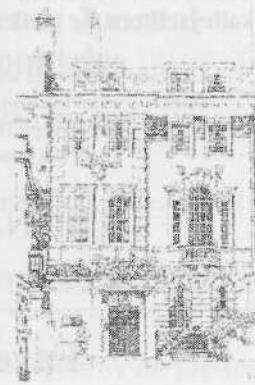

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SECRETARY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

SOME FORTHCOMING EVENTS: SEE ALSO THE 'SOCIETY NOTICES' ON PAGES 69-70

Wednesday 12 April 2000, at 5.30 for 6 p.m. at the Royal Overseas League, Park Place, off St James's Street, London SW1, **The Revd Harry Potter** on "Kipling and the First World War".

Wednesday 3 **May** at 12.30 for 1 p.m. at the Royal Overseas League, the Society's **Annual Luncheon.** The Guest of Honour will be **The Honourable Austin Asche, A.C., Q.C.,** a Kipling scholar and until recently Administrator of the Northern Territory of Australia. Admission strictly **by ticket.** (A booking form was enclosed – for individual members – with the December 1999 *Journal.* If a replacement is needed, urgently contact the Secretary.)

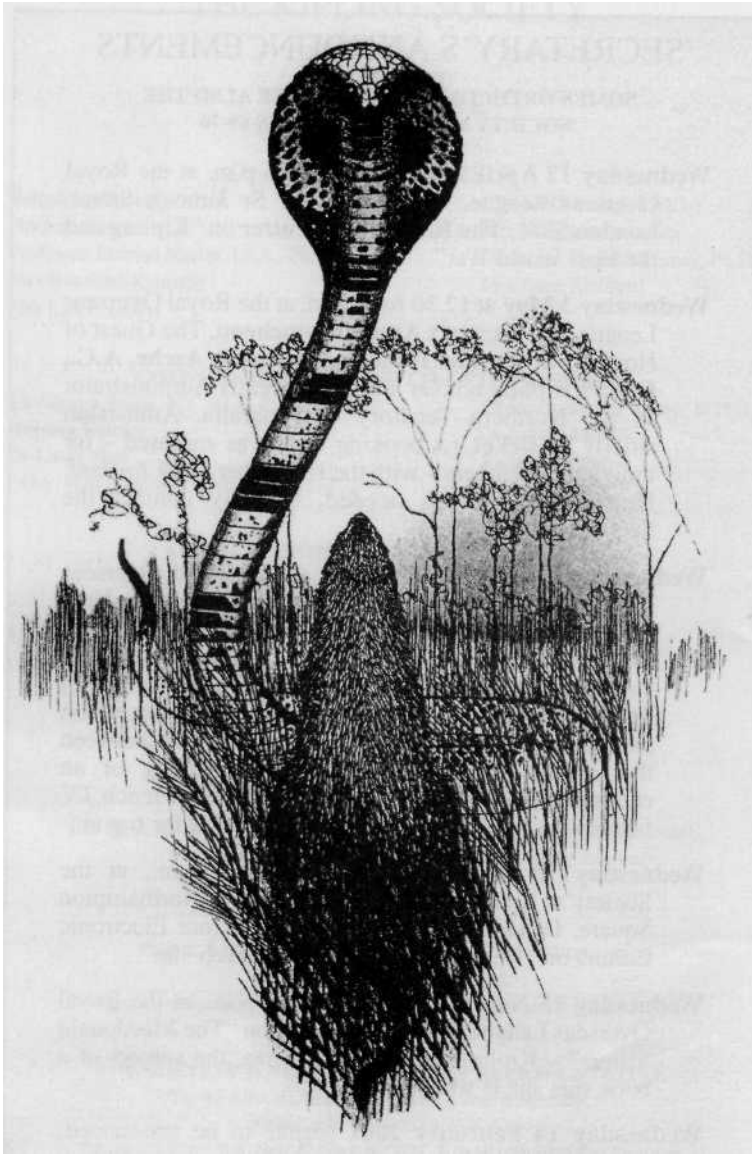
Wednesday 12 July at 4.15 p.m. at the Royal Overseas League, the Society's **Annual General Meeting.** Note that **tea** will be served in the Wrench Room at 3.30 p.m. for those who order in advance. (A booking form is enclosed for individual members, with this *Journal.)* This arrangement will reduce the congestion experienced previously. **Drinks** will be served between the end of the A.G.M. and the beginning of an entertainment which we hope will be a new French TV film about Kipling, and which is scheduled for 6 p.m.

Wednesday 13 September at 5.30 for 6 p.m., at the Society's Library in City University (Northampton Square, London EC1), **John Radcliffe** (our Electronic Editor) on "Developing the Society's Web-site".

Wednesday 15 November at 5.30 for 6 p.m., at the Royal Overseas League, **Judith Flanders** on "The Macdonald Sisters" – Kipling's mother and aunts, the subject of a book that she is writing.

Wednesday 14 February 2001 (venue to be announced) **Jan Morris** (author of a brilliant trilogy on the British Empire) on "Kipling and the Empire".

March 2000 SHARAD KESKAR & MICHAEL SMITH



The mongoose 'Rikki-Tikki-Tavi' meets the cobra, 'Nag'. A drawing by Charles Keeping, for *'Rikki-Tikki-Tavi' and Other Animal Stories* by Rudyard Kipling (London; Macmillan Children's Books, 1984). For comments on the extraordinary skill that enables a mongoose to confront and kill a cobra, turn to page 8.

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A NOTE ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATION AT PAGE 6

Young Rikki-Tikki, though inexperienced, effectively deals with two cobras and a karait, displaying the wonderful "quickness of eye and of foot" on which his life depends. Readers may wonder if Kipling exaggerated a mongoose's ability to match the lightning speed of a cobra's deadly strike.

Evidence that he did not can be found in an article by Major-General Sir George Younghusband (1859-1944) in *Blackwood's Magazine.* Written in the 1920s, it was collected in 1934 in *Soldiers' Tales* (volume VII of a series, *Blackwood's Tales from the Outposts).* It describes an unusual sporting event held by the Guides (Younghusband's Indian Army regiment). It was a contest indoors between one soldier's pet mongoose and another's wild but captive cobra. Younghusband explained that a cobra cannot bite when flat on the ground, but must erect about half its length to strike. When thus erect, it commands a circle in reach of a lunge by its head. "Within the radius of that uplifted head is death. Outside it, even by the fraction of an inch, is perfect safety." This the mongoose understood.

At first, the cobra showed no aggressive tendency, but kept still, so the mongoose's handler began to toss pieces of meat in the direction of the snake, to induce the mongoose to encroach on its space. The first piece fell just within the strike-radius, and the mongoose would not touch it. The second fell a little short of the first, and the mongoose went and ate it, calmly ignoring two strikes by the cobra which hit the floor just short of their target. The cobra stood there, hissing angrily. The mongoose nonchalantly turned broadside on, presenting a larger, seemingly safer target. The furious cobra duly struck again, and in a flash the mongoose deftly caught it by the back of the neck, bit through its spine, and, killed it at once.

EDITORIAL

OBITUARY : LORD ANNAN, O.B.E.

It is with sadness that we record the death on 21 February, at the age of 83, of one of our Vice-Presidents, Lord Annan. Our deep sympathy goes to Lady Annan and their family.

Noel Annan was endowed with exceptional mental and physical energy, and a brilliant intellect – qualities amply brought out in his distinguished and many-faceted career. Having gone up to King's College, Cambridge as an exhibitioner, and gained a 'double first' in history, he joined the Military Intelligence department of the War Office in 1940, and spent the next four years in clandestine and sensitive work there, before moving at the end of the war to a staff post as a Lieutenant-Colonel with the Control Commission in occupied Germany. He vividly described his experiences in an admirable book, *Changing Enemies* (1995), the title of which reflected the transformation of the Soviet Union from ally to potential enemy, while Germany underwent the converse change.

By 1947 he was back at Cambridge with a fellowship at King's, starting on an academic career. I knew him quite well from 1949, and I remember his well-deserved reputation as a dazzling lecturer. But it was as an administrator that he would go on to make his most conspicuous mark. He became Provost of King's before he was 40, and was later Provost of University College, London, and eventually Vice-Chancellor of London University.

Not that those busy appointments precluded his acceptance of a wide range of part-time but long-term functions. For instance, he was variously Chairman of the Committee on the Future of Broadcasting (and author of the 'Annan Report' in 1977); Vice-Chairman of the Commission on Public Schools; a Director of the Royal Opera House; a Trustee of the British Museum; Chairman of the National Gallery; and President of the London Library. Nor did his restless diligence in these and other roles (including parliamentary attendance after he became a Life Peer in 1965) keep him from much miscellaneous but always stylish public speaking and writing. In *Who's Who* he gave as his recreation "Writing English prose" – and if that phrase suggests confidence in the quality of the product, it is fully vindicated by the elegant style that adorns his string of books – from a life of Leslie Stephen (1951) to the *tours de force* of *Our Age* (1990) and *The Dons* (1999).

Kipling interested him greatly, and he gave a lot of thought to what might be termed Kipling's 'philosophy'. In that connection he wrote a perceptive and original article on "Kipling's Place in the History of Ideas", first published in *Victorian Studies* in 1960, then collected by Andrew Rutherford in *Kipling's Mind and Art* (1964). In it Annan considered the 'sociological' viewpoint of Kipling, and the significance of his reactions to the perceived pressures and demands of society, and to the problems of social order, both in Britain (with its chronic 'Condition of England' anxieties) and in the inherently precarious superstructure of India under the Raj. It was a strenuously reasoned and persuasive study, in which Annan's respect for Kipling as "one of the *cleverest* of Victorian writers" (his emphasis) was very apparent. Annan himself was undoubtedly one of the cleverest of critics.

As Guest of Honour at our Annual Luncheon in 1986, he delivered an eloquent speech (published in the *Journal,* June 1986); and in 1991 he accepted a Vice-Presidency of the Society. Though (as he had warned us) he was seldom able to attend our meetings, he always had a friendly interest in our affairs; and just a few days before he died he took the trouble to write to me with encouraging comments about the high quality of the *Journal.* The Kipling Society is among a number of institutions that will be the poorer for his passing.

ANOTHER NEW BIOGRAPHY

One might reasonably suppose that the Law of Diminishing Returns would apply to full-scale biographies of Kipling, and that the production of three such books in a single year would progressively wear out the subject, clog the market and reduce demand. I expressed some unease on this account in my reviews of Harry Ricketts's *The Unforgiving Minute* (March 1999) and Andrew Lycett's *Rudyard Kipling* (December 1999). And now the third has appeared: *The Long Trail : Kipling Round the World* by Mrs Meryl Macdonald Bendle (writing as 'Meryl Macdonald'). It was published in late 1999 by Tideway House, P.O. Box 26, Bristol BS9 1YH, and is obtainable from the publishers at £16.95 – though a concessionary price of £14.95, postage in the UK free, is available to members of the Society.

It is a very attractively produced hardback, quite substantial (xxvi + 261 pages), well illustrated (with a number of previously unpublished pictures), and extremely readable. The author has a sure grasp of her subject and a very pleasant style, enlivened by a good sense of humour. Our readers will remember that several passages from this book have already appeared in the *Journal* as advance excerpts under the heading

of "Kipling the Globe-Trotter" (see our issues of June and September 1997, and June and December 1998). These have enabled us to get the feel of the impending book, and to look forward in an informed way to its appearance. Now that it is out, I see that my unease about excessive coverage of Kipling's extraordinary career was misplaced. This book proves that the subject is large enough, and varied enough, to take three nearly simultaneous studies without tedious repetitiveness, especially when the three authors have sufficiently different standpoints and perspectives. Certainly Meryl Macdonald's approach to Kipling is strongly coloured by her Macdonald relationship as his first cousin once removed. Fortunately for the balance and truthfulness of the book, she is ready to criticise as well as to praise, but she does not conceal her underlying sympathy for her subject, and her confidence that the story of Kipling's life is remarkable enough to justify an approach which, like Ricketts's and Lycett's books, is free from prejudiced political 'spin', free from the jargon of highbrow literary analysis, and free from sales-driven compulsion to search for revelations of psychiatric disorder in Kipling's personality, or for evidence of murky gothic goings-on at Bateman's.

Apart from the family connection Meryl Macdonald has one other *parti pris* as Kipling's biographer. She is an enthusiast, and a very knowledgeable one, in the matter of cars and ships, and this gives her a particular authority in describing Kipling's journeys in what we can now recognise as the golden age of travel by car and by steamer. (She had already written a booklet, *Kipling the Motoring Man*, for the National Trust.) The result is that her accounts of Kipling's travels gain an added dimension from her expert comments. There is a powerfully romantic flavour to this aspect of Kipling's life, as Kipling himself was aware. His beautiful poem, "The Long Trail", contains in verse after verse some of the most self-consciously romantic lines he ever wrote –

Then home, get her home, where the drunken rollers comb,
And the shouting seas drive by,
And the engines stamp and ring, and the wet bows reel and swing,
And the Southern Cross rides high!

Meryl Macdonald took "The Long Trail" for her title, and although her book is a general biography, she touches on the special romance of travel whenever occasion offers. We must congratulate her on a considerable achievement : this attractive book deserves to sell well.

KIPLING'S "FRIENDLY BROOK"

by INGER K. BRØGGER

[Ms Inger K. Brøgger, who is Danish, has an M.A. degree in English Literature, from Durham University: the subject of the dissertation that she submitted for it was Kipling. She had had a fondness for Kipling since childhood, when her parents had read to her many of his stories, "quite brilliantly" translated into Danish; and they had also introduced her to Charles Carrington's biography.

As a student, she had been well grounded in Kipling criticism, finding much to interest her in Shamsul Islam's *Kipling's Law;* Joyce Tompkins's *The Art of Rudyard Kipling;* and *Aspects of Kipling's Art* by a fellow Dane, Professor C. A. Bodelsen. By 1998, when she first got in touch with me, she had completed a course of study for a *'Cand. Mag.' degree* at the University of Copenhagen. For that, her *'speciale'* or thesis was a 35,000-word dissertation, with the title, *A Fraction Good Enough to be Drawn Upon Later: A Study of Rudyard Kipling's Last Three Collections of Short Stories.*

The next step, she decided, would be to adapt her *'speciale'* into an enlarged thesis, *"Devious Discourse: Rudyard Kipling and the Short Story",* to be submitted with an application to proceed with a Ph.D. degree course at Copenhagen University. Her text would include close studies of two of Kipling's short stories which she felt would particularly repay scrutiny; and with encouragement from Lisa Lewis of our Society she offered these to the *Kipling Journal.* I am very glad to publish them – one, on "Friendly Brook" *(A Diversity of Creatures),* in this issue; while the other, on "The Manner of Men" *(Limits and Renewals),* will follow in the next. They are admirably thought-provoking. – *Ed.]*

"Friendly Brook" was first published in the *Metropolitan Magazine* in March 1914, and was collected in *A Diversity of Creatures* (1917). Reviewers of that collection received this story in particular very favourably. It is singled out as the best story in the collection, or at least one of the best, in no fewer than six of the ten reviews I have found.[1]

The unsigned review in the *Morning Post,* for example, thinks it is "a jewel in short stories, as near to perfection as the short story can be brought, even by such a master in that kind as Mr. Kipling." On the other hand, the *Athenaeum* mentions "Friendly Brook" only for the "sang-froid" with which Kipling here dealt with the sixth Commandment [which forbids murder]; and the *Observer* and the *Times Literary Supplement* pay no attention to the story.

Revenge or punishment is a recurring theme in *A Diversity of Creatures,* and is treated in many different ways. In "As Easy as

A.B.C", it is the just punishment by the 'Big Brother' state. In "Friendly Brook", the superstitious peasants see it as the gods' intervention against city-dwellers. In "The Village that Voted the Earth was Flat", revenge is a frighteningly well-planned, crushing, and only supposedly funny destruction through the media. In "Regulus", it is an edifying and pedagogic punishment. "The Vortex" is a comic fable of the just and accidental punishment of the political bore and of his pan-Imperial 'idea'. In " 'Swept and Garnished' ", the punishment of the self-righteous Berlin lady is just, crushing and harrowing. Finally, in "Mary Postgate", the (supposed) revenge carried out by the spinster is horrible and grotesque. The differences between these stories are so stark that they, more than anything, set off the 'diversity' of A *Diversity of Creatures.*

*

A brief outline of "Friendly Brook" may here be useful before embarking upon a closer reading. In wet November weather in pre-war Sussex, two elderly woodmen, Jesse and Jabez, are working on an overgrown hedge in a valley, and come to discuss a strange remark once made to them by the owner of the nearby field, Jim Wickenden, who apparently feels that he "owes" the brook, which is flooding his field, "a snatch at his hay".

Jesse, the elder, tells Jabez the story of how Wickenden, after his lazy wife had died, and his domineering mother had moved in with him, adopted a child through a London agency – a girl, Mary, who grew up lazy and unattractive.

One day, Mary's natural father had arrived and demanded to have her back. Jim Wickenden, timid and afraid to use violence (having spent six months in prison for a crime of violence as a young man), had tried to buy him off; but this only made the man, who was an alcoholic, return regularly for more money. One day, Jim left the house, because the man had sent word that he was coming, and Jim could not face him. Instead, he left him to the attention of his fierce, though mute, old mother, and went to work by the brook with Jesse.

At dusk that evening, they found a dead body in the brook, whom Jim recognised as the blackmailer. Jim took from the body the money his mother had evidently given the man, and put him back in the brook. Later the same evening, Jim and Jesse discovered that Jim's mother had given the man not only money but half a bottle of whisky as well. Jim had only laughed when he heard this.

Next day, Jesse had observed, significantly, that the plank bridge

across the brook, leading to Jim Wickenden's farm, had been shifted by the previous day's flooding. The other woodman, Jabez, remarked that "I dunno how it *looks* like, but let be how 'twill"[2]; and concluded that the blackmailer "hadn't no business to come down from Lunnon . . . threatenin' to take away" a child whom others had looked after. To which Jesse replied [p 62] that in fact the man "had the business", and "had the law with him", but that "he had the drink with him, too, an' that was where he failed." The brook, which at the beginning of the story "growled", was now, at the end of it, mumbling softly.

*

"Friendly Brook" is formed as a conversation between Jesse and Jabez. It is mainly Jesse talking, and telling the story in his broad Sussex dialect – which is indicated without drastic changes of the spelling[3] – but Jabez takes an active part, and Jesse is not, like Marlow (Conrad's narrator in *Heart of Darkness* and other stories), just once in a while saying, "Pass the bottle." Jabez's intruding comments serve as constant reminders of the frame of the story, and of who the two speakers are, for their slow and deliberate taking stock of the hedge and the job in hand has proved them expert workers and judicious men. The main story has a strong local and authentic feel, through the use of Sussex dialect, and Jesse's blunt view of things.

The mechanism of a framed story formed as a personal narrative is, of course, traditional, and known from such major works as the *Decameron,* the *Arabian Nights* and the *Canterbury Tales.*

*

The opening of "Friendly Brook" gives a vivid picture of wet November in the Sussex countryside, with a fog so thick that "one could scarcely see a cow's length across a field." The humidity, and the activity of the water everywhere are described in the first paragraph; and it is "all delivering to the brook below". The brook is referred to as "she", and her domineering presence in the valley, and in the story, is established. The reader feels that the valley is thick, not only with fog, but with superstition and animism. "Jesse listened, too. There was a growl in the brook's roar as though she worried something hard." [p 46]

Jim Wickenden is described as a man very similar to Jesse and Jabez: a hard-working, cautious, even secretive man, who is suspicious of the authorities, and who almost never smokes or drinks. He has been taught in his youth to tame his aggressive impulses, having suffered six

months in jail. He is a mild, almost docile man, who has been bullied, first by a lazy wife, then by a powerful mother, and finally by his adopted daughter, Mary.

It was Jim's mother who had given him the idea of adopting a child, "to furnish out the house with a child, like, and to keep him off of gettin' a noo woman. He mostly done what his mother contrived." [p 49] When Mary's "Lunnon father" appears, and wants to take Mary away, Jim allows him to blackmail them; and he worries and sweats.

> "The law's *with* the man. I walk about daytimes thinkin' o' it till I sweats my underclothes wringin', an' I lie abed nights thinkin' o' it till I sweats my sheets all of a sop . . ." [p 54]

He is tyrannised over even more by his old mother, who disapproves; but he refuses to give in, though in the end [p 57] he has "fair cried dunghill an' run".

Mary is presented as a very unattractive character, lazy, unfriendly, ungrateful, haughty; and the devotion of Jim Wickenden and his mother seems wholly undeserved: "Her Maker ain't done much for her outside nor yet in." [p 51]

She is unfeeling: "I never knowed her show any sort o' kindness to nobody – not even when Jim's mother was took dumb." And she is lazy, too, for "She don't put on an apron o' Mondays 'thout being druv to it – in the kitchen *or* the hen-house." [p 51]

But she also represents the modern times; she is studying to become a schoolteacher, and it is Mary who complains in writing to the "Lunnon Children's Society" after her natural father has turned up. Of course,

> "I lay she hadn't been proper polite in her letters to 'em, for they answered middlin' short . . . there had been an oversight . . . I reckon they had sent Mary out as a orphan instead o' havin' a father. Terrible awkward!" [p 52]

Jesse's disapproval is mixed with an amusing under-statement. It is a victory for Jim Wickenden (who has always been bullied), when the blackmailer is shown to have got the better of Jim's dumb but formidable mother, too:

> *"She* won't be able to crow no more over *me* about givin' him money. *I* never give him more than a sovereign. She's give him two!" an' he trousers 'em, laughin' all the time. [p 59]

The degree of Jim Wickenden's devotion to Mary, and ensuing hatred of the man who will take her away from him, is shown in his treatment of the dead body. Jim and Jesse "pooked him back into the middle of the brook" [p 59] – not only as an act of vengeance, but also to avoid an inquest, something which the intensely private Jim Wickenden obviously fears, because Mary's parentage and her father's end would then become public knowledge; and something which Jesse does not want to waste a day on, when there is no pecuniary reward.

The brutality of this is brought home to the reader by the description of the body when it eventually came to official notice, downstream. It "had polted and polted up agin' so many bridges and banks, like, they couldn't make naun out of him." [p 61] Meanwhile, Jesse and Jim Wickenden have carried out their own inquest. ("I lay he fell into the brook," says Jesse. "I lay he did," says Jim. [p 58])

But Jesse also checks the primitive plank bridge to Jim Wickenden's farm. His discovery that the plank was "liable to tilt ye sideways if you wasn't careful," because "the brook had gulled out the bank a piece under one eend o' the plank" [p 61], makes Jabez draw his own conclusion:

> "Well, I dunno how it *looks* like, but let be how 'twill, he hadn't no business to come down from Lunnon tarrifyin' people, an' threatenin' to take away children which they'd hobbed up for their lawful own – even if 'twas Mary Wickenden."

As Jabez obviously does, the reader suspects that Jim Wickenden may have helped the brook to assist him – that perhaps he himself, and not the brook, made the plank tilt sideways. Or perhaps his mother was not only being "too tender-'earted to live" [p 60], as her son seemed to think, when she had served the blackmailer half a bottle of whisky. She might have counted on the help of the brook, too. But nothing is said; and the only suggestion is Jabez's "I dunno how it *looks* like …" while Jesse keeps a straight face.

Also, there is the part played by the brook. Before Jesse tells Jabez his story, "There was a growl in the brook's roar as though she worried something hard." [p 46] And then in the final sentence of the story [p 62], "The brook had changed her note again. It sounded as though she were mumbling something soft." This and the title of the story suggest another explanation – that it is the brook itself which, as a river god, *ex machina*, has done away with an evil intruder in 'her' valley. Jim Wickenden, of course, seems or pretends to believe this. That Jesse and Jabez also at least partly believe it, is suggested by the description

of the brook in the frame.

The frame of the story – the woodmen trimming a hedge – gives important clues to the story itself. Three of the characters in the narrative – Mary, Jim's wife, and Mary's father – are not from the countryside, and are all very unattractive, primarily because they are lazy. This is how Jesse sees them, and how he expects city people to be. Jabez asks him if the blackmailer did not have a job, and Jesse bluntly replies, "He told me he was a printer. I reckon, though, he lived on the rates like the rest of 'em up there in Lunnon." [p 55]

Modern life, the city of lazy drunkards, is changing the countryside, with adopted children who study to become schoolteachers, fathers with 'papers', and tarred roads for automobiles which change the way of nature. As Jesse tells Jabez [p 47]:

> " 'Tisn't as 'twas in the old days, when the waters soaked in and soaked out in the way o' nature. It rooshes off they tarred roads all of a lump, and naturally every drop is bound to descend into the valley. And there's tarred roads both two sides this valley for ten mile. That's what I told Jim Wickenden when they tarred the roads last year. But he's a valley-man. He don't hardly ever journey up-hill."

Jim Wickenden belongs to the old order; he is a valley-man who perceives his problems according to "the way of nature", and solves them likewise.

*

In his autobiography (published posthumously), *Something of Myself*, Kipling recommends that writers edit their work very carefully and repeatedly:

> In an auspicious hour, read your final draft and consider faithfully every paragraph, sentence and word, blacking out where requisite. Let it lie by to drain as long as possible. At the end of that time, re-read and you should find that it will bear a second shortening. Finally, read it aloud, alone and at leisure. Maybe a shade more brushwork will then indicate or impose itself . . . I have had tales by me for three or five years which shortened themselves almost yearly.[4]

Bodelsen points out how Kipling employs different kinds of 'pointers'

in his 'late manner', one of which is the repetition of some word or phrase:

> The first time the reader comes across it he may not pay much attention to it, but with each recurrence he is more likely to realize that here is something that the writer is calling attention to; or the word or phrase may remain in his subconscious mind, and thus prepare the ground for the understanding of some meaning hinted at later in the tale.[5]

Thus, it is significant that the word 'law' appears no less than nine times in the seventeen pages of "Friendly Brook". Etymologically, 'law' derives from 'lie' – that which lies or is fixed[6] – what is there and cannot be changed, like the "way of nature". It is not right, and never has been, that the man who abandoned his child should have the right to take it away from those who have raised it and who love it. Jim Wickenden is law-abiding in its real sense when he lets the brook rid him of his problem. The brook becomes, and is, 'that which lies'.

The two woodmen in the frame-story are not only trimming a hedge, they are also taming a piece of wild nature, or rather a civilisation run wild, and reinstating order in chaos. They are presented as upholders of civilisation, working in concordance with nature –

> By noon a length of unclean jungle had turned itself into a cattle-proof barrier, tufted here and there with little plumes of the sacred holly which no woodman touches without orders. "Now we've a witness-board to go by!" said Jesse at last. [p 46]

Jesse and Jabez have a "witness-board" to go by, because they are genuine champions of order, the old order. T. S. Eliot points out how important is Kipling's "vision of the people of the soil". Eliot does not see it as a Christian vision,

> but it is at least a pagan vision – a contradiction of the materialistic view; it is an insight into a harmony with nature which must be re-established if the truly Christian imagination is to be recovered by Christians. What he is trying to convey is, again, not a programme of agrarian reform, but a point of view unintelligible to the industrialised mind.[7]

Eliot seems to suggest that Kipling's vision is Christian in the sense that it points to people's mutual interdependence, that you are your

brother's keeper; but Eliot has his own, and not Kipling's, axe to grind in his comments about recovering "the truly Christian imagination".

This view would certainly find many advocates today among 'Eco-Christians'; but it is doubtful whether Kipling would have been interested. Jesse and Jabez represent paganism in the sense that they belong to the land, like the trees and the hedges; and they play an important part in the narrative. The 'witness-board' of Jesse and Jabez points to the fact that they are witnesses to the changes taking place in the countryside; but they also have a 'witness-board' to go by, in the sense that, as ancient keepers of the land, they are the only proper judges of Jim Wickenden's actions; and they acquit him.

Here T. S. Eliot's comment about the "truly Christian imagination" is relevant, because Jesse and Jabez *are* Jim Wickenden's keepers, and they will protect him against the evil of the modern city's "industrialised mind". The brook is the presence which finally sweeps away and clears up the mess of the modern city law.

The opening of "Friendly Brook" – "The valley was so choked with fog that one could hardly see a cow's length across a field" – may be an allusion to the famous opening of Dickens's *Bleak House,* in which the fog and mud of paper injustice centres in the Lord High Chancellor in his High Court of Chancery in London, "making a pretence of equity,"[8] and in which, in stark contrast to London, "the waters are out in Lincolnshire," and "the soft loppings and prunings of the woodman's axe can make no crash or crackle as they fall." It is in Lincolnshire that Lady Dedlock is "bored to death" by watching rural happiness in the rain.

The fog at the beginning of "Friendly Brook" represents, on the other hand, the superstition and animism of the country people, as well as their conservatism. These forces and beliefs are all seen as benevolent; and their embodiment, the brook, represents justice, albeit not a courtroom justice but a primitive 'eye for an eye' justice. This is the opposite of the paper law, i.e. injustice, of the Lord High Chancellor in *Bleak House,* which suffocates every spark of life. The fog of "Friendly Brook" blurs the outlines of things and actions, and protects cautious and good country people against intruding eyes and threats.

The narrative devices employed by Kipling in "Friendly Brook", frame and narrator, are, as already mentioned, traditional; and would have been more recently seen and known to the reviewers from Conrad. The rural setting and the characteristics of the narrators would have reminded them of Hardy. Indeed, the picture Kipling gives of Sussex country folk leads James Harrison to say that "the story might

almost, one feels, have been written by Hardy."[9] It is no surprise, then, that the reviewers received it with acclaim.

NOTES

1. I found reviews of *A Diversity of Creatures* in *The Times Literary Supplement* (19.4.1917); the *Saturday Review* (21.4.1917); the *Evening Standard* (18.4.1917); the *Observer* (22.4.1917); the *Morning Post* (17.4.1917); the *Daily Telegraph* (17.4.1917); the *Sunday Times* (22.4.1917); the *Spectator* (21.4.1917); the *New York Times* (6.5.1917); and the *Athenaeum* (May 1917). It is interesting to see how few of the literary publications so much as acknowledged the book's existence. There was no mention of it in the *New Republic;* the *Nation;* the *Bookman;* the *Edinburgh Review;* the *Quarterly Review; Blackwood's Magazine* or the *Nineteenth Century and After.*

2. Page references to Kipling's "Friendly Brook" are to its publication by Macmillan, London, in the standard Pocket Edition of Kipling's works. It has also been published by Penguin in 1994.

3. According to Philip Mason, a friend told him that the talk was authentic Sussex, and identifiably East Sussex, not West. *(Kipling: the Glass, the Shadow and the Fire,* London, Jonathan Cape, 1975) p 219.

4. Kipling, *Something of Myself* (London, Macmillan, 1937) p 208.

5. C.A. Bodelsen, *Aspects of Kipling's Art* (Manchester University Press, 1964) pp 105-6. See also an article by Professor Danny Karlin, "Repetition-work and Richness", *(Kipling Journal,* September 1999, pp 54-62; and December 1999, pp 11-21.)

6. Walter W. Skeat, *The Concise Dictionary of English Etymology.*

1. T.S. Eliot, "Rudyard Kipling". Introduction to *A Choice of Kipling's Verse* (London: Faber & Faber, 1941) p 33.

8. Charles Dickens, *Bleak House,* 1853 (Penguin, 1985) p 50.

9. James Harrison, *Rudyard Kipling* (Boston: Twayne, 1982) p 99.

THE ILBERT BILL

by GEORGE ENGLE

[In November 1995 Sir George Engle, K.C.B., Q.C., (a former First Parliamentary Counsel, who is now Chairman of our Council), addressed a London meeting of the Kipling Society with a very informative talk on "The Ilberts, and the Ilbert Bill". He did not supply a formal *verbatim* text for the *Journal*, because he had not used one, but in our December 1995 issue, at pages 48-49, as a partial substitute, we printed his very favourable review of *The Ilberts in India, 1882 to 1886* (London, BACSA, 1995), a book by Mary Bennett (granddaughter of Sir Courtenay Ilbert, G.C.B., K.C.S.I. – as he later became).

This was the book that had first prompted Sir George's interest in the Ilbert Bill, and his review of it predictably embodied some points he had made a month earlier in his talk. The book covered a wider field than the Bill, and provided an evocative glimpse of the way of life of expatriates such as the Ilberts, in British India.

Though Sir George's review, with its description of the social life of a leading British family in Calcutta and Simla, thus reflected a part of his talk, I hoped that one day a somewhat fuller text of what he had specifically said on the subject of the Bill could be reconstructed. Sir George has now done this, and I am glad to print it. In this text he confines himself to the Bill, and consciously ignores various social and family connections, vividly recorded in Mary Bennett's book. In a note accompanying his text, he writes : "All the research underlying this article was done by Mary Bennett. I have done little more than extract and bring together the material relating to the Ilbert Bill contained in her fascinating book, my enthusiastic review of which is in the *Kipling Journal* of December 1995."

The controversial progress of the Bill is a part of the history of the Raj, and it also marks a turning-point in Kipling's life by obliging him – as he admitted in chapter III of *Something of Myself*- to confront the painful fact that so long as he remained a salaried employee of a newspaper he would never attain real independence. He was then eighteen years old. – *Ed.]*

> "In the early 1880s a Liberal Government had come into power . . . Just then, it was a matter of principle that Native Judges should try white women . . . No one had asked for any such measure – least of all the Judiciary concerned . . . A pleasant English gentleman called CR Ilbert had been imported to father and god-father the Bill . . ." [From chapter III of Kipling's autobiography, *Something of Myself]*

Except that a Liberal Government headed by Mr Gladstone was elected in 1880, and that the splendidly named Courtenay Peregrine Ilbert

(1841-1924) was a pleasant enough English gentleman, all the above statements made by Kipling at the end of his life are, as I hope to show, wrong.

At the end of 1881, the post of Legal Member of the Viceroy of India's Council fell vacant, and was offered to CR Ilbert, then aged 40, a barrister whose busy Chancery practice included assisting the Government in the drafting of Parliamentary Bills. At Oxford, he had obtained a double first in 'Mods' and 'Greats' at Balliol, where he was taught by the celebrated Benjamin Jowett (who at that time held very radical views), and he had won an impressive number of University scholarships. The appointment, which was normally for five years, carried a salary four times Ilbert's comfortable income at the Bar; and after discussing the matter with his wife and various friends, he accepted, travelled in April 1882 to Simla – the hill station which from March to October each year was the seat of government – and was duly sworn in as a member of the Viceroy's Council.

All power in India was vested in the Viceroy in Council – a body (slightly smaller than the governing body of a typical Oxford college) which ruled over an area stretching from the borders of Afghanistan to the delta of the Irrawaddy. It consisted of the Viceroy, six 'official' members and the Commander-in-Chief, plus the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab or of Bengal (according to whether the Government was for the time being seated in Simla or in Calcutta). The business of government was divided between seven Departments (each of them headed by one of the official Members of Council, and run by a Secretary). Ilbert was head of the Law Department.

When acting as the Legislative Council, Council included ten 'additional' Members nominated by the Viceroy – namely four nominated government officials, four nominated Indians, and two nominated Englishmen from outside official circles. In Ilbert's time these last two were (1) the President of the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce; and (2) Griffith Evans, a leading member of the Calcutta Bar (who was to become a vigorous opponent of the Ilbert Bill).

The 18 legislators met once a week, sitting round a table. They did not rise to speak. The public sat round in an outer ring, and the proceedings were followed closely by the Calcutta press, which included papers written in English and in various Indian languages.

Describing his job to his mother, Ilbert wrote:

> "Besides the regular work of my Department, which consists in advising on legal. . . questions concerned with the administration of the country, and in the preparation of legislative measures, I am consulted privately by the Viceroy on all the most important

> questions that come before the Council for decision. In fact, absurd as it may seem, I am a kind of Lord Chancellor, Attorney-General and [chief legislative draftsman] rolled into one."

A new Criminal Procedure Bill, the work of Ilbert's predecessor, Whitley Stokes, was enacted early in 1882 after prolonged discussion. During its Select Committee stage, the senior Indian member of the Legislative Council, Sir Jotindra Tagore, had raised privately the question of the jurisdiction of Indian magistrates and judges. The code preserved the requirement that, outside the three great cities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, a European British subject on a criminal charge could only be tried by a European British subject (and so not by an Indian judge or magistrate). The case for relaxing this rule arose mainly because Indians were beginning to enter the higher, or "covenanted" Indian Civil Service via the London examination, and were therefore becoming eligible for relatively senior judicial posts. Lord Ripon, the Viceroy, undertook to consider the matter, and Sir Jotindra did not press it.

In fact the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir Ashley Eden, had made the same point at about the same time, expressing the view that the Indians in the covenanted service who had "attained the position of District Magistrate or Sessions Judge should have entrusted to them full powers over all classes, whether European or native, within their jurisdictions."

The Executive Council consulted the Provincial Governments. No clear general view emerged, but nearly all agreed that at least Indian District Magistrates and Sessions Judges should have full jurisdiction. Enter, at this point, Ilbert. Explaining his part in the affair to Jowett in the following year, he wrote :

> "The extent of my responsibility for the Bill is that when the replies of Local Governments came up to Simla, and the Council were divided in opinion as to how far it would be sensible to go in altering the law, I suggested a middle course, which commended itself to the majority of Council and to the Secretary of State in Council at home, and which was embodied in the Bill. As to the kind and amount of feeling which the Bill was likely to excite, I had no knowledge of my own, and was guided by the opinion of people like Sir Ashley Eden and Sir Steuart Bailey, both of whom thoroughly know the planting districts of Bengal and who certainly did not anticipate such a storm."

Ilbert had, in fact, suggested a way out of the difficulty that would have occurred to any experienced legislative draftsman, namely, "If the

policy-makers are uncertain how far they want to go, implement the agreed policy expressly in the Bill, and take power to go further by subordinate legislation or executive action." What he actually proposed was :

(a) to give full jurisdiction *ex officio* to all District Officers and Sessions Judges; and
(b) to enable full jurisdiction to be conferred individually on officials (whether European or Indian) of various other categories.

Had these powers been exercised at that time in all possible cases, only about twenty Indians would have acquired the power to try Europeans.

Ilbert's proposals were circulated to the members of the Viceroy's Council, and won enough support for Lord Ripon to refer them to the Secretary of State for India (Lord Hartington) in the autumn of 1882; and in reply Hartington told Ripon that he did not expect the Council of India (a U.K. consultative body) to raise any objections. The dispatch conveying approval arrived from London just after Christmas 1882.

There had, however, been a slip-up in London. Sir Henry Maine, a predecessor of Ilbert and a member of the Council of India, had warned that Council by letter that "the great explosions of European feeling have generally had this class of question for their pretext", and had suggested that Lord Ripon should be warned personally of this, and advised to take soundings in the European community before the Bill was introduced. The Secretary of State, Lord Hartington, forgot all about this – some said because at the material time he was just off to the races – with the result that no warning was sent; and no soundings among unofficial Europeans were taken before Ilbert introduced his Bill.

There had also been a slip-up in India, where, because the proposed change had originally been put forward by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, it was assumed that there was no need to send Bengal the circular enquiry which went to the other Provinces. The Calcutta Bench and Bar thus discovered that their colleagues in Bombay and Madras had been consulted on a matter of which they knew nothing.

The English community in Calcutta was substantial and long-established. Members of the same families reappeared there in successive generations, whether as civilian officials, soldiers, merchants or planters. The violence of the reaction to the Bill was entirely unexpected by Lord Ripon and his advisers. The *Englishman*, the chief Calcutta daily, published a leader condemning it; and a campaign of opposition – launched, it was said, in the Library of the

Calcutta Bar – was rapidly taken over by the Anglo-Indian business community. A letter in the *Englishman,* signed "X", asked –

> "What would more please our Indian fellow-subjects than to bully and disgrace a wretched Englishwoman? The higher her husband's station and the greater his respectability, the greater the delight of her torturer."

Second Reading having been fixed for 23 February 1883, the opponents called a protest meeting for the day before. Ilbert visited Calcutta from Simla to try and calm the situation, and on his advice Second Reading was postponed to 9 March. As a result, the protest meeting was put off for a week; but the letters in the *Englishman* and other Anglo-Indian papers became ever more violent, urging railway workers to strike, Volunteer forces to disband, and even soldiers to mutiny; and there were protest meetings in other parts of India.

The Calcutta meeting itself was a disgraceful affair. The wild language used, the rabble-rousing speeches whipping up racial fear and hatred, and the furore of applause, burned it into the memory of all who were there. Civilised men of both races were shaken and horrified. From then on, the "Ilbert Bill" became a symbol of the transfer of power from one race to another; and at the next Legislative Council meeting Griffith Evans, who now took a leading part in the opposition to the Bill, said (in front of his Indian fellow-members and reporters from the Indian press) that "the bulk of the Anglo-Saxon race looked upon the Natives as men bred in degrading idolatry, surrounded from their infancy by influences most adverse to truth, uprightness, honour, and every quality which Englishmen most revere."

It would be tedious to go into all that happened before the Ilbert Bill was finally passed. Briefly, the Council continued to have cold feet in the face of widespread protest meetings (in England as well as India) and vociferous opposition in the Anglo-Indian press – including, in Lahore, Kipling's paper, the *Civil and Military Gazette.* Some people boycotted receptions given by the Viceroy and pointedly refrained from raising their hats when he passed them in the street; and at one point Ilbert was burnt in effigy.

Ilbert himself was firmly against withdrawing the Bill, on the grounds that to do so would be to sacrifice the authority of the Government of India, and took the view that, as the "irreducible minimum", the racial disability must be removed from District Magistrates and Sessions Judges – though he would have liked to retain the power to make rules for conferring full jurisdiction more widely, with the added safeguard of requiring such rules to be laid before Parliament for approval.

In the end, a different solution was adopted by way of compromise, with the agreement of Griffith Evans as representative of the Defence Association. Jurisdiction to try Europeans would be conferred on European and Indian District Magistrates and Sessions Judges alike; but a defendant would in all cases have the right to claim trial by a jury of which at least half the members must be European. Thus amended, the Bill was passed on 25 January 1884, as the Criminal Procedure Code Amendment Act 1884, coming into force on 1 May of that year.

So ended the saga of the Ilbert Bill. It is clear that Ilbert was in no sense "imported to father and godfather the Bill", though his appointment was no doubt attributable in some measure to his known liberal views. The part played by Sir Jotindra Tagore and Sir Ashley Eden in the genesis of the Bill shows that Kipling was mistaken in thinking that "no one had asked for any such measure"; and it is most unlikely that Sir Jotindra raised the question of enlarging the jurisdiction of Indian judges with the Viceroy without having consulted at least some of them beforehand. Finally, the "matter of principle" which prompted the Bill was the ending of discrimination against duly qualified Indian judges, and not that "Native judges should try white women".

Kipling was, of course, a very young man at the time, and he seems to have swallowed whole the racialist views of the planters, small traders, minor officials and subalterns who frequented the Lahore Club – where, as he recounts in *Something ofMyself*, he was hissed when his paper "ratted over the Bill". As Harry Ricketts says in *The Unforgiving Minute* (his recent biography of Kipling) :

> "That evening in the club was one of the turning-points of Rud's life – and not simply because of the revelation that he was a paid lackey, working for a paper with vested interests. At his age and in his situation, few would have been able to stand out against such an unequivocal display of public feeling; and Rud, who up till then had had no particular political allegiances, had no desire to stand out – on the contrary, he desperately wanted to fit in."

ON WRITING A BIOGRAPHY OF KIPLING

by ANDREW LYCETT

[In my last Editorial (December 1999, pages 9-10), I reviewed Andrew Lycett's important new book, *Rudyard Kipling,* published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson, and I also mentioned that he had addressed the Society's meeting in September 1999 with a talk about what the writing of that book had entailed. It was an absorbing talk, the text of which, with minimal editing, I am glad to publish below.

The impression left on the mind after reading Andrew Lycett's book, and then his comments about what had gone into the writing of it, is that he has earned the approbation of us all, for his consistently high standards, and for the painstaking care that he lavished on producing this handsome and authoritative volume.- *Ed.]*

I first thought of a biography of Kipling in late 1995. I had recently published a book on Ian Fleming, and was looking for a new subject. Let me be honest: at the time I did not know much about Kipling, and had read only the more obvious things – *Plain Tales, Kim,* the *Just So Stories,* and a few other miscellaneous poems and short stories. Apart from a personal favourite, " 'Rikki-Tikki-Tavi' ", I had always found the *Jungle Books* hard going; while *Stalky & Co.* seemed to reflect a self-satisfied rumbustiousness that I disliked.

However, I recognised Kipling himself as a great and undervalued character. I kept on hearing of people – often unlikely people – who admired his work. I became fascinated by the way one of Britain's most successful writers had fallen out of fashion – indeed had been consciously rejected by the chattering classes. Yet Kipling retained an extraordinary hold on the public imagination – a point that was emphasised when, early in my research, "If —" was voted the nation's favourite poem. My reading of earlier biographies of Kipling suggested that although Charles Carrington and Lord Birkenhead, in particular, had done decent jobs, they had ignored aspects of Kipling's life – for example, the development of his views on man and society, or, more importantly, the progress of his relationship with his wife, Carrie.

Obviously biographers hope to uncover exciting new material but, as the last biographer (Martin Seymour-Smith) had suggested that Kipling was homosexual, I did not expect to trump that! (For the record, I felt at the time that this was unlikely; and everything that I have since discovered indicates that, on the contrary, Kipling was heterosexual,

though not necessarily particularly active or successful.) Nevertheless, my background as a journalist convinced me that some professional probing could not fail to bring to light further facts about Kipling's life. In that context, I was particularly interested in his early days as a newspaperman. It seemed important that he, like the Elephant's Child in the *Just So Stories,* was full of " 'satiable curtiosity". So was I, and that sense of discovery – of my own eyes being opened to new ideas, new material, fine new writing – was one that I hope I brought to my book throughout.

One of the first things I did was to read and/or re-read all of Kipling. I did not go for fancy editions; I preferred paperbacks which I could annotate. I had to chase down – and dig into my pocket for – certain books such as Andrew Rutherford's fine compilation, *Early Verse by Rudyard Kipling.* I enjoyed acquiring *Letters ofMarque* and *From Sea to Sea;* but sadly my copy of the latter lacked those stories from *The Smith Administration* that add so graphically to an understanding of Kipling in India.

I also read widely *around* Kipling – for example Lord Baldwin's book on the Macdonald Sisters; Tom Pinney's editions of the *Letters* (though I waited until I had a contract before investing in them myself); a variety of memoirs of India and of London in the 1890s. These confirmed an early realisation – that Kipling was a creature of interesting times, and that there was a lot to be said about how he fitted in. For example, the influence of his extraordinary extended family – particularly his Uncle Ned Burne-Jones – seemed to offer much scope.

Since this talk is, as much as anything else, about the genesis of my book, I should add that I had to convince my publisher of the commercial viability of a new Life of Kipling. Luckily I did not have too much difficulty. Ion Trewin (my editor, and also managing director of Weidenfeld & Nicolson) had been literary editor of *The Times* but, more significantly, his father, the once well-known drama critic J.C. Trewin, had been a great Kipling fan – not only did he write about his love for Kipling in two volumes of memoirs, but he also penned an excellent review of Kipling and the Theatre, published by John Murray in a collection for the English Association called *Essays and Studies, 1967.*

Ion told me that his father, as a young man on a Devon newspaper, had been such an enthusiast that he was known by colleagues simply as "Kipling". Afterwards, he had worked on the *Morning Post,* a paper where Kipling enjoyed significant influence in his later years, through

his friend, the editor, Howell Gwynne.

A sequel to that story (though jumping the gun, slightly). During my research I pored through volumes of Devon newspapers, to try to pin down which articles the young Rudyard had written for the local press. (In a letter to Mrs John Tavenor Parry, you will recall, he tells of being "up to my eyes in work – articles for local newspapers and gas and sewerage comments, poems, school work, Russian, Chronicle and stories flying through my head like a railway train".) I found several likely examples of such gas and sewerage comments in the *Bideford Gazette*, though I cannot say conclusively which was by Kipling. I also found that one of the local councillors was called Trewin (apparently a fairly common Devon name) and, more significantly, something I didn't put in my book, a magistrate was the estimable J.R. Pine-Coffin. In the *North Devon Herald* this was hyphenated. Clearly Kipling retained the name, which he used again only five years later in "Pig" (*Plain Tales*) – though Pinecoffin there became a South Devon man, "as soft as Dartmoor bog".

I promised to say something about the problems of writing this sort of book. In a way, life was much harder for the first two major biographers. Carrington and Birkenhead. They had Elsie Bambridge to deal with. You will recall how Carrie Kipling had cast around for biographers for her husband during the three years between Kipling's and her own death. She alighted on Hector Bolitho, a middlebrow historian with some respectful royal biographies to his name; and Taprell Dorling, who wrote sea stories under the pen-name "Taffrail". But nothing came of either approach. Then after Carrie's death in 1939, Elsie Bambridge's husband George met Lord Birkenhead, who seemed keen to do the job. But then George himself died, and Birkenhead was tied to an onerous contract by Elsie, who subsequently prevented his publishing his completed book. The task was taken up by Charles Carrington, who published his biography in 1955. Birkenhead's tome finally emerged in 1978, two years after Elsie's death; but it contained nothing that should have alarmed Kipling's daughter. Additional major biographies have come from Angus Wilson (1977), Martin Seymour-Smith (1989) and Harry Ricketts (1999).

However, Elsie's keenness to preserve the good name of her father reflected a general antipathy to biography within the Kipling family. Kipling himself had burned most of his parents' papers, certainly all letters from him to them. Elsie was required to destroy her mother's diaries, which proved largely to be simply catalogues of meetings and

visitors (though with some intriguing personal material, it must be said). There was precious little correspondence between Rudyard and Carrie – and, as far as I know, no secret revelatory memoirs or diaries.

Although this lack of intimate papers makes things difficult for a potential biographer, it is wrong to suggest that Kipling left nothing to chew on. He was an inveterate letter-writer and, despite his efforts to recover some of the more personal among them, thousands of his letters have accumulated throughout the world – mainly in libraries, but also in private collections.

One of my first tasks was to track them down. An early port of call for any biographer used to be the Historical Manuscripts Commission off Chancery Lane in Holborn, London. This keeps a record of collections of papers, both in Britain and abroad – relating to various public figures, institutions and even companies. Now I started this project at an interesting stage in the history of our communications. During my three years of research, the Internet, which when I started was just beginning to make its mark, came into its own as an important tool.

Some institutions had information on-line, and some did not. The Historical Manuscripts Commission was very un-user-friendly in this respect. Today, I have to say, it is very different. Through the Internet, one can access its Indexes from home, in seconds; discover where various papers are kept and, in many cases, link directly to those (mainly) libraries for further details. But in 1996 – really very recently - one had to go there and key into an old-fashioned terminal to get a print-out of Kipling collections. Often the reading included an NRA number – a reference to a volume of the National Register of Archives - kept at the Commission, that provided more detailed information on collections.

I emerged from the Commission armed with details of around 40 repositories of Kipling material – but these, it became apparent, were only part of the total. I then began to contact and visit them. First on my list was the Kipling Society Library at City University, an admirable institution, carefully presided over by Trixie Schreiber. It gave me access to two important resources. One was my predecessor Charles Carrington's annotated version of Carrie Kipling's diary. Equally useful was a relatively unknown book, the *Index of English Literary Manuscripts,* edited by Barbara Rosenbaum, which sought to detail every version of a Kipling poem, story or article, and to say where it first appeared, and where the various manuscripts were now held. I learned to use the book in conjunction with other bibliographic material, notably the Canadian collector James Stewart's *Bibliography* that I obtained from Dalhousie University – once I had made contact

with Karen Smith, the helpful Kipling Librarian – at the bargain price of 60 Canadian dollars, around £25.

I next visited the Sussex University Library, where the bulk of Kipling's papers are deposited. These are the letters, manuscripts and other documents that Elsie Bambridge accumulated at her house, Wimpole Hall. After her death they were left, with her estate, to the National Trust, which after taking advice decided to deposit them at Sussex. They were catalogued and stored in over thirty boxes, which are retrieved from the stores by the meticulous Manuscripts Librarian, Bet Inglis. What can one say about the material at Sussex, except that all Kipling's life is here – from his period in India (through his own letters, and also through material such as Edith Plowden's 'Fond Memories'), through his finances and business affairs (a hitherto closed area), to his family genealogy and his literary correspondence?

Under Bet Inglis's guidance the Sussex collection is growing all the time. When I first started, there was excitement because a batch of letters written by one of Carrie's many secretaries, Elsie Parker, had been discovered in a chest of drawers, and was being put up for auction in Chichester. I went to view the letters (in which Miss Parker was distinctly uncomplimentary about her employer) at Stride & Co., the auctioneers, who allowed me to copy what I wanted. But I needn't have bothered, because they inevitably ended up at Sussex – as did a collection of both Dunsterville and Beresford ['Stalky' and 'M'Turk'] letters that emerged during my research.

Two interjections here : (1) Does any member know of any material, over and above the obvious original diaries, that did not make the journey from Wimpole to Sussex University? And (2) The last time I went to Sussex, earlier this year, cutbacks in university funding had ensured that the Special Collections section was only open three days a week – which seemed a shame.

I won't bore you with a résumé of my trips to various libraries around the world. It was fun, visiting the Huntington Library in Pasadena, with its atmosphere of an ideal Oxbridge College on the west coast of America; there was a wealth of material in both the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library; I received much kindness at Marlboro College, a small private university in Vermont, just above Brattleboro where of course Kipling had lived when he first married. Closer to home, I am not sure I plumbed the full resources of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. The Public Record Office in Northern Ireland proved an engaging place to work. Some of the most attentive librarians – with whom I communicated by e-mail when I got into that habit – were in New Zealand and Australia, and in South Africa where I had some useful dealings with the Brenthurst Library, having met its patron, the

industrialist and enthusiastic Kipling collector, Harry Oppenheimer.

But such collections comprised only half the potential store of material. I knew from my previous work on Ian Fleming that some of the most intriguing biographical insights come from papers in private hands. Kipling having no direct descendants, I began contacting members of his extended family – his cousin (and Carrie's godson), Miles Huntingdon-Whiteley; more cousins, Betty and Helen Macdonald (Betty in particular kept a wealth of memorabilia, but sadly she died last year); and Lady Baldwin (who takes a personal interest in the family).

I sought to find descendants of Kipling's great love, Flo Garrard; but she had no immediate family. However – to anticipate a bit – I found her will, in which she left her estate to a Miss Frances Egerton (the recipient, as some will recognise, of Flo's copy of *The Light that Failed,* which later turned up at Sotheby's, complete with Flo's denunciation of her portrayal as Maisie in that book).

Helped by a casual reference from the Society's Secretary, Michael Smith, I tracked down the heir to Isabella Burton, the original of Mrs Hauksbee; and she provided me with some extraordinarily vivid unknown letters from Kipling to her great-grandmother in India.

I was keen to find out more about 'Crom' Price. An early approach to his granddaughter, Lorraine Price, a member of our Society, was politely rebuffed. However, with my book already at the publisher's, I met her at a Society meeting, and she invited me to her house, and showed me a thrilling collection of letters, including some correspondence between Lockwood and Alice Kipling in Lahore and their son's headmaster in Devon. I had to beg my publisher to add this material at proof stage, but it was worth while. My thanks for a very fine gesture by Lorraine.

Another important contact was Wolcott and Carrie Balestier's great-nephew (their sister Josephine's grandson). This was Wolcott (known as 'Dick') Dunham Jr, who, over the course of three years, opened his family papers to me. As a result, I was able to include some extraordinary new material about the first meetings between Rudyard and Wolcott, and – more importantly – between Rudyard and Wolcott's two sisters, Josephine and Carrie. During that period, Dick Dunham deposited some of this material on microfilm in the Libraries of both Sussex University and Harvard University (his *alrna mater).*

Before I move on, I should mention various books that were invaluable in my research. Obviously anything by Tom Pinney – not just his editions of Kipling's Letters, but his *Kipling's India : Uncollected*

Sketches. Then there was Reginald Harbord's *Readers' Guide to Kipling;* Sandra Kemp and Lisa Lewis's *Writings on Writing;* Bart Moore-Gilbert's fascinating *Kipling and 'Orientalism';* and a host of other material – not least the whole run of the *Kipling Journal.*

Then there was the remarkable *Kipling Dictionary,* originally compiled by Arthur Young in 1911, and up-dated in 1967 by another Honorary Librarian of our Society, John McGivering. It was particularly useful for reminding me of the names of obscure characters – and which books or poems they appeared in. To quote from just one column on one page, Christopher Trejago ("Beyond the Pale", in *Plain Tales from the Hills)* is easy enough; Bobby Trivett (a subaltern in "The Honours of War", in *A Diversity of Creatures)* is manageable; but Trivey (the liar in "A Fallen Idol", in *Abaft the Funnel)* or Exeter Battleby Tring (the wise railwayman in the poem "Public Waste") might take some remembering, certainly at times of stress.

I can now move on to the exciting bit, the new material – particularly where I feel I have made some advance on Kipling scholarship. I have already mentioned Flo Garrard. At an early stage I identified her as crucial to the telling of Kipling's story. I was surprised by how little had been made of his teenage poems to her (mostly collected in Rutherford's *Early Verse by Rudyard Kipling, 1879-1889).* But my job was to find out more about her personally. Carrington, you may recall, mentioned her in his biography and, in a later edition, added a note about an Oxford connection with Mabel Price, whose father, I discovered, was the celebrated mathematician Professor Bartholomew Price, Master of Pembroke College, Oxford, and a friend of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (Lewis Carroll). I made contact with Mabel Price's nephew near Oxford, and he sent me a family memoir that recalled her work for the Oxfordshire branch of the Tuberculosis Association,

But it also told of her earlier life as an artist. Like Flo, as I discovered, she had studied at the Slade, and then at Julian's studio in Paris. "Mabel's companion in Paris", I read, "was Miss Violet Garrard, also a student in Julian's studio, with whom she occupied an annexe or *pavillon* in the garden of their *pension.* On one occasion they entertained the *pension* with a travesty of Sardou's *La Tosca,* in the title role of which Sarah Bernhardt was then creating a sensation. Miss Garrard was 'La Tosca' ; Nigel Playfair (the great actor-manager) acted Scarpia, and Mabel 'Jeune-Premier' – very funny."

And so on. (Just to clarify things, Flo was christened Florence Violette.)

I began researching Flo Garrard, Her birth certificate revealed that she

was born on 21 January 1865 (i.e. about a year before Rudyard), at 12 Victoria Road, Kensington, the daughter of Robert Garrard, a captain in the 5th Dragoons, and Fanny Garrard, formerly Mortlock. A history of the 5th (Princess Charlotte of Wales's) Regiment of Dragoon Guards revealed that Captain Garrard, formerly of the 95th (the Derbyshire) Regiment of Foot, had served in the Crimea before retiring on half-pay in September 1865 (shortly after Flo's birth), a fact later confirmed from Army records in the Public Record Office.

The regimental history indicated that Captain Garrard came from White Lodge, in Wokingham, Berkshire. From a local historian in Wokingham, I learned that this probably referred to East Heath Lodge, formerly known as White House, for a long time the home of Robert Garrard, the senior partner in the Crown Jeweller, R. S. Garrard & Co.; and this Robert Garrard turned out to be Flo's grandfather. Through this distinguished firm I sought some of her relations. I found no direct descendant but many cousins, one of whom filled me in on bits of family history.

Flo's grandfather Robert Garrard's uncle had been the great animal painter, George Garrard. Her father, also called Robert, had got bored with both the Army and the family business, and had taken to a peripatetic life – which explains why Flo had ended up, like a waif, at Lorne Lodge in Southsea, where Captain Holloway seems to have had some family connection with her grandmother, old Robert Garrard's wife Esther, *née* Whippy. The artistic antecedents helped to explain Flo's interest in art.

The more I looked, the more Flo was confirmed as the model for Maisie in *The Light that Failed;* and Mabel Price as the mysterious "red-haired girl" who takes against Dick/Rudyard in that extraordinary book, whose autobiographical aspects become increasingly obvious. The reason for the dislike of Mabel for Rudyard also became clear: from all the evidence, these two women moved in early Lesbian circles, which obviously made life difficult for Rudyard. Flo went to live in Glebe Place, Chelsea, where she was known for her cats and her mannish demeanour. She exhibited once at the Royal Academy, and held other shows. At one stage she appears to have been arrested for painting outside the Houses of Parliament, for she wrote a remarkable illustrated book, called *Phantasmagoria*, about her experiences. A lively satire on the pomposity of authority, it is one of the more difficult volumes to find in the British Library, since it is catalogued under the pseudonym 'Silivigi'. One of her Chelsea neighbours and friends was John Singer Sargent. After his death, his sisters gave Flo some of his canvases to work on. She discovered two apparently quite important portraits among them, which she was allowed to keep and sell.

Mabel Price's Oxford connection was interesting (by the way, she was no relation to Cormell Price, as far as I know) because it indicated the sort of intellectual world the Kiplings inhabited. When Rudyard returned to London in 1889, he met Mrs Clifford, the author, and widow of another distinguished Professor of Mathematics, William Kingdon Clifford. She introduced Kipling to her publisher, Macmillan. Her own acquaintance with Kipling had almost certainly come through her friends the Leslie Stephens. Sir Leslie was father of Virginia Woolf, while his first wife Julia was the niece of Sarah Prinsep – early patrons at Little Holland House of Kipling's uncle Ned Burne-Jones and his fellow pre-Raphaelites. Julia had appeared in certain of Burne-Jones's paintings, such as his "Annunciation" in 1879.

I was interested in the interaction between the Kiplings and the artistic and intellectual developments of their time. I bring out more than anyone the way that Kipling's father, Lockwood, had been inspired by the design innovations of the Great Exhibition of 1851. British design was supposed to be degraded, and the Exhibition was intended – *inter alia* – to promote purer design, examples of which were to be found in India. At the same time the Exhibition was a testament to the utilitarian principles of the age. When Lockwood Kipling went to Bombay he found that Indian design was coming under attack from commercialism. He tried to stick to basic design, which meant he was happy teaching Indian masons and even sculptors in Bombay and Lahore, but he had no truck with any suggestion of more general educational advancement for Indians. He saw English as the language of instruction in India (as laid down in the famous minute by Thomas Macaulay in 1835). Arriving in India less than a decade after the Mutiny, he subscribed to the neo-utilitarian but conservative philosophy associated with Leslie Stephen's brother, James Fitzjames Stephen, the Law Member of the Executive Council in the 1870s.

*

Rudyard himself was something of a Liberal when he came to Lahore in 1882 to join the *Civil and Military Gazette.* I learned from his *Writings on Writing* (edited by Sandra Kemp and Lisa Lewis) how he had picked Gladstone and Bismarck as his 'greatest living statesmen' in a family questionnaire in about 1880-81. (This was probably something to do with the influence of Crom Price, who was a Radical in his politics.) But Rudyard soon changed his views, as he came to see the teachers, soldiers and administrators around him, doing their best for the development of India.

He charted the process of his growing-up in a series of stories which

I try to interpret (with some help from other commentators, I must admit) – notably "The Dream of Duncan Parrenness" in *Life's Handicap,* and "The Strange Ride of Morrowbie Jukes" (collected in *Wee Willie Winkie)* with its metaphors of a man living by measurement, confounded by the unpredictability of India.

He remained a great observer of India, but his sense of imperial duty had taken root. It could not even be deflected by his dalliance with older women like Isabella Burton. His letters to her show a sophisticated but unformed man/boy, in the same relation to her as the eponymous character Yeere towards Mrs Hauksbee in "The Education of Otis Yeere" (in *Wee Willie Winkie).*

Interestingly, Isabella's husband, Major (later Colonel) Francis Burton, was a nephew of Frederic Burton, a friend of Burne-Jones in London. He had served in Afghanistan, and was attached to the 1st Bengal Lancers, known as Skinner's Horse, whose yellow-and-black colours were sported by Mrs Hauksbee in *Plain Tales.*

One other thing about India: I enjoyed discovering about George Allen, boss of the *Pioneer* and investor in the *Civil and Military Gazette.* Allen's other businesses included a tannery and a factory that made boots. This factory won Army contracts in Afghanistan, and later in South Africa – allowing an interesting new interpretation of Kipling's poem, "Boots".

Coming back to London in 1889, imbued with a sense of imperial mission, Kipling was unhappy. He was saved by his friendship with Wolcott Balestier, scion of a fascinating New England family, a branch of which had been frontiersmen around Chicago in the early nineteenth century. Sadly however, for reasons of space, I had to cut much of this early history of the Balestier family. I managed to include a short section about Carrie Kipling *née* Balestier, and her discovery in England of her distant cousins, Daisy Low and Mabel Leigh; but I was not able to elaborate on the relations that linked them and their kinsman, John Kinzie (1763-1828) the Indian fur trader who founded Chicago.

Nevertheless, with Dick Dunham's help, I was able to chronicle how Kipling came to know Carrie and Josephine Balestier. It is clear that Carrie first met her future husband earlier than has hitherto been suggested. As early as March 1890 she was telling her sister Josephine in New York about Rudyard's interest in typewriters and old silver. By the autumn she was calling him "the pleasantest article in London" – someone who put her at her ease because he was "so refreshingly un-English".

I could continue in this vein. For example, I provide new material on the revival of Kipling's idealism about Britain's imperial role, largely through his dealings with Rhodes, Austen Chamberlain and *The Times* newspaper. Earlier, I detail Kipling's links with that paper through Humphry Ward, Moberly Bell, and a family friend, Wynnard Hooper, whose father George had known Kipling's parents when he edited the *Bombay Gazette* from 1868 to 1871. (George Hooper's sister-in-law, Hannah Winnard, was one of the three "dear ladies" Kipling stayed with, while on holidays from school.)

I speculate a bit on the influence of Bell, in particular, and others on the depiction in *The Light that Failed* of the Anglo-Egyptian campaigns in the Sudan. Several other figures feature in this respect, including George Wyndham (the writer/politician son of the Burne-Jones family's friend, Percy Wyndham); and the Duke of Connaught, whose relationship with the Kipling family runs through the book – not least in his office as Grand Master of English Freemasonry. Kipling's lifelong interest in Freemasonry is another enduring theme.

I show how his fear of Germany developed during his later years; how he pushed for Army reform; how he became interested in innovations such as cars, aircraft and machines; how his view of the world was coloured by recollections of the geo-politics of India and the 'Great Game'; how he developed a peripheral interest in espionage; and how the First World War crept up on him. After that, Kipling was a reduced figure, mouthing political platitudes but still producing great stories; trying to develop a universal philosophy of brotherhood based on a sort of Christianised Freemasonry; beginning to see versions of his stories in films; getting rich; and warning at an early stage about the rise of Nazi Germany.

From a biographical point of view, I expand on Kipling's relationship with Oliver Baldwin, his first cousin once removed, who became something of a surrogate son after the death of his own son, John; and how Kipling was devastated to learn of Oliver's homosexuality; and how this affected his daughter Elsie's marriage with George Bambridge. More than ever before, I explore Kipling's links with the people closely associated with his later years – from the doctor, Peter Stanley, and his wife Frances; through politicians such as the Home Secretary, Sir William Joynson-Hicks; and writers such as Michael Mason; to the redoubtable Lady Milner, Carrie's only real friend in and around Bateman's.

Inevitably my research became more interesting towards the end, when I knew more about my subject-matter and could identify exactly what I needed. My notebooks show how, even at the beginning of this year [1999], I was still feverishly trying to pin down various pieces of

information. I became fascinated by the pictorial recording of war – how the gradual move from drawing to lithography to photography was reflected in the moves from realism to impressionism in the world of art; and how this was all aired in *The Light that Failed* – to my mind one of Kipling's most under-estimated pieces.

I remain interested in the way film features in Kipling's work. (Remember, for example, "The Prophet and the Country" in *Debits and Credits.)* I discovered a lot of new information about the filming of his own stories, including *A Fool There Was,* an American film inspired by Kipling's poem "The Vampire", which itself had been inspired by a lurid and sexually suggestive painting of 1897 by Philip Burne-Jones. The poem begins, "A fool there was, and he made his prayer / Even as you and I! / To a rag and a bone and a hank of hair. . ." The film was banned by the British censors when it was released in the First World War – and remains so.

I also unravelled details of Kipling's contributions to *One Family,* a dismal piece of imperial propaganda. As well as helping on the script, he prevailed on his friend King George V to allow filming at Buckingham Palace for the first time. But the film was an unmitigated flop.

The last change I made to my text came as recently as July [1999]. During my research I had regularly checked the contents of various 'English Literature and History' sales at Sotheby's. The previous year, there had been some fascinating late correspondence between Kipling and Lord Gorrell – the poet and politician who edited the *Cornhill* magazine – in which Kipling had expanded on his disillusionment with modern aesthetics. In their July 1999 catalogue I found details of the forthcoming sale of Flo Garrard's copy of *Echoes,* complete with dedicatory verses dated September 1884, from Kipling.

The only trouble was that the last line of this short poem – which was illustrated in the catalogue – differed in one small but important respect from what I had written in my manuscript. There, taking my cue from the text in Louis Cornell's *Kipling in India* (Macmillan, 1966, page 69), I had written the last four lines of the poem as follows: "And should my foolish songs discover / Some traces of your girlhood's lover / Forgive me – two long years apart / Still leaves me mistress of my heart."

That word, "me" in the last line, though confirmed by Cornell who had inserted after it the word *'sic'*, had left me flummoxed. So I felt I had to comment, naively, as follows: "By mistakenly writing 'me' instead of 'you' in the last line, Rudyard was making what would later

be called a Freudian slip, hinting at the egocentricism of his passion for Flo who, true to her nomadic background, was pursuing a career as an artist, and who, that very autumn, had just started a course in Fine Art at the Slade School in London."

Now with the publication of my book only two months away, I saw in the catalogue a photograph of this text and (as was confirmed when I raced round to Sotheby's to consult the book itself) this last line actually read as one would have imagined, "Still leaves you mistress of my heart."

I really did not expect I would be able to change this (and the accompanying gloss), as the book had progressed from proof stage and was with the printer. However, for reasons of both scholarship and personal pride, I could not allow this heinous mistake to appear. Luckily, my publisher agreed to contact the printer to make the change. Nevertheless, I will still have to bear the costs, which could be substantial. And I didn't even manage to acquire the book, as I had hoped, in the auction sale.

What did I miss out in my research? On one level, it's still early to tell. But being something of a perfectionist, I would like, for example, to know more about Flo Garrard's brothers and sisters. Through her grandfather's will, I am familiar with her aunts and uncles. But her siblings are more amorphous – apart from a sister, Maud, whom Trix Kipling remembered at Southsea; and a brother, another Robert, who worked as a banker in Paris.

I would also have welcomed more input about the Poynter family. Sir Edward's younger son, Hugh, ended his days in Australia, where – until recently, at least – there were some relatives. 1 received some help from a lady in Melbourne who is writing Sir Edward's biography. But I found no new family letters or memoirs that throw light on the Poynters' relationship with the Kiplings.

I had more luck with the Burne-Joneses, perusing, for the first time, (courtesy of Lord Neidpath at Stanway, his Gloucestershire home), some correspondence between Margaret Burne-Jones (later Mackail) and her friend Mary Wyndham (later Lady Elcho); and also discovering interesting letters from Philip Burne-Jones in both the Houghton Library at Harvard, and the Bodleian at Oxford.

One great mystery remains : What happened to Philip Burne-Jones's painting, "The Vampire", which inspired Kipling's poem, "A Fool there was and he made his prayer. . ."? No expert – literary, family or even pre-Raphaelite – has been able to enlighten me.

I would like to have discovered more about Edmonia ('Ted') Hill, and that other "dear Lady" to whom Kipling wrote so slavishly in the summer of 1888. More research on Ted Hill's husband might have yielded useful biographical material on Kipling.

It is a shame that Kipling's correspondence with Perceval Landon has vanished. (Kipling himself inherited and apparently destroyed it.)

Also, Kipling's daughter Elsie wrote well – witness her postscript appended to Carrington's Life of her father in 1955. Any memoir by her or her husband George Bambridge could have added appreciably to our knowledge of the Kipling family dynamics.

However, looking back, I feel I covered most of the basics, and the only real criticism I have incurred is that I was too thorough in pursuit of detail. Sometimes that could have the effect of, as it were, cutting off the wood from the trees; but with a subject of Kipling's complexity – as a writer, as a character and as a historical figure – I believe it can add hugely to our understanding. •

Editor's comment. Lycett's concluding claim reminds me that an unkind review of his book was in *The Times* of 2 September 1999, and I responded with a letter to the Editor, which appeared on 7 September. In it I said:-

"Kipling was certainly a complex and highly-strung personality, and Iain Finlayson [the reviewer] rightly draws attention to some apparent contradictions in his attitudes – though he exaggerates Kipling's alleged tendency to 'hysteria', 'perpetual panic', 'terror of life' and the 'horror' at his 'dark heart'.

Where he is unfair is in claiming that Lycett 'acknowledges rather than investigates' these contradictions – i.e. does not explain them. At the same time he accuses Lycett of perpetrating 'a catalogue of people and events', a 'wearisome roll-call of minor characters' and a 'dead weight of peripheral detail'.

Much of Kipling's writing, especially the enigmatic passages of prose and verse, gains immeasurably when the reader knows against what contemporary encounter to set it. Kipling's friends and relatives, his sometimes uncomfortable marriage, his exceptionally widespread travels, his political alignments, his bereavements, all constitute that background – sometimes an inspiration for his 'daemon', sometimes an obstacle.

Lycett's biography is invaluable for its mastery of the multiple background influences which cast light on what Kipling wrote. Thus the aspect of the book which Finlayson finds superfluous will, for the scholarly reader, be one of its main attractions."

CITIES OF DREADFUL NIGHT

by KENNETH FRAZER

[Last November, at a London meeting of the Kipling Society, Ken Frazer (a member of our Council and an occasional contributor to the *Journal)* gave a very interesting talk on "Cities of Dreadful Night".

That phrase, originating in the title of a once well known poem, "The City of Dreadful Night", published by James Thomson in 1874, clearly had attractive resonances for Kipling. He borrowed the title more than once, to attach to his own accounts of visits to Indian cities. The result, in terms of his always intricate bibliography, seems at first rather complex. However, Mr Frazer's skilled guidance leads us helpfully through the maze, and incidentally prompts us to re-read Kipling's descriptions of some of his Indian travels. These are most rewarding, for he was always a consummate journalist.

In 1885, *The City of Dreadful Night* served as the title for a memorable article by Kipling for the *Civil and Military Gazette,* later collected in *Life's Handicap,* describing a solitary visit on foot, one bakingly hot August night, to the heart of the city of Lahore. Later, in 1890, *The City of Dreadful Night and Other Sketches* served as the group title for a reprinted collection of Kipling's articles, some of which had described, in critical terms verging on disgust, his visit to Calcutta in 1888; while others dealt with a miscellany of other Indian topics. However, this whole collection was abruptly suppressed by Kipling: all but about three copies of the book were destroyed.

Then, in 1891, with a title altered to *The City of Dreadful Night and Other Places,* another collection was formed (its table of contents is reproduced at page 49). Eight 'chapters' of the record of Kipling's visit to Calcutta were here supplemented by three briefer accounts of up-country travel: first, to the headquarters of the East Indian Railway at Jamalpur; second, to the coal-fields of Giridih; third, to an opium factory at Ghazipur.

This is not quite all of the Kipling material that Mr Frazer took under his purview. There was also an assemblage of slight journalistic pieces called *The Smith Administration.* This frivolous but entertaining social-political satire was published in 1891 by Wheeler & Co. of Allahabad, as a book – but without the sanction of Kipling, who promptly suppressed it. The connection of *The Smith Administration* with *The City of Dreadful Night* and Mr Frazer's topic, is a little tenuous, but three of the Smith articles had been among the miscellaneous items collected with *The City of Dreadful Night and Other Sketches* (though that too was suppressed); and there is another connection, since 18 short chapters of *The Smith Administration* were definitively collected in 1899 in volume II of the standard editions of *From Sea to Sea and Other Sketches,* where they share the space allotted to *The City of Dreadful Night and Other Places,* and where a curious reader can most easily find them.

Mr Frazer would have been unable, in the time allotted for his talk, to do full justice to all these pieces. So he made Kipling's visit to Calcutta the main feature of his presentation, but mentioned some supplementary items, which include vivid accounts of

travel elsewhere than in Calcutta. This is a reminder that Kipling in India produced a substantial amount of straight journalistic reporting (as distinct from his fictional short stories) and that much of it is still eminently readable, as befits a journalist or special correspondent of his exceptional calibre. Some of the best of this material was duly collected in book form, e.g. in the volumes of *From Sea to Sea;* while many other items have now been convincingly identified as Kipling's work by scholars, e.g. the 'uncollected sketches' of 1884-88 brought together by Thomas Pinney in his *Kipling's India* (Macmillan, 1986).

Ken Frazer has usefully drawn our attention to a slightly neglected area of Kipling's works, and also reminded us of that very rum man of letters, James Thomson, whose best work was endowed with what the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* called "imaginative power . . . sombre intensity . . . sonorous music . . . strange gaiety . . . pathos and caustic irony." His worst was "mere rhetoric and verbiage". Here is the text of Ken Frazer's talk (slightly edited by expanding in places after discussion with him). – *Ed.]*

My interest in this subject started some years ago, when a friend who was helping to build an enormous sewer in Bombay said in a letter to me that Kipling had surely never written about such vulgar matters as sewers.

This was before Professor Pinney's volumes of Kipling's collected Letters had begun to appear; but I had a vague memory of Kipling doing just that – writing about bad drains – in a book called *The City of Dreadful Night.* I had a copy of the Tauchnitz edition paperback, *The City of Dreadful Night and Other Sketches* (1900), and I discovered that all those stories were also collected and included in volume II of the standard Macmillan edition of *From Sea to Sea and Other Sketches.* I sent my friend the Tauchnitz to read when he had time to spare from his sewers.

Now that several volumes of Kipling's letters (edited by Pinney) have been published, members who have had not only the fortune to buy those invaluable books but also the time to read them, will know of the young Kipling's boundless enthusiasm for drains, an enthusiasm which also seeps into some of his early verse. Here are a few references.

In 1882, Lockwood Kipling wrote to Cormell Price (Headmaster at Westward Ho!), that Rudyard, aged sixteen, newly arrived in India from school, was already "writing nonsense about sanitation etc in some local newspaper". In 1885 Rudyard wrote from Lahore to his cousin Margaret Burne-Jones, "Personally I'm death on drains and water-supply." In May 1886 he had written at length on the subject in the *Civil & Military Gazette,* and he again wrote to Margaret: "I fell

foul of the Lahore municipality. Every moment I could spare was devoted to abusing them and pointing out a few trifling defects in their drains and sanitary arrangements."

Drains occasionally surfaced in his early poetry, most obviously in the poem called "Municipal" [1887, collected with *Departmental Ditties],* which has a prefatory verse –

"Why is my District death-rate low?"
Said Binks of Hezabad.
"Well, drains and sewage-outfall are
My own peculiar fad. "

And he reserved some of his zeal for the insanitary cities of Benares and, particularly, Calcutta, where smelly drains vie for his attention with politicians, washed-up sailor-men, and prostitutes of various hues and varying financial success.

I want to touch on four 'Cities of Dreadful Night': Lahore, Calcutta, London – and the imaginary city evoked by James Thomson's poem of that name. The poem both influenced Kipling and provided him with a title for his Lahore item – as well as supplying his enterprising publishers in India with a title for the unauthorised publication of his Calcutta sequence, thereby annoying Kipling and confusing some of his readers.

By way of brief introduction, James Thomson (1834-1882) was born in Scotland, the son of a merchant seaman. (He is not to be confused with the earlier James Thomson (1700-1748), author of "The Seasons" and allegedly of "Rule, Britannia".) The 19th-century Thomson, after a period as an Army schoolmaster, lived in London, initially with the famous rationalist, Charles Bradlaugh[1], whom he had first met when Bradlaugh was a trooper in the Army. There was a biography of Thomson by Henry Salt[2] (1889). Another, by Tom Leonard, called *Places of the Night,* was published by Jonathan Cape as recently as 1993.

Thomson's poem, "The City of Dreadful Night", was first published in instalments in 1874 in Bradlaugh's paper, the *National Reformer,* and then in book form in 1880 under the auspices of Bertram Dobell, who had admired it when it first came out in serial form.

Thomson's "The City of Dreadful Night" is partly based on two poems he had written earlier: "The Doom of a City" (1857), and a poem about Durer's engraving of 1514, 'Melancolia'. He wrote under the pseudonym 'B.V.': the B was after Bysshe (as in Shelley), and the V was for Vanolis, an anagram of Novalis, the pen-name of the German poet, F. von Hardenberg!

A long extract from "The City" is in Helen Gardener's *Oxford Book of English Verse.* Several editions of Thomson's poems have been published. A 1963 edition, with some of his letters, was edited by Anne Ridler. This is a good selection. It contains his poem "Despotism and Dynamite", in which a Russian Czar foresees his death at the hands of anarchists, ending with the refrain, "I look with terror on my crowning day." It was written a month before Thomson died.

Dobell, in his preface to a 1910 edition of the poems, says: "The fame of the second James Thomson is at last securely established, and he cannot now be confounded, save by the very ignorant, either with the author of 'The Seasons' or with his almost equally unfortunate contemporary, Francis Thompson." But this preface is not always reliable. Having told us that Thomson was born in 1834, it later says he died in 1832 – and there may be other misprints. And if you order James Thomson's poems from a library you may well receive the poems of his eighteenth-century namesake, whose work is now generally forgotten, except on the last night of the 'Proms', when they sing "Rule, Britannia" – the words of which are usually credited to him.[3]

*

Now I turn to Lahore, once memorably described as that "splendid city . . . [with its] mausoleums and shrines magnificent and numberless, where death [appears] to hold equal honours with heaven. . . a city altogether like a piece of enchantment. . ."

That description is from *Lalla Rookh,*[4] a collection of 'Oriental' tales in verse, edited and linked in prose by Thomas Moore in 1817. Lockwood Kipling quoted that passage when in 1876 he wrote (jointly with a Mr Thornton) a guide book to Lahore, for the benefit of the large number of tourists (or globe-trotters, as Rudyard liked to call them before he too began trotting round the globe) who were even then visiting that city. Lockwood described the Mosque of Wazir Khan, built in 1634, which he says was "remarkable for the profusion and excellence of the inlaid pottery decorations". It was from a minaret of this mosque that Rudyard gazed down, one oppressively hot night, on the strange spectacle of the sleeping city.

Among interesting items in Lockwood's book is a translation into English of the long inscription on Zam-Zammah, the great cannon which features in the opening chapter of *Kim.* And there are fascinating translations of native ballads, deploring the alleged impoverishment of the natives by the British –

Even the dirt of the city they can't leave alone.
A saintly contractor whose name is well known
Undertakes all the sweepers' sublime avocations.
Hard lines on the sweepers, they're dying outright
Within the Feringhees' dread regulations.

Thus unemployment is caused in Lahore by management consultants trying to improve efficiency. No doubt Kipling would have approved of the aim of the "dread regulations", but he seems to have been singularly unimpressed by their effect.

Kipling's Lahore article, "The City of Dreadful Night", is well known. It was originally published in the *Civil & Military Gazette* in 1885, and was collected in *Life's Handicap*. It describes how the narrator, on a hot and sleepless night, wanders into the heart of the city from the European quarter, and finds the whole population trying to sleep. He climbs to the top of the Mosque of Wazir Khan, and looks down. What he sees and hears gives rise to a superb piece of descriptive writing. It does not mention the fine inlaid pottery: it is about people, not about the visual arts.

In a letter to his beloved 'Wop' (nickname for his cousin Margaret Burne-Jones), Kipling says: "Para 2 from the butt end asks me if I know 'The City of Dreadful Night'? Oh Wop, Wop, what a question." He goes on, "Furthermore, did I not one month ago spend one weary night on the great *minar* of the Mosque of Wazir Khan, looking down on the heat-tortured city of Lahore, and seventy thousand men and women sleeping in the moonlight, and did I not write a description of my vigil, and christen it the City of Dreadful Night?"

This appears to answer a recent question on whether Kipling deliberately called his piece after the poem. At this stage he was not yet a successful author, so he may not have been too concerned about authors' rights. A few typical lines from Thomson's poem may show why Kipling chose to use its name for his Lahore story of a ghostlike city, where people were trying to sleep:

The city is of night, but not of sleep;
There sweet sleep is not for the weary brain;
The pitiless hours like years and ages creep;
A night seems termless hell.

There is also much in the Thomson poem which identifies his City as a city of the dead:

Myriads of habitants are ever sleeping

Or dead, or fled from nameless pestilence,
Yet as in some necropolis you find
Perchance one mourner to a thousand dead,
So there; worn faces that look deaf and blind.

The Lahore night opened in a burial ground, with a jawless skull, and ended with a woman's corpse going down to the burning-ghat. A bystander says, "She died at midnight from the heat." So Kipling's first 'city of dreadful night' ends in death. Indeed, Thomson's poem itself, not just its title, may have been the inspiration for Kipling's description of Lahore at night.

Before looking at the Calcutta group of writings, I might mention that it was not only here that Thomson influenced Kipling in India. In Andrew Rutherford's collection of little-known items, *Early Verse by Rudyard Kipling 1879-1889*, is a verse called "From the Hills", supposedly spoken by a junior official in the Bengal Civil Service. His name is Orion Golightly – a surname familiar to readers of *Plain Tales* – and he is going to meet his love at the railway station. Her arrival brings to an end his period of lonely over-work in his 'Kutcherry'(office or court-room). The third verse (of seven) reads:

Scant time indeed have I had to be merry,
Little of leave and less of delight,
Stewing all day in that frowsy *Kutcherry;*
What do I care? – She is coming tonight!

Thomson was a man of moods. He wrote such verses as "As we rush, as we rush in the train", and "Give a man a horse he can ride", which feature in anthologies.[5] The latter is from a long romantic poem called "Sunday up the River": one part describes a young city clerk waiting for his love to come over the bridge. The third verse reads:

The strange faces brighten on meeting her glances,
The strangers all bless her, pure, lovely and free;
She fancies she walks, but her walk skips and dances,
Her heart makes such music in coming to me.

The beat, the rhyme-scheme and the story are basically much the same as in Kipling's verse.

And now to Calcutta. The collected articles on Calcutta from the

Pioneer were originally published in book form without Kipling's approval, and were apparently twice suppressed. There is much bibliographical lore on the subject.[6] Very few copies survived.

The first partial edition of Thomson's poems, published by Dobell in 1882 just before the poet's death, was called *The City ofDreadful Night and Other Poems,* a very similar title to Kipling's *The City ofDreadful Night and Other Places.* Although, earlier, Kipling had been happy to use the name for his Lahore item, the authorised reprint of his Calcutta sequence, published simultaneously in London (by Sampson Low, Marston & Co) and in India (by Messrs A.H. Wheeler & Co, Allahabad), contained an apology for using the title without permission. It was an apology to Thomson's executors, for by then Thomson, a hopeless alcoholic, had died wretchedly in a London hospital of acute dipsomania.

The Calcutta articles are reports by a seasoned young journalist, seeing Calcutta by night under the protection of a tough police guard – unlike the Kipling of Lahore, or the sad lonely Thomson in London. In his preface to *From Sea to Sea,* Kipling explained:

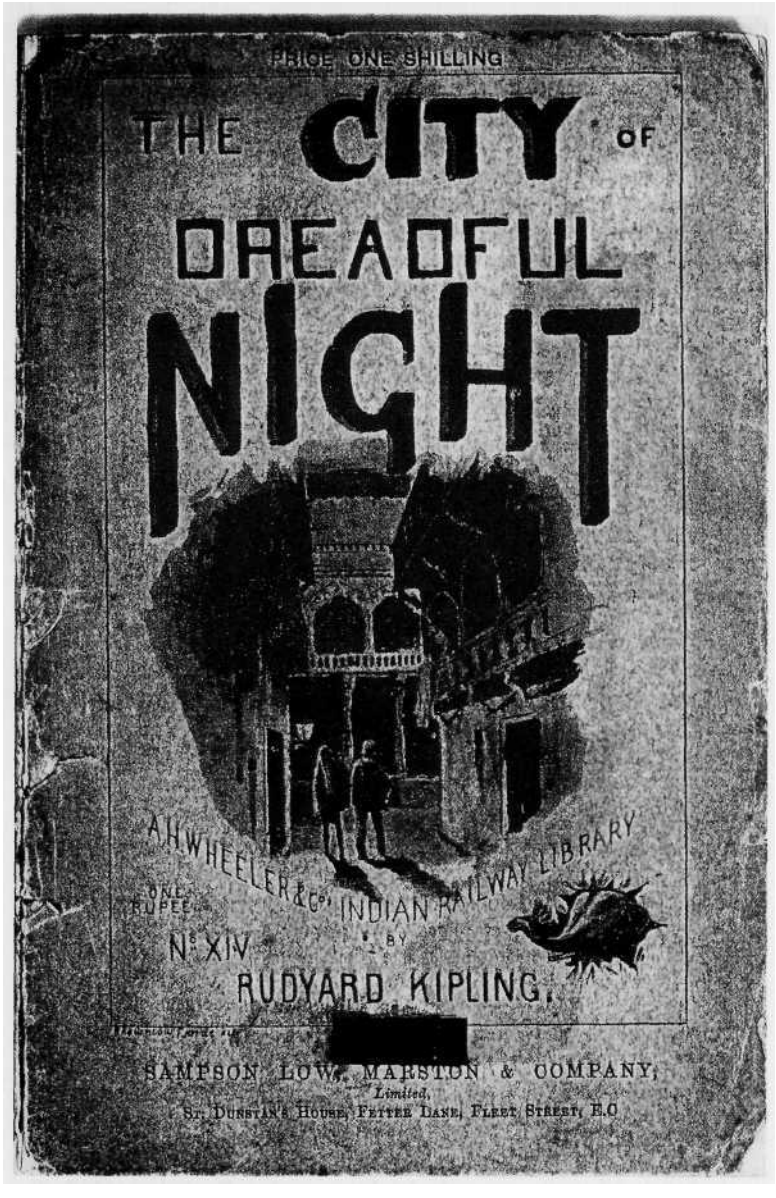
> "In these two volumes I have got together the bulk of the special correspondence and occasional articles written by me for the *Civil and Military Gazette* and the *Pioneer* between 1887-1889. I have been forced to this action by the enterprise of various publishers who, not content with disinterring old newspaper work from the decent seclusion of the office files, have in several instances seen fit to embellish it with additions and interpolations."

There is a similar explanation or apology at the start of the authorised version of *Abaft the Funnel* (1909): "... I should never have reprinted them but Messrs Dodge's enterprise compels me to do so. . ."

Let us now look at the Calcutta sequence in *The City of Dreadful Night* by Kipling. He had arrived back in India in 1882, and by January 1888, when he visited Calcutta on behalf of his newspaper, he had served much of his 'Seven Years Hard'. In a long letter to his cousin Margaret, he says : "They cut me adrift afresh, bidding me chuse *[sic]* my own ground for exploration. I have taken the 19th century, and the Railway colonies in India, and the opium factories and the out of the way life of Calcutta and Benares, and a relic of the Mutiny for my subjects."

In chapter I of the Calcutta sequence, "A Real Live City", he remarks on the homesickness commonly felt by expatriate Englishmen in India, and says that "We have been deprived of our inheritance." Here Kipling may well be speaking for himself, taken away from literary society to

[Continued on page 50]



A battered first edition of *The City ofDreadful Night and Other Places* (1891)

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The Contents page of Kipling's *The City of Dreadful Night and Other Places* (1891)

sweat in India, under the watchful eyes of his parents and the discipline of his editor. Yet he says that the port of Calcutta "holds out false hopes of some return". A year later his hopes would come true, for it was from Calcutta that he took ship for home.

For the present, he focuses on the great size and importance of Calcutta as a capital city: "This is London! This is the docks. This is imperial." But he is also highly critical, admitting that he is tempted by the Devil to take the view that "it is not only a wrong but a criminal thing, to allow natives to have any voice in the control" of a city which has been "adorned, docked, wharfed, fronted and reclaimed by Englishmen, existing only because England lives, and dependent for its life on England."

Actually, this is part of Kipling's effort to prove the superiority of the Punjab to Bengal. He tells us that when Bengalis are given any responsibility over others they fail. As Edward Thompson says in *An Indian Day* (1927, republished by Penguin, 1938) the Punjab has had a "curse from the very first and all along. . . self-righteousness." Kipling, to illustrate the ineffectiveness of government in Bengal, introduces us at length to the "big Calcutta stink", which he describes as "sickly . . . indescribable. . . certainly not an Indian smell". It "resembles the essence of corruption that has rotted for the second time – the clammy odour of blue slime. And there is no escape from it... If you live long enough in Calcutta you grow used to it . . ." But Kipling resented the local expatriates' complacency about the stink that pervaded this "surfeited muck-heap", and deeply resented the tolerated continuance of such a disgraceful nuisance, noting that "for diffused, soul-sickening expansiveness" the prevailing stench of Calcutta was worse than anything in his experience elsewhere.

In chapter II ("The Reflections of a Savage", implying that the author comes from up-country, the *Mofussil),* Kipling pokes fun at the residents of impressive houses in the Chowringhi Road, from the insolent door-man, generally asleep in calling-hours, to the local Englishmen's attachment to top hats which, up-country, may end, after use in amateur theatricals, as beehives. He is also told, "If you want to be respectable you mustn't smoke in the street. Nobody does!" He now tells us, "It is time to escape from Chowringhi Road, and get among the longshore folk, who have no prejudices against tobacco, and who all use very much the same sort of hat."

But now – the longshore loafers must stand over, he says – he takes us into "The Council of the Gods", a sitting of the Bengal Legislative Council. "All the trappings are there," says Kipling. "But where" he asks, "is the criminal who is to be hanged for the stench that runs up and down Writers' Buildings staircases; for the rubbish heaps in the

Chitpore Road; for the sickly savour of Chowringhi; for the dirty little tanks at the back of Belvedere; for the street full of smallpox; for the reeking gharri-stand outside the Great Eastern. . . and for a hundred other things?" It is part of Kipling's youthful hostility to authority in general, and to Bengal in particular. He pours ridicule on all the members who are debating the Calcutta Municipal Bill; he ridicules "the grey Englishman in a black frock-coat"; the "keen-eyed, black-bearded Englishman" – there seem to be no Scots or Irish in Calcutta – a "heavily built Babu"; a "slight, spare native in a flat hat-turban, and a black alpaca frock-coat"; who debate endlessly while the smell fills the chamber, and "Calcutta continues to cry out for the bucket and the broom." Kipling seems to have felt equal scorn for the legislators and for the social aspirations of the Calcutta-based Englishmen.

He now moves on to an active report on men and work. He writes vividly of the brutal and hopeless life of sailors of every nationality, washed up on the banks of the Hughli; and the well paid pilots, who look like majors in native cavalry regiments; and the poorly paid pilots who look on them with envy. He reports on the 'Deputy Shipping', who knows all the iniquities of the riverside, and controls the signing-on of desperate sailors in his office next door to the Sailors' Home, at whose gate the cast-ups of all the seas stand in all manner of raiment.

It is a first-class piece of descriptive writing. This also applies to the three chapters, V to VII, which describe his tours of Calcutta by night.

The first of these (V, "With the Calcutta Police") starts with the Thomson quotation, "The City was of Night – perchance of Death, / But certainly of Night." The second of this sequence (VI, itself called "The City of Dreadful Night") starts with a verse from the poem:

> And since they cannot spend or use aright
> The little time here given them in trust,
> But lavish it in weary undelight
> Of foolish toil, and trouble, strife and lust –
> They naturally clamour to inherit
> The Everlasting Future – that their merit
> May have full scope. . . As surely is most just.

The third chapter of this sequence (VII, "Deeper and Deeper Still") –

an allusion to Dante – starts with a verse from Tennyson's "The Palace of Art"[7].

> I built myself a lordly pleasure-house,
> Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.
> I said, 'O Soul, make merry and carouse,
> Dear Soul, for all is well.'

As Kipling starts moving into the night with his police escort (chapter V), he encounters drunks, and hears from the police how they handle them. He is quoting a police view when he asserts that "a woman-drunk is a good deal worse than a man-drunk. She scratches and bites like a Chinaman . . ." Kipling never liked 'Chinamen'. On his voyage back to London in 1889 he would express prejudiced concern about the Chinese he saw both in Singapore and Canton. Perhaps he was led astray as a boy by his reading of Bret Harte.[8]

As he starts the next chapter (VI), Kipling says: "The difficulty is to prevent this account from becoming steadily unwholesome. But one cannot rake through a big city without encountering muck." He seems to have forgotten his enthusiasm for drains. And so, with no more difficulty than a modern tabloid journalist, he produces his portrait of a sensationally beautiful prostitute. He has been threading his way through a warren of squalid houses in a part of Calcutta that is "shut to Europeans – absolutely", when they see "a glare of light on a stair-head" and hear "a clink of innumerable bangles, a rustle of much fine gauze, and the Dainty Iniquity stands revealed, blazing – literally blazing – with jewellery from head to foot. Take one of the fairest miniatures that the Delhi painters draw, and multiply it by ten; throw in one of Angelica Kauffmann's best portraits, and add anything that you can think of from Beckford or "Lalla Rookh", and you will still fall short of the merits of that perfect face . . ." This has been the favourite quotation from the Calcutta sequence for a hundred years, from G.F. Monkshood in 1899 to Andrew Lycett in 1999, including such diverse authors as George MacMunn and Marghanita Laski.

We then descend via "a fat vice in whom there is no romance or beauty, but equally well jewelled and appointed", to "five pitiful draggle-tails, huddled together on a bench" and dens where the drunken sailors land up. In one of these, "a white hand with black nails becomes visible in the gloom. Someone is asleep or drunk in the cot." The police say he is a sailor from the ships. "He'll be robbed before morning, most likely."

The last of these three chapters describing his nocturnal wanderings in Calcutta (VII, "Deeper and Deeper Still") discovers a street of "low,

mean stalls, lighted and with shamelessly open doors, wherein women stand and lounge." And one of the women waiting there is a European (or possibly Eurasian), known to the police as "Mrs D –", the widow of a British soldier, and "whatever shame she may have owned she has long since cast behind her" – as is all too apparent when they stop to talk to her. As they move on, Kipling feels shock and dismay, that a white woman, "the widow of a soldier of the Queen", should have "stooped to this common foulness in the face of the city." Yet the police assure him that she is not unique: "there are any amount of that lot." He grimly concludes that "the secret of the insolence of Calcutta is made plain. Small wonder that the natives fail to respect the Sahib – seeing what they see and knowing what they know." This chapter ends with a whiff of opium, and a sudden glimpse of Chinese in a gambling den, which Kipling's police party swiftly and methodically raid.

Then the tour is over, for "all good Calcutta has gone to bed, the last tram has passed, and the peace of the night is upon the world." So thus is Calcutta condemned, by a journalist on a brief visit, for all the world like a television documentary.

*

There is one more piece about Calcutta in *The City of Dreadful Night.* It is chapter VIII, "Concerning Lucia", and here the young journalist is no longer describing men and women at work, but the dead at rest, in some musings on the tombs in the Old Park Cemetery. So another City of Dreadful Night ends in Death. It is a historical sketch, an exercise in irony, an elegant fantasy, set in the eighteenth century, concerning a young Englishwoman called Julia who died in Calcutta in 1776, aged 23, as her engraved tombstone states. There are verses on the stone, too, one of which runs :-

> Though closed the lips, though stopped the tuneful breath,
> The silent, clay-cold monitress shall teach –
> In all the alarming eloquence of death,
> With double pathos to the heart shall preach . . .

The "Other Places" (in the full title of Kipling's book), beginning with the three chapters of *Among the Railway Folk;* are of interest. When, in "A Railway Settlement", Kipling meets the 'railway folk' at Jamalpur, he is starting to become that expert of the technical, who will report to the rest of India on a life that only he can understand and describe. With the confidence born of a few days' observation and careful recording, he writes on things that are essentially strange to

him, such as the list of workshop repairs which he is told a certain locomotive is due to have, "ranging from mud-hole flanges and blower-cocks to lead plugs, and platform brackets" – and the specification of a heavy-duty class of engine which someone mentions to him, namely "six-wheel coupled eighteen-inch, inside cylinder, 45-ton locos." The reader is presumed not to understand these terms, but the writer implies that the ordinary man on the job uses them familiarly. (A few years later, Kipling plays the same trick with ".007" and "The Ship that Found Herself, in *The Day's Work.)*

The next of the "Other Places" that are included in Kipling's collection, to accompany *The City of Dreadful Night,* is Giridih, in southern Bengal. It is described in the three chapters of *The Giridih Coal-Fields* which, like the other items, was definitively collected in *From Sea to Sea, and Other Sketches.* The coal-fields of Giridih, which strongly remind Kipling of England's 'Black Country', clearly engaged his close attention, and are vividly described. He went down a pit, in a tub and a helmet, and was powerfully impressed by what he was shown, and probably felt less 'in control' of his environment than he had been in the engine sheds, where he had wandered peaceably, making detailed mechanical notes. In chapter 3, "The Perils of the Pits", he described the various terrible accidents that can befall and overwhelm the miners at the coal-face, by fire or explosion or subsidence. This is a world outside his experience, and though he writes it up with assurance, he is forced to acknowledge that "it is hopeless to pretend to understand it all".

Then there is the historically interesting piece, *In an Opium Factory,* set at Ghazipur, forty miles below Benares on the Ganges. Here Kipling tells us, in considerable detail, how opium is made ready for the Chinese market. It ends with the statement, "And this is the way the drug, which yields such a splendid income to the Indian Government, is made." I do not think that Kipling was being ironical. He would later write from Vermont to his M.P. uncle, Alfred Baldwin, who had asked his opinion on opium. In his reply, Kipling wrote that opium taken in moderation was harmless, and that the Indian tended to be moderate in his use of drugs.

Also linked with the Calcutta sequence in the 'Other Places' in Kipling's assortment, is *The Smith Administration*, a substantial item of nearly 100 pages, originally published separately. It consists of 18 brief newspaper articles, which are satirical, sometimes frivolous, studies of Indian life. The 'Smith' part is an allegory of government, and tells how much better the writer copes with his own 'empire' – that is, his household – than does the Indian Government. A typical remark is: "India has been squabbling over the Great Cow Question these four hundred years . . . I, Smith, have settled it." The articles include a Pathan's impression of Bengal, which he finds to be a land "very strongly held" – so the Mullahs have lied about the prospects of easily plundering it.

There are also unconvincing 'soldier' pieces, set in the canteen of the Tyneside Tailtwisters ["What it Comes to"], and with Gunner Barnabas ["The Opinions of Gunner Barnabas"] in the Artillery Lines. (Incidentally, a subaltern in the Tailtwisters is 'Little Mildred', who soon moved to better things with the White Hussars in "The Man Who Was" in *Life's Handicap.)* And there is "The Bride's Progress", with a newly married English couple honeymooning in Benares, which they view with an attitude of uncomprehending disgust, as when the bride exclaims indignantly, "Why don't these horrid people clean the place out?"

An early commentary on the Calcutta articles was enthusiastic. In 1899, in *Rudyard Kipling: An Attempt at Appreciation*, G.F. Monkshood [W.J. Clarke], having read a copy of the suppressed writings that a friend has obtained for him, remarks that "The Calcutta part of these entertaining little books is an object-lesson in the 'writing up' of a big city." He adds: "I have not heard truly why these two travel books *[The City of Dreadful Night* and *Letters of Marque]* have been suppressed."[9] He clearly regards these sketches as travel writing of the highest quality.

Angus Wilson, in his biography, *The Strange Ride of Rudyard Kipling*, says that "Kipling's reports from his travels are enormously readable travel journalism, even today." But he modifies this in relation to the Calcutta group, saying that "the satires on the Congress sittings are heavy-handed; the diatribes against Calcutta's red light district have all the conventional gothic and sermonising we find in Dickens's similar escapades." However, "sermonising" does seem an odd word to use about Kipling's admiring description of 'Dainty Iniquity'.

This group of writings is of interest for a number of reasons. First,

they reveal Kipling as a journalist who can now report, often brilliantly, on any subject for his paper – an ability he never lost. Second, they present many aspects of life in India in the 1880s, which would not otherwise have been recorded. Third, they are used as source material. Mines go into "On Greenhow Hill" *(Life's Handicap);* railway sheds into ".007" (*The Day's Work);* 'Dainty Iniquity' contributes to 'Di'monds-an'- Pearls' in " 'Love-o'-Women' " *(Many Inventions);* while the unsuitability of Bengalis for administration returns in "The Head of the District" (*Life's Handicap),* as does the lying Mullah. The international fraternity of sailors features in "The Ballad of Fisher's Boarding-House".

> And there was Jake Without-the-Ears,
> And Pamba the Malay,
> And Carboy Gin the Guinea cook
> And Luz from Vigo Bay,
> And Honest Jack who sold them slops
> And harvested their pay . . .

As late as April 1886, Kipling wrote to E.K. Robinson: "Would you be astonished if I told you that I look forward to nothing but an Indian journalist's career?" But by 1888 Indian journalism had become less attractive to him, and literature more important. His journalist training never left him, but he regretted the unearthing of pieces he had not himself selected and edited for re-publication. In 1895 he wrote to William Carey about a pirated edition : "How would you like a man selling your cast-off breeches on Broadway?" In the end he had them dry-cleaned, and sold them on his own behalf.

*

There are at least two other uses of the poem by Kipling in India. He quotes a stanza (which I have already noted) at the beginning of "Under the Deodars" (in *Wee Willie Winkie and Other Stories);* and two lines at the beginning of "My own true Ghost Story" (also in *Wee Willie Winkie and Other Stories).*

> As I came through the Desert thus it was –
> As I came through the Desert.

In the autumn of 1889 Kipling returned to London, where as a boy he had started his habit of 'night walking'. In 1890 he wrote "The Record

of Badalia Herodsfoot" *(Many Inventions)*, a story of the London slums. J.M. Barrie described this as "merely a clever man's treatment of a land he knows little of'[10] – though possibly Kipling knew more of the lives of the London poor than Barrie did.

Soon Kipling was writing at length, in prose and verse, to the *Pioneer*, attacking his fellow-countrymen and the City itself. Much of this was republished in *Abaft the Funnel* in 1909. Typical is "In Partibus", the only commonly quoted item in this collection.

> Earth holds no horror like to this
> In any land displayed,
> From Suez unto Sandy Hook,
> From Calais to Port Said;
> And 'twas to hide their heathendom
> The beastly fog was made. . .
>
> It's Oh to see the morn ablaze
> Above the mango-tope,
> When homeward through the dewy cane
> The little jackals lope,
> And half Bengal heaves into view,
> New-washed – with sunlight soap. . .

The *Pioneer* editor remarks, with a twinkle in his eye: "Mr Rudyard Kipling, who was understood not always to be satisfied with life in India, is at times apparently dissatisfied with life in England." And in 1948, Kipling's sister was quoted in the *Journal* as saying that her brother "came in for a fearfully foggy winter [of 1889-90] in London, and he didn't like it one little bit." Well, who would?

The last obvious indications of the importance of Thomson's poem to Kipling's work are in several references in *The Light that Failed* (1890), written at (and about) this period of his life. In chapter IX 'the red-haired girl' reads aloud Thomson's description of Melancolia, the queen of Thomson's city. Maisie decides to paint a Melancolia, and Dick Heldar thereupon asserts that he will paint a better one. He duly paints what he feels is his masterpiece, but when in chapter XIII she sees it, it has been wrecked by the servant-girl Bessie, and Dick, unaware of Bessie's vandalism, has gone blind. Maisie rushes out distraught, unable to control her hysterical laughter. When Dick learns the reason, he goes away to seek death in the desert.

George Shepperson, in an essay on "The World of Rudyard Kipling", claims that Kipling "had always been fascinated by James Thomson's 'The City of Dreadful Night', and he used its *motifs* to explore late

Victorian decadence in *The Light that Failed."*[11]

That book, at chapter III, is also of interest in relation to Kipling's suppression of the Indian newspaper pieces of which he had not authorised the re-publication. The artist Dick Heldar, after years sketching the lives and background of British soldiers abroad, has returned to England and become a sudden popular success. His publishing syndicate wish to make money out of his hitherto unpublished sketches which are still in their possession (but not their ownership). Dick very angrily demolishes their pretensions and deflates their stout representative, frock-coat and all. This is surely Kipling telling us about his Indian publishers and how, in parallel circumstances, he dealt with them – or would have liked to.

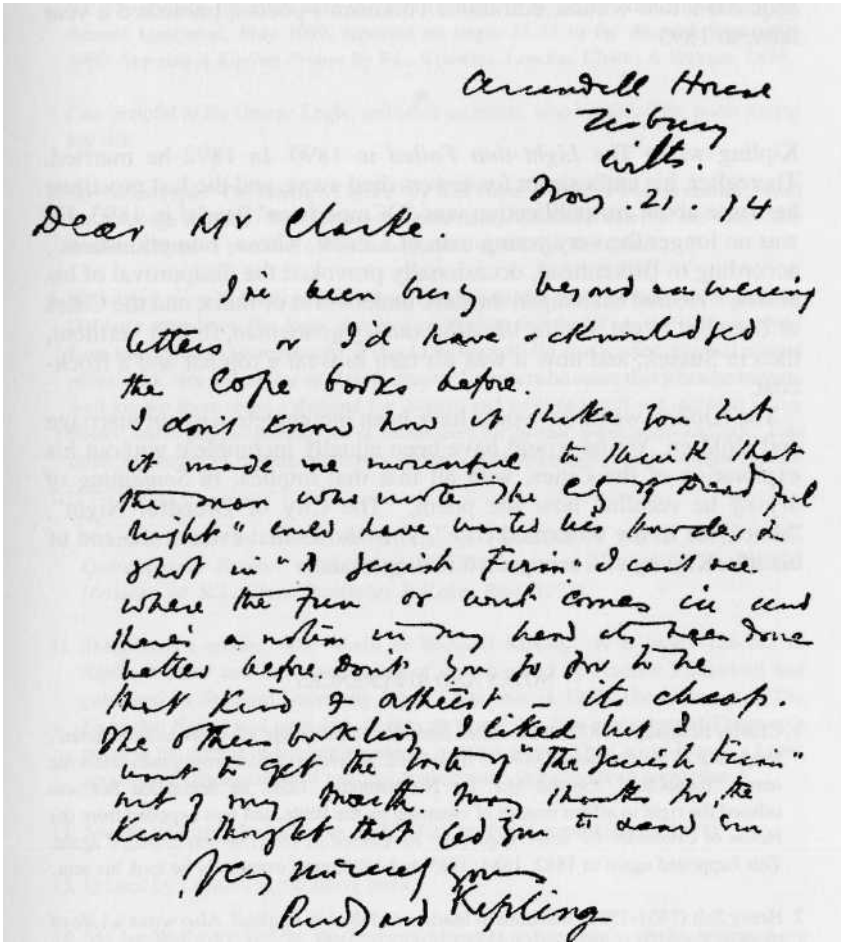
A significant reference by Kipling to Thomson's poem is in a facsimile letter printed facing page 11 of *Rudyard Kipling: an Attempt at Appreciation* (1899) by G.F. Monkshood (the pen-name of W.J. Clarke), and reproduced opposite. Addressed to Clarke from Kipling at Tisbury in Wiltshire, on 21 May 1894, it thanks him for sending Kipling two books relating to Thomson. Kipling calls them "the Cope books", and it seems likely that they were two volumes of (or selections from) a monthly periodical called *Cope's Tobacco Plant,* to which Thomson had first contributed in 1875, and which thereafter had been his main source of income.

Kipling wrote: "I've been busy beyond writing letters, or I'd have acknowledged the Cope books before. I don't know how it strikes you, but it made me mournful to think that the man who wrote 'The City of Dreadful Night' could have wasted his powder & shot in 'A Jewish Firm'. I can't see where the fun or [?wit] comes in and there's a notion in my head it's been done better before. Don't you go for to be that kind of atheist – it's cheap. The other bookling I liked but I want to get the taste of 'The Jewish Firm' out of my mouth. Many thanks for the kind thought that led you to send 'em . . ."

Kipling was referring to a satirical article by Thomson, "The Story of a Famous Old Jewish Firm", first published in 1865 in the *National Reformer,* reprinted posthumously in 1884 in a book called *Satires and Profanities.* It satirises the Holy Family as a squabbling family firm, in competition with "Jupiter & Co."[12]

The poet Swinburne, who had admired some of Thomson's early work, said later: "He has left behind, as well as some remarkable and creditable verses, some of the silliest and most offensive rubbish that ever discredited the memory of a man."[13]

Kipling's letter to Monkshood / Clarke was written in 1894, but in spite of the disillusionment he there expressed, his library at Bateman's



Arundell House
Tisbury
Wilts.
Nov. 21. 94

Dear Mr Clarke.

I've been busy beyond endurance writing letters or I'd have acknowledged the Cope books before.
I don't know how it strike you but it made me nauseous to think that the man who wrote the "City of Dreadful Night" could have wasted his hours & ghost in "A Jewish Firm." I can't see where the fun or work comes in and there's a notion in my head that I've done better before. Don't you go for to be that kind of atheist – it's cheap.
The others look big. I liked best I want to get the taste of "The Jewish Firm" out of my mouth. Many thanks for the kind thought that led you to send me.

Very sincerely yours
Rudyard Kipling

Kipling's letter of 1894 to W.J. Clarke, about James Thomson. This is the subject of comment in the accompanying article by Kenneth Frazer.

acquired a two-volume edition of Thomson's poems, published a year later, in 1895.[14]

Kipling wrote *The Light that Failed* in 1890. In 1892 he married. Thereafter, his enthusiasm for sewers died away, and the last prostitute he wrote about for publication was 'Di'monds an' Pearls' in 1893. He was no longer the very young man of Lahore, whose 'bumptiousness', according to Birkenhead, occasionally provoked the disapproval of his elders.[15] He had exchanged the dark underworld of India, and the Cities of Dreadful Night, for the life of a country gentleman, first in Vermont, then in Sussex; and now it was *his* turn to wear a top hat and a frock-coat.

The Kipling we know would have been incomplete without marriage and children. Yet he would have been equally incomplete without his exploration of the Cities, with all that that implies. In *Something of Myself* he recalled how the poem, "The City of Dreadful Night", "shook me to my unformed core". This shows that even at the end of his life, Kipling still recognised its importance.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Charles Bradlaugh (1833-1891) called himself a 'freethought advocate and politician'. Proprietor of the *National Reformer* from 1862. Active in radical propaganda under the name, 'Iconoclast'. Elected M.P. for Northampton, 1880, he demanded but was refused the right to affirm instead of swearing on the Bible, and was expelled from the House of Commons for non-compliance. Re-elected in 1881, he was expelled again. This happened again in 1882, 1884, 1885 and 1886, until eventually he took his seat.

2. Henry Salt (1851-1939) was born in Madras and died in England. Also wrote a Life of Shelley. Edited the 'Thinkers' Library' collection of Thomson's poems, 1932.

3. The *Oxford Dictionary of Music.* The song was written for the masque *Alfred,* in collaboration with David Mallet.

4. *Lalla Rookh* can equally be described as a long prose work interspersed with love ballads, written by the Irish poet Thomas Moore (1779-1852), author of "The harp that once through Tara's halls" and "The Minstrel Boy". Lalla, the eponymous heroine, was an Indian princess of surpassing beauty.

5. Anthologies include the *Oxford Book of Victorian Verse* and an updated edition of *The Golden Treasury.*

6. See for instance the address to the Kipling Society by David Alan Richards at the Annual Luncheon, May 1999, reported on pages 11-25 in the *Journal*, September 1999. See also *A Kipling Primer* by F.L. Knowles, London, Chatto & Windus, 1899.

7. I am grateful to Sir George Engle, and other members, who identified the poem during my talk.

8. See for example "The Heathen Chinee" by Bret Harte. "Which I wish to remark, / And my language is plain, / That for ways that are dark, / And for tricks that are vain, / The heathen Chinee is peculiar, / Which the same I would rise to explain . . ."

9. Why were these collections suppressed? I suggest that (as expressed through Dick Heldar's attitude in *The Light that Failed)* Kipling felt that if anyone were to profit from his work and his reputation, it should be himself. He also wanted editorial control of his work. See *Something of Myself*, chapter III, where he states that when he became well known there arose a demand for "signed and unsigned stuff not included in my books, and a general turning-out of refuse-bins for private publication and sale. This upset my hopes of editing my books decently and responsibly, and wrought general confusion."

10. From an essay by Barrie, about Kipling, published in March 1891, in the *Contemporary Review*, vol LIX, pp 364-372; reprinted in *Kipling: the Critical Heritage*, ed. R.L. Green, Routledge & Kegan Paul (1971).

11. Shepperson's article, "The World of Rudyard Kipling", is at pages 126-145 in *Kipling's Mind and Art*, a collection of essays edited by Andrew Rutherford and published by Stanford University Press, California, in 1962. The reference to *The Light that Failed* is at page 136. It goes on to say that "the equivalent of Thomson's poem in the corpus of Kipling's verse is, in many ways, 'The City of Brass', a bitter, apocalyptic denunciation of national degeneration through urban corruption."

12. See the bibliography in *Places of the Mind* by Tom Leonard (Cape, 1993).

13. Quoted by Leonard in the above book.

14. Ms Jan Wallwork-Wright, the Property Manager at Bateman's, kindly informed me that these books were there.

15. See chapter V of Lord Birkenhead's *Rudyard Kipling* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1978). Birkenhead cites one or two outspoken examples of the hostility that the young Kipling sometimes provoked among fellow-expatriates in Lahore by what was perceived as bumptiousness or bad manners.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

[I am glad to receive letters intended for publication. However, since more are received than can in practice be printed, I must be selective, and reserve – unless expressly told otherwise – the usual right to shorten a letter. In some cases it may be possible for the text, and/or enclosures, to be summarised under "Points from Other Letters". My address is given on the penultimate page of this issue. – *Ed.]*

A RUSSIAN FILM ABOUT MOWGLI

From Mr Shamus O. D. Wade, 37 Davis Road, Acton, London W3 7SE

Dear Sir,

There was a wonderful Christmas present for 'Kiplingites' in Britain, on TV Channel 5 on Christmas Day 1999 – the Russian cartoon film, *The Adventures of Mowgli.* This was originally released in 1968, when the Communists were still in power. The English language version (with Charlton Heston as Narrator, Sam Elliot voicing Kaa, and Dana Delaney, Bagheera) came out in 1996. Directed by R. Davidov, this splendid production from Soyuzmultifilm Studios is the complete opposite of Walt Disney's *Jungle Book.*

The film runs for 105 minutes, and seems to include all the Mowgli stories (except the ones involving the villagers) in both the First and the Second *Jungle Books.* Nearly all the characters – Father Wolf, Mother Wolf, Akela, Gray Brother, Won-Tolla, Baloo, Bagheera, Kaa, Hathi and his Sons, Mysa, the Little People of the Rocks, Shere Khan, Tabaqui, Red Dog, the White Cobra, the Bandar-Log, Mang, Ikki and Mor – are pretty much as I had imagined them. The gradual growth of Mowgli from man-cub to fully grown adult male is very subtly done. There is a little over-simplification, to get it all into 105 minutes: Mowgli is briefly Leader of the Pack.

But the only major change to Kipling is that Bagheera is female. When I was actually watching the film, this seemed right. It was only when I re-read the books afterwards that I noticed the change. (Perhaps I was influenced by a lady of my acquaintance whose mother was a pedigree prize-winning Siamese, and whose father was the King of Lad Lane – a Dublin back-alley . . .)

Before the film began, I was rather surprised that Channel 5 gave it a Guidance Rating of 'G' and warned that some parents might feel it was unsuitable for children. But Kaa with the Bandar-Log was, true to Kipling, really frightening; and the first sight of the Little People of the

Rocks made even me a little uneasy.

Am I the only member of the Kipling Society to have never even heard of this magnificent film before?

Yours sincerely
SHAMUS O.D. WADE

UP A TREE WITH A TIGER

From Mr Ronald F. Rosner, Apartment 5D, 300 East 34th Street, New York NY 10016, U.S.A.

Dear Sir,

As something of an old 'Koi Hai', I read with great interest Mr Whitehead's obituary article about Mr B.E. Smythies, whom I regret that I was not fortunate enough to have met. *[Editor's Note:* That was on pages 66-69 of September 1999, since when, I am very sorry to report, the obituarist, John Whitehead, has himself died. This is also a serious loss to the Society. He will be remembered particularly for his recent painstaking and thorough annotation and re-publication of Kipling's *Barrack-Room Ballads* and the 'Mrs Hauksbee' stories.–*Ed.]*

Regarding Mr Smythies [writes Mr Rosner], it may be of interest to members of the Kipling Society, that his mother and father, while tiger-shooting in 1925, were involved in an incident so remarkable that it is frequently mentioned to this day, in books about tigers and *shikar* in India.

According to his father's first-person account in the *Pioneer* of 30 June 1926 (as quoted in 1938 by Sir John Hewett in his *Jungle Trails in Northern India),* Mr and Mrs Smythies were in separate but nearby *machans* [platforms constructed in a tree, to shoot from] while beaters drove a tiger towards them. When the tiger appeared, Mr Smythies shot at it, and missed. As the beaters drew nearer, the tiger again broke cover, and Mr Smythies fired a second time, only to miss again. Mrs Smythies then fired as the tiger passed her *machan,* hitting it above the heart but below the spine.

Upon being hit, the tiger turned and made for Mrs Smythies, climbing up the tree and attempting to enter her *machan.* After her husband had fired again, this time only grazing the tiger, Mrs Smythies put her rifle muzzle into the tiger's mouth, pulled the trigger and – had a misfire! The tiger continued to try to climb into the *machan,* and in her attempt to avoid its paws Mrs Smythies fell backwards from the tree.

At that moment, Mr Smythies fired his last bullet – his spare ammunition having been inadvertently knocked out of his *machan* in the excitement – taking the tiger in the heart. Mrs Smythies made her escape to her husband's tree, and was rescued by a mahout who had ". . . rushed up on his elephant, regardless of wounded tigers. . ."

Upon receiving a fresh supply of ammunition, Mr Smythies verified that the tiger, a 9 foot 3 inch male, was dead, and recovered his wife's rifle, which bore the tiger's teeth-marks eight inches up the barrel. In Mr Smythies's words, this was "an incident which must, I think, be unique in the annals of tiger-shooting. At least, I have never heard of a lady being hurled out of a high *machan* by a climbing tiger, and her husband killing it up in the air with his last cartridge."

A monument commemorating the incident was erected by the Forest Department staff, and can still be seen, although overgrown, in the forest near Haldwani, in northern Uttar Pradesh.

Yours sincerely
RON ROSNER

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

by JOHN SLATER, Honorary Librarian

ACCESS TO THE LIBRARY

It has been decided to replace the present pasteboard annual member's card with a more durable, slightly smaller, permanent card, and also to re-introduce the use of a Visitors' Book, The new arrangements will apply from the beginning of April. Most existing users of the Library should by now have received a new card; but one or two may have fallen through the net. Anyone who has not received a new card is asked to get in touch with me at 13 Canonbury Road, London Nl 2DF [telephone 0207 359 2404; e-mail jssaki@aol.com.].

BUYING VAL PRINSEP ON THE INTERNET

Many people have now heard of the effect Amazon and other retailers are having on the new books market by use of the Internet; but some less computer-literate bibliophiles may not yet realise the equally important effect the Internet is having on the second-hand market. Already catalogues of hundreds of booksellers from all over the world are available in the home. They can be searched, and prices from

different dealers can be compared. An example (though not entirely typical) may be useful.

Andrew Lycett, at page 596 of his new biography of Kipling, in his bibliographical listing, included *Imperial India: An Artist's Journals* by Val Prinsep, published by Chapman & Hall in 1878. It seemed possible that the Internet might be able to produce a copy. In fact it did not, but it did throw up *Glimpses of Imperial India* by Val C. Prinsep, published in India a century later, in 1979. This was clearly the same book, but without the Internet one would not have known that it existed. In due course it arrived by surface mail from Minneapolis, at a cost of US$ 13, paid by credit card. The book is an offset facsimile either of the original 1878 edition or, more likely, of a revised second edition of 1879 mentioned on the *verso*. It is not clear why there is a confusion of titles.

Val Prinsep (1838-1904), painter and Royal Academician, was a close friend of Burne-Jones, and in 1857 had worked with him (and William Morris, Rossetti and others) on decorating the new debating chamber of the Oxford Union.

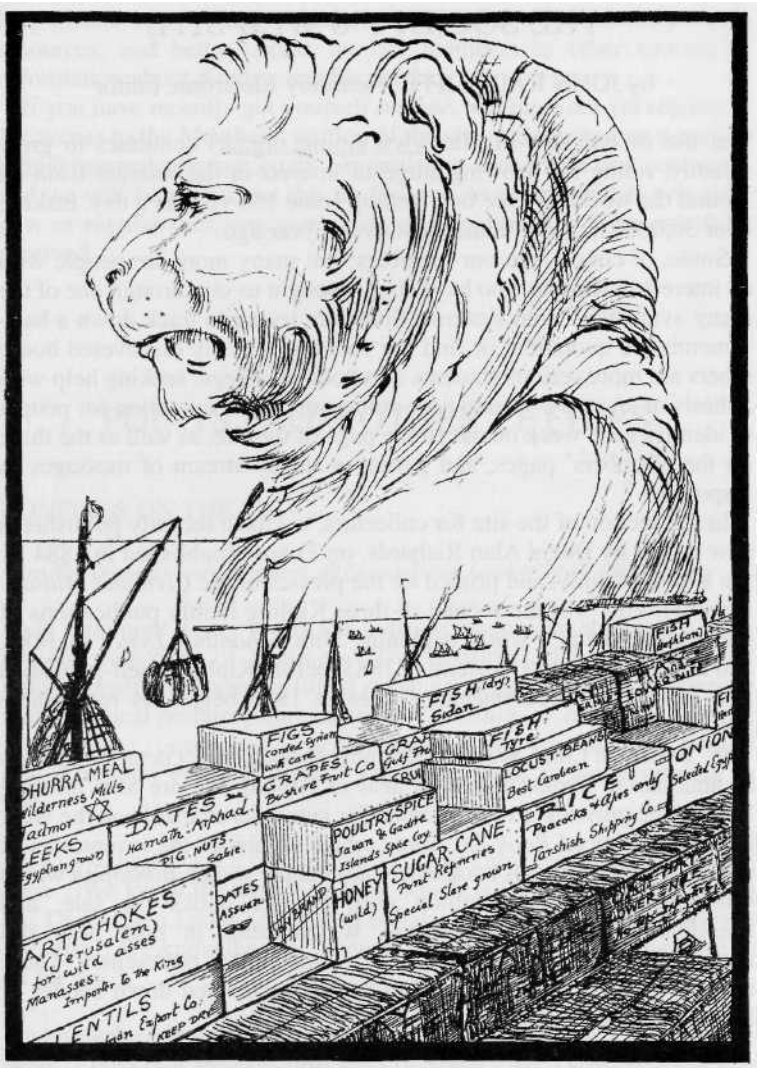
He had been born in Calcutta, and his family's connection with India went back over a hundred years. His grandfather had left a Warwickshire vicarage to serve there, despite a letter to his father, warning him not to let the boy go, as Clive [who finally left India in 1766], was "the very devil". In the next generation, no fewer than seven Prinsep brothers served there – of whom three were notable enough to feature in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

With that background, it is not surprising that Val was commissioned to paint the commemorative picture of the great Delhi Durbar of 1877 that now hangs in the Foreign & Commonwealth Office in London.

After the Durbar, Prinsep spent twelve months travelling through India, from Kashmir in the north to Mysore and Madurai in the south, so that he could capture in paint a great variety of Maharajahs and Nawabs and their wives in ceremonial robes. Throughout his trip he kept a journal, which makes the basis of a very readable and interesting book.

The book, of 360 pages, hardback (but glued, not sewn), with 24 illustrations by the author, is still listed on the Internet, but unfortunately only from India, at US$ 30 plus postage (and no credit cards). The address is Oscar Publications, C-558, Lane No 12, Majlis Park, Ardash Nagar, Delhi 110033, India. (Telephone, 91-11-7130449, Fax 91-11-7435724, e-mail, editor@oscarindia.com.)

The familiar drawing by Kipling, of "the Animal that came out of the sea" in "The Butterfly that Stamped" (his story about King Solomon, in *Just So Stories).* This animal, though well-disposed, had a voracious appetite and confounded Solomon's over-sanguine intention of feeding all the animals in the world, by swallowing the entire collected provision on his own, including even "the boxes and packets and bales" in which they were contained.



This adaptation of the picture opposite was made by Kipling and inherited by Meryl Macdonald Bendle, as explained on page 164 of *The Long Trail* (her biography of her kinsman, reviewed on page 10 of this issue). Kipling was evidently dissatisfied with some of his illustrations in *Just So Series*, and talked of supplying new ones for later editions. He never did so, but this re-drawing was possibly one step in that direction.

THE SOCIETY'S WEB-SITE

by JOHN RADCLIFFE, Honorary Electronic Editor

The use of our web-site (at www.kipling.org.uk) continues to grow steadily, riding the growing surge of interest in the Internet from all around the world. We are now getting some 150 visitors a day, making over 30,000 since our launch just over a year ago.

Some, of course, are our members; but many more are people with an interest in Kipling who have simply sought us out through one of the many available search systems. Some are trying to track down a half-remembered quotation, or find the value of a newly discovered book: others are more serious students at school or college, seeking help with a thesis or an essay. We are now putting up a new quotation for people to identify each week on the Home page of the site, as well as the three on the Members' pages, and getting a steady stream of messages in response.

In the section of the site for collectors, we have recently published a new article by David Alan Richards, on *Echoes* (published in 1884 by the Kipling family, and printed on the presses of the *Civil and Military Gazette).* This was the second of three Kipling family publications of the teenage writer's work, beginning with *Schoolboy Lyrics* in 1881, and concluding with *Quartette* in 1885, before Kipling's self-published first edition of *Departmental Ditties* in 1886 began his remarkable ascent to fame.

In 'Books on Line', we are continuing to add contact details and links to antiquarian booksellers who deal in Kipling We are also offering links to the growing array of bookseller networks available on the Web, like the *Advanced Book Exchange* which combines the inventories of over 5,700 independent booksellers around the world; *Bibliofind* which offers more than ten million used or rare books for sale; and *Bookfinder,* based in California, which deals in both new and antiquarian books and has links with over 15,000 booksellers. There are few titles in the literature that cannot be tracked down sooner or later through these networks.

As you may know, John Slater, who has succeeded Trixie Schreiber as Librarian, has been creating a new catalogue of the Kipling Society's Library at City University, and this is now available on the web-site. John Morgan has recently completed a revised version of his massive Index of the *Kipling Journal,* and this too will soon be available on the site. We are planning to establish closer links with libraries and universities around the world with Kipling collections. This should

help enable better use by scholars and students of the Society's own resources, and better access for our members to other sources of information about Kipling and his works.

If you have recently got yourself on-line, and have not yet registered for access to the Members' section of the site, please send an e-mail to john@fastmedia.demon.co.uk suggesting a user name and password, and we will be glad to set this up for you. As ever, whether you are a new or regular user, any comments or suggestions will be gratefully received.

POINTS FROM OTHER LETTERS

BONFIRES ON THE ICE

From The Dowager Lady Egremont, 40 Sussex Street, London SW1V 4RH

Lady Egremont writes to say she hopes someone can elucidate for her the obscurer parts of Kipling's "The Bonfires". This powerful and tightly constructed poem is full of rather enigmatic allusions, beginning with a cynical prefatory note in prose:- *"Gesture . . . outlook . . . vision . . . avenue . . . example . . . achievement. . . appeasement. . . limit of risk.* Common Political Form." The poem itself is worth quoting in full:-

We know the Rocket's upward whizz; / We know the Boom before the Bust. / We know the whistling Wail which is / The Stick returning to the Dust. / We know how much to take on trust / Of any promised Paradise. / We know the Pie, likewise the Crust. / We know the Bonfire on the Ice.

We know the Mountain and the Mouse. / We know Great Cry and Little Wool. / We know the purseless Ears of Sows. / We know the Frog that aped the Bull. / We know, whatever Trick we pull, / (Ourselves have gambled once or twice) / A Bobtailed Flush is not a Full. / We know the Bonfire on the Ice.

We know that Ones and Ones makes Twos – / Till Demos votes them three or nought. / We know the Fenris Wolf is loose. / We know what

Fight has not been fought. / We know the Father to the Thought ? Which argues Babe and Cockatrice / Would play together, were they taught. / We know *that* Bonfire on the Ice.

We know that Thriving comes by Thrift. / We know the Key must keep the Door. / We know his boot-straps cannot lift / The frightened Waster off the Floor. / We know these things, and we deplore / That not by any Artifice / Can they be altered. Furthermore / We know the Bonfires on the Ice!

The poem appeared in the *Morning Post* on 13 November 1933, and was a prescient warning of the threat that Hitler's rearmament of Germany would pose to a militarily unprepared Britain. Angus Wilson's biography of Kipling (1977) describes it as his "warning of what he believed to be all the delusive panaceas based on the easy ways out." Andrew Lycett's biography (1999) says the poem reflected Kipling's "alarm at contemporary political myopia", and quotes an explanatory comment by Gwynne (Editor of the *Morning Post),* that 'Bonfires on the Ice' meant "policies built upon falsehood, which cheer and deceive for a time, but in the end fall through the foundations on which they are built." As for the Fenris (or Fenrys) Wolf, Lycett says this is the sinister werewolf of Nordic legend.

But there may well be more that could usefully be said about the style or content (or timing) of this poem, with all its taut allusions to proverbial wisdom. I invite readers to write to me with their comments. – *Ed.*

THE WEATHER AT VERNET

From Mr B.J. Bolt, Well Forge End, Stanton Wick, Pensford, Bristol BS38 4BZ.

Mr Bolt, after seeing a letter (December 1999, page 54) about Kipling's visits to Vernet-les-Bains in France, writes to draw attention to a pleasant little piece by Kipling called "Why the Snow Falls at Vernet". It was published in a small local English-language magazine, *The Merry Thought.* Mr Bolt thinks that because it was never collected it will be unknown to many of our readers, and he suggests that we print it. I agree, and will see if it can be placed in our next issue.

WARTIME MEMORIES

From Mr Patrick Gibson, 37 Vivian Way, London N2 OJA

Mr Gibson, who was brought up on Kipling's prose and verse, and greatly admires it, wrote asking how to join the Society. This has been arranged. He also sent me a copy of a remarkable book he has just written, called *Childhood Lost: a boy's journey through war*. Though it contains some interesting echoes of Kipling (e.g. elephants hauling teak, a mongoose killing a cobra, schooling at Naini Tal, a visit to Mandalay) it is not on that account that I mention it here, but simply because it tells, in artless but compelling terms, an extraordinary story of the author's childhood experiences in the Far East before and during the second World War, when his father worked for the Bombay Burma Trading Corporation. When the Japanese overran Siam, Malaya and the Dutch East Indies, he and his parents became separated; and though he escaped from Sumatra to Calcutta, he was there mistakenly told they were dead. He was thirteen, and he spent most of the rest of the war stranded in India. His vivid memories of this upheaval of his life are movingly recounted, and when he is critical he does not pull his punches. This is an engrossing 'human document' and 'period piece', and the very simplicity of the narrative argues its honesty.

Childhood Lost (183 pages, generously illustrated) is obtainable from the author at the address above (telephone 0181 883 6095) for £13.99 + £1.50 for U.K. postage and packing.

AT THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

From Mr Shamus Wade, 37 Davis Road, Acton, London W3 7SE

Mr Wade writes with zest about a 60-minute presentation on "Kipling's Life and Verse" which he attended in the packed lecture hall of the National Portrait Gallery on 26 February. It was staged by Colin Penney, Kathy Clancy and William Beck, of Marchurst Productions, who were "absolutely splendid", holding the audience "in the hollow of their hands". They moved "at a brisk trot from Kipling's parents' first meeting at Lake Rudyard, to the end," all "with terrific verve". They aim to do it again in the autumn; members within reach of London to note.

READINGS BY RALPH FIENNES

From Michael Smith, Honorary Secretary, The Kipling Society

Michael Smith writes in enthusiastic terms about a new selection of Kipling's prose and verse, read by the well known actor, Ralph Fiennes. It is obtainable as a CD at £9.99, or a tape at £7.50 (both prices include packing and postage in the U.K.), from Droffig Recordings Ltd, 24 Donovan Avenue, London N10 2JX (telephone 0181 444 5819; fax 0181 442 1005) – payment by cheque only. It is part of a series of readings produced for the National Trust, of the works of authors who at one time lived in Trust properties; they are on sale at the Trust's shops.

Michael Smith describes how the passages for recitation are interwoven with music, mainly by Elgar, though some classical Indian pieces are included; and there is atmospheric *sitar* music to introduce Kipling's earliest childhood memories of Bombay, with walks in the company of his *ayah*. Then Elgar's "La Capricieuse" is followed by an extract from "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi"; and later, music by flute and drone leads into the return to India in 1882, from *Something of Myself*. A suitably grave but nervous voice marks the concern of the young soldiers on parade, at the execution of "Danny Deever"; the pseudo-calm of their Colour-Sergeant is spine-chilling. Kim's journeying with the Lama continues the Indian theme, then a short flute solo counterpoints Elgar's "Chanson de Matin", and a Sussex sequence of "If–", "The Very Own House" and "The Way through the Woods". The final sequence includes Elgar's "Nimrod" variation and the poem "Minesweepers", with its wonderful rhythmic roll-call of little ships –"Unity", "Claribel", "Assyrian", "Stormcock" and "Golden Gain". And there is a letter dated November 1915 to 'Stalky' Dunsterville, reporting in stoical terms the loss of his son John. Then "My Boy Jack", epitomising his tightly controlled grief. The curtain-fall comes with "Cities and Thrones and Powers".

Michael Smith feels Henry Gifford's selection of prose and verse for this programme cannot be faulted, and should appeal to members. The recording is accompanied by an attractive booklet (with the CD) or folder (with the tape), with a charming painting of Bateman's, and an insert of the Collier portrait which hangs on the landing. There is also a description of Kipling's study, an outline of his career, details of the selected pieces, and a note on Ralph Fiennes. The entire thing has been created, with skilful good taste, by Anthea Gifford. It will give great pleasure, and Michael Smith suggests it could make a very acceptable gift.

SOCIETY NOTICES

FROM THE SECRETARY, MICHAEL SMITH

[See also the Announcements on page 5]

PROPOSED TOUR OF THE LOOS BATTLEFIELD

Sadly, the number of members expressing an interest in joining the planned excursion in September 2000 to the First World War battlefield of Loos (described in some detail on page 43 of our last issue) is insufficient to make it a viable proposition, and after discussion with Toni and Valmai Holt we have reluctantly decided to cancel it.

SIR JOSIAS CUNNINGHAM

We warmly congratulate Sir Josias Cunningham on the award of a knighthood in the latest New Year's Honours List. This was in recognition of Political Services in Northern Ireland, where for several years he has been President of the Ulster Unionist Council. He has also served as a Deputy Lieutenant for County Antrim. Sir Josias, a keen and long-standing member of our Society, wrote a 'theatre review' which was published on pages 34-36 of our last issue.

THE SIR J.J. SCHOOL OF APPLIED ART, MUMBAI

Members will recall that some time ago we formally presented to the modern form of the Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy School of Art in Bombay (where Lockwood Kipling taught, and where Rudyard was born) a replica of the historic plaque which had been commissioned for the launch of H.M.S. *Kipling*.

The Dean, Professor M.G. Rajadhyaksha, has now written to tell us a specially commissioned bust of Kipling (a superb likeness, created by the sculptor N.L. Sonavadekar) has been unveiled there, to consolidate the Kipling connection, accompanying a display panel entitled "Rudyard Kipling: a Photo Journey". The Dean – himself a graduate of the School, and now an artist, designer and administrator with a national reputation – has kindly sent us a photographic record of the unveiling, performed by Mr Rustom J. Jeejeebhoy, a direct descendant of Sir Jamsetjee.

The photographs will be housed in the Society's Library, and some will be on view at our web-site, where colour representation will do full justice to the importance of the ceremony, and to the garland of red and white flowers placed, in true Indian fashion, round Kipling's shoulders.

We are very grateful to the Dean, and we congratulate him on securing the consent of his Government for a permanent commemoration of Kipling.

A GREMLIN AT WORK

Our excellent printers, Michael Egan Associates, maintain a high standard of accuracy in producing the *Kipling Journal*, but very occasionally an inexplicable technical fault has occurred in their automated collation and stapling of the finished magazine, so a few 'freak' copies have been distributed with pages out of order, or missing. We (and the printers) take these rare errors seriously, and will be grateful if anyone who receives a *Journal* with defective pagination will at once send details to the Editor or me: a replacement will then be supplied.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following, listed on 10 February by the Membership Secretary.

Mr Paul L. Beckley *(Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, U.S.A.);* Mr R.S. Burdett *(Baldock, Hertfordshire);* Mr. W.M. Caulfield *(Castle Hill, New South Wales, Australia);* Mr Charles R. Dickey *(North Salem, New York, U.S.A.);* Mr. J.E.M. Dunsterville *(Harpenden, Hertfordshire);* Miss Victoria Hopkirk *(Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire);* Mr Andrew Lees *(Sittingbourne, Kent);* Captain William Mather *(London WI3);* Mr Frank Noah *(Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire);* Miss Roseanne O'Reilly, M.B.E. *(London SW1);* Miss Costanza M. Storaci *(Bologna, Italy);* Mr David G. Walker *(Orpington, Kent);* Mr John Weser *(Occidental, California, U.S.A.);* Miss Nancy Winfield *(Salisbury, Wiltshire);* Herr Christian Winkle *(Esslingen, Germany).*

We asked Mr Dunsterville if he was related to Kipling's 'Stalky' (General Dunsterville), and he said he was, adding that he and his family had several incidental connections with Kipling. His two sons had been at Haileybury, a school with manifold links with India, the United Services College, and Kipling himself. And in the second World War his father had served in the destroyer *Kelly*, and when she was sunk in the Mediterranean in 1941 he was among the survivors rescued by H.M.S. *Kipling*, in an action made famous by the film *In Which we Serve.*

ABOUT THE *KIPLING JOURNAL*

AN EXPLANATORY NOTE

The *Kipling Journal,* house magazine of the Kipling Society, is sent quarterly to all our currently subscribing 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. (The entire run since 1927 has now been comprehensively indexed.) Scores of libraries and English Faculties, in a dozen countries, receive the *Journal* as corporate members of the Society.

However, though scholarly in general tendency, it is not an austerely 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 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.**

ABOUT 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 (No. 278885) 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. There is a large membership in North America; and 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 Membership Secretary, Kipling Society, 295 Castle Road, Salisbury, Wilts SP1 3SB, England. (The Society's Internet web specification is: http://www.kipling.org.uk)

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

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