The KIPLING JOURNAL

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THE KIPLING SOCIETY

THE Society was founded in 1927 by Mr. J. H. C. Brooking. Its first President was Major-General L. C. Dunsterville, C.B., C.S.I. ("Stalky") (1927-1946), who was succeeded by Field Marshal the Earl Wavell, G.C.B., G.C.S.I, G.C.I.E., C.M.G., M.C. (1946-1950).

Members are invited to propose those of their friends who are interested in Rudyard Kipling's works for election to membership. The Hon. Secretary would be glad to hear from members overseas as to prospects of forming a Branch of the Society in their district.

The subscription is : Home Members, £1 5s. 0d. ; Overseas Members, 15s. per annum, which includes receipt of the *Kipling Journal* quarterly.

Correspondence should be addressed to :—

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Notes

MEMBERS of the Kipling Society will be glad that the first and unworthy review of "A Choice of Kipling's Prose " by Mr. Raymond Mortimer was far from representing the critical reaction to Mr. Maugham's book. Indeed, the editor of the *Sunday Times* received a sheaf of protests and printed a column taken from them. Of Kipling, the man, Mrs. Grace Saxon Mills wrote : —

> " I cannot recognise Kipling in Mr. Mortimer's picture of his personality. My husband and I knew Mr. and Mrs. Kipling well. I always found him kind, genial and amusing. In no way am I ' reduced to conjecture' about the 'facts of his life.' "

Not the least virtue of Mr. Somerset Maugham's book is that it has given Kipling lovers a fresh opportunity to clarify their judgments about his books. The Earl of Birkenhead reviewed the volume in the *Daily Telegraph,* incidentally regretting that Mr. Maugham failed to include the story of the man who fell in delirium from his horse into the pit of the deathless dead.

"A Profound Artist"

The best of the reviews of Maugham's anthology came from Professor Bonamy Dobrée, in the *Spectator.* He said :—

> " It was only when Kipling ceased to write like Maupassant, with the rather too obvious clicking mechanism—a great discovery in its day—that he became a profound artist ; and what he did invent was something quite different from Chekhov and made him unique ; he discovered a method which enabled him to tell two or three stories at the same time, with amazing reverberations."

Kipling as Scourge of Pomposity

Here is Professor Dobrée's answer to Maugham's suggestion that Kipling regarded the humiliation of people as in itself funny. This, apropos of " The Village that Voted the Earth was Flat." As Bonamy Dobrée says, " the people humiliated are all of them snobbish, pretentious and mean, given to the stupid and self-glorifying exercise of petty authority, as was Sir Thomas Ingell, M.P., in this very story. Kipling hated anything dictatorial and loathed the cant, the pomposity and the stupidity of the dictatorial mind." Professor Dobrée adds :—

> " Mr. Maugham does indeed do justice to Kipling's technical brilliance, his mastery of forms, his immense vocabulary, his economy, in fact to all the craftsmen side. But in leaving out a whole aspect of Kipling, he gives no notion of the depth, the sympathy, the sense of the need for infinite compassion which is the life-blood of the later stories."

Stalky & Co.

Apropos of Mr. Maugham's judgment upon *Stalky & Co.* as an "odious story of school life," it is amusing to recall that schoolboys in 1899, when the book was published, had much the same opinion, if a poem in *Punch* is to

be trusted, entitled "Any schoolboy to any fond Mama."

" Our House'd make
Stalky, McTurk and Beetle sit up some—
Shirking their games to smoke and such-like rags !
Stalky & Co. weren't kicked enough when fags ;
Rotters like that would catch it here, by gum ! "

Dean Alington,who was Head Master of Eton at the time, speaking as a guest of the Authors' Club upon *The Public Schoolboy in Fact and Fiction,* was far more flattering to Stalky & Co. Dr. Alington began with the novels of school life, such as Vachell's *The Hill* and *The Bending of the Twig,* which dealt with his own school, Shrewsbury, and passed to Dean Farrar's *Eric* which he described as public school fiction. Dean Alington's recital of Kenrick's famous dropped goal aroused shouts of laughter. " I thought you would agree that that's the stuff to give 'em," said Dr. Alington. " There's no nonsense about it being photographic." The headmaster of Eton concluded, " Kipling was the only great writer who had dealt with boys as they were : he had also shewn more understanding of the schoolmaster than anybody else."

Ian Hay, Vice-President

Major-General Beith (Ian Hay), who died on September *23,* was an ardent admirer of Rudyard Kipling and a vice-president of the Society. Under our founder, Mr. J. H. C. Brooking, he was a member of the preliminary committee called in 1922 to consider the possibility of forming the Society which, in fact, came into being in 1927. As a novelist and playwright, Ian Hay displayed almost as keen an interest in the Services as Kipling himself, and *The First Hundred Thousand,* describing life in his own battalion during its first year of life in 1914-15, established Ian Hay's position in English Letters. It appeared serially in *Blackwood's* and *Carrying On* and *The Last Million* continued the series. He had the trick of play writing, and was a perfect collaborator, as joint ventures with such varied writers as Seymour Hicks, P. G. Wodehouse, Anthony Armstrong and A. E. W. Mason shew. Mr. Carl Naumburg, the Society's secretary in the United States, has sent the *Journal's* editor a pleasant tribute culled from the *New York Times,* recalling Ian Hay's work as a member of the British Military Mission in 1917 and 1918.

A Kipling Telephone Exchange

Sir Christopher Lynch-Robinson has received this interesting letter from H.M. Post Office.

Dear Sir,

When I wrote to you in November, 1951, I promised to let you know whether the name KIPLING would be used for a new telephone exchange in the Maida Vale-St. John's Wood district. We have now decided not to use the name for this particular exchange but to give it to another exchange which will be opened some years hence at Mottingham in S.E. London. Although I realise that it is doubtful whether Rudyard Kipling had any connection with this area the name 'Kipling' seems to be the most suitable of the very many possibilities which we have considered.

Yours faithfully,
H. F. Edwards,
for Controller, Telephones.

Discovering Kipling

The telling broadcast of " They " on August 17 was followed by a successful rendering of " The Cat that Walked by Himself " on Sunday, October 12, at 6.30, adapted as a play by Maurice Brown, the Director of the Drama League. Alan Wheatley played the Cat. The B.B.C. is discovering Kipling.

ERNEST SHORT.

On "Mr. Maugham to the Rescue"

A Review by Raymond Mortimer in the "Sunday Times" of September 14th, 1952

by J. K. Stanford, O.B.E., M.C.
Indian Civil Service (retired)

SO many readers of the *Sunday Times* outside this Society have risen in protest against the above review of Mr. Somerset Maugham's *A Choice of Kipling's Prose* that I am almost tempted to sink back in the pool and say "*De Mortimer nil nisi bonum."* But the review has so many manifest inaccuracies, or half-truths, that even an old trout like myself may think it deserves a swirl of indignation, even if this is paying the writer a compliment he does not deserve.

Most of us, whether mere readers or writers who try at times to say what they think, would imagine that when the most distinguished story-teller of our age takes the trouble to assess Rudyard Kipling's work and to discuss, expertly, his technique, everyone would be anxious to learn something. Not so Mr. Mortimer. He dismisses Mr. Maugham as an elderly, and not very notable, writer 'galloping to the rescue' of another who is almost forgotten, and 'when he is not forgotten is commonly disliked.' Kipling's few remaining admirers, he is careful to add, must be in their dotage now. He is never likely to attract new readers. He was a Fascist, presumably because he had the nerve to write of the glories of Imperial Britain, and that is enough to put him beyond the political pale of those who believe in giving what is left of the Empire a good hefty kick in the back when they can. And so on. It is all slightly infuriating until one recalls Hazlitt's words :

> "The [critic's] object is not to do justice to his author, whom he treats with very little ceremony, but to do himself homage. . . . A sweeping, unqualified assertion ends all controversy, and sets opinion at rest. A sharp, sententious, cavalier, dogmatical tone is therefore necessary, even in self-defence, to the office of a reviewer."

" Sweeping Assertions "

Let us take a few of these 'sweeping assertions' *privatim et seriatim,* as Beetle would have put it. First, "his contempt for educated Indians was silly and vulgar." This, it may be noted, is said of the man who has given us in *Kim* the Lama and Hurree Chunder Mookerjee; who wrote lovingly of Purun Bhagat, who had been the honoured friend of Viceroys and Governors and missionaries and hard-riding English officers; of Grish Chunder in *The Finest Story in the World;* of Umr Singh in *A Sahib's War;* of the Arab slave-dealer in *A Deal in Cotton;* and of a host of Indians who, if not so highly educated, ruled unquestioningly over their fellow-men, from Rutton Singh in *Stalky* to Peroo, the lascar, and Bukta and Iman Din, and Machua Appa, and Kamàl, in the *Ballad of East and West,* and, above all, Shafiz Ullah Khan, whose *One View of the Question* has summed up Bloomsbury and the Little Englanders better than any modern writer has attempted to do.

I am not quite sure on what story Mr. Mortimer bases this assertion of contempt, though Kipling did tell one

tale of a down-country native Deputy Commissioner who lost his head* when there was trouble on the frontier just after he had taken over—a thing which those of us who have known India would say was not impossible for Europeans as well. But, as for ' lowering our reputation in the sub-continent,' may I say, quite humbly as an ex-Indian Civil Servant, that Kipling's stories taught me more about the natives of India and Burma, and gave me a more abiding sympathy with them, than anything else I ever read or was taught in my service? And that was at a time between the wars when a form of pink intellectualism was constantly and secretly at work to denigrate not only Kipling but the job we were trying to do?

Again, Mr. Mortimer " doubts if Kipling was deeply interested in human beings." What a suggestion about the man who wrote :

Thy people, Lord, Thy people are good enough for me!

Unforgettably Living Portraits

Let me counter-suggest, at random, a few people in whom he was sufficiently interested to draw unforgettably living portraits : a Pathan who had killed his faithless wife *(Dray Wara Yow Dee);* several retired native officers of high rank; Mahommedan butlers who stole, or loved their children, or served their masters with affection ; missionaries, French priests, schoolmasters, civil servants of every calling ; elderly village women *(The Wish House) ;* an Indian courtesan (Lalun) ; beachcombers like Daniel Dravot ; drummer-boys ; blind painters ; war-correspondents ; subalterns ; ships' engineers ; Americans settling in England; policemen; American prisoners-of-war in Africa ; Bloomsbury aesthetes transported to a foxhunting shire; hedgers and ditchers ; lighthousemen ; and all the motley throng who have dwelt in an English parish in the last 2,000 years. Has any other contemporary left so varied a collection of unforgettable pictures?

* *The Head of the District*

Kipling, we learn, had a ' morbid interest in cruelty.' Well, he wrote the only story I know of a bull-ring in which the bull left the ring alive. He wrote lovingly of dogs and horses. His occasional references to the inevitable horrors of life, the execution in *Danny Deever,* the dacoities in Upper Burma, the tortures inflicted by Rajahs on their womenfolk, are referred to with a brevity which modern writers would probably consider skimped. He liked revenge stories—and most of Victorian melodrama had the same theme—but then the schoolboy in all of us rather gloats over the downfall of the overbearing and pompous, as the Greeks did with those who showed *'Hubris.'* As for the phrase, *' the sap masquerading as the sapper,'* while this might be a facile term of contempt for the cocksureness of some of the earlier stories, is it true of Beetle—" from his untied shoe-strings to his mended spectacles "—of the seasick naval correspondent in *Their Lawful Occasions,* of the humble and friendly disciple who learnt from doctors and freemasons, who loved fishing, who wrote the best dog-story I know *(Garm),* the man who ' would have given much ' to have written J. K. Stephen's biting lines about himself?

One begins to wonder if Mr. Mortimer's sweeping assertions are based on study or conjecture. In fact, I could not help thinking how our member, Hilton Brown, must be chuckling, first, to learn that, in spite of all his painstaking work, the ' facts of Kipling's life are not available to

us,' and secondly, that all the 'Kiplingiana' of which this *Journal* is full are mere 'conjecture.' But this review throws a lurid glare on the critics who, after Kipling's death, 'processed,' as Hilton Brown put it, 'through the commonplaces of slightly patronising approval,' but preferred to ignore his work.

It is tempting to unmask the ignorance behind three other remarks in this review: *(a)* that Kipling knew little of India outside Simla and the Punjab; *(b)* that he retained the 'prejudices of a suburban memsahib'; (c) that there was a noticeable 'narrowing of experience after his settling in England'—but space does not permit, though I am sure any member of the Kipling Society needs no enlightenment on these points. But I, for one, am extraordinarily grateful to Mr. Somerset Maugham, not only for his selection, but for his acutely discerning appreciation of Kipling's technique and work. The old soldiers of the literary world, in their faded review order, who never die but bob up at intervals only to fire a blank volley at Kipling's prestige, can best be left to themselves.

A Companion Volume

I had meant to close this here. But in turning over Mr. T. S. Eliot's book, *A Choice of Kipling's Verse,* which may be taken as a companion volume to Mr. Maugham's perspicacious selection of Kipling's prose, I came across the verses called *'The Appeal,'* and think they are almost the last word on those who wonder condescendingly 'how many of his books are now in demand except as presents for children':

If I have given you delight
By aught that I have done,
Let me lie quiet in that night
Which shall be yours anon;
And for the little, little span
The dead are borne in mind,
Seek not to question other than
The books I leave behind.

The Society's Annual Luncheon

Mr. Somerset Maugham's Address

THE Annual Luncheon of the Kipling Society was held at the De Vere Hotel, Kensington, on October 30th, when Sir Roderick Jones, K.B.E., presided. The Guest Speaker was Mr. Somerset Maugham, who said:—

"As perhaps you know, I arranged, some time ago, to make a selection of Kipling's stories and to write the introduction for it. I hope that you have not all read this introduction because in it I said pretty well everything I have to say on the subject, and I do not see how I can possibly help saying today at least a good deal of what you may already know. If so, I will ask you to possess your souls in patience.

In order to write this introduction to the best of my ability I read pretty well everything I could find of importance that had been written about Kipling. I found myself in almost complete disagreement with what I read. Some of the writers had so little good to say for him at all that I wondered why they had troubled to write about him at such length.

Those more favourably disposed treated him in an apologetic, even patronising, fashion which I thought very far from justified. But what chiefly surprised me was that they

dismissed as of no great importance the Indian stories and reserved such praise as they were bound to give to the stories of what they called his third and fourth periods, such stones as *Puck of Pook's Hilt* and *A Madonna of the Trenches.* Some of them are not as good as others but, to my mind, Kipling could not have written badly if he had tried, but they lack the magic with which he infused the stories which he wrote about those whom he called 'Mine own people.' No one could have written those stories but himself.

They were translated into a score of languages, and the success of a work in translation is a pretty good indication of what posterity will think of it. If a work in a foreign tongue gains a multitude of readers, it can only be because it does not depend on local interests, which a foreigner cannot be expected to share, but on interests which are broadly human and so permanent.

The Indian Stories

Now it is Kipling's Indian stories which have been most widely popular in the various countries of Europe, so if there is anything in my notion at all, it is on these that his fame will ultimately rest.

If I had followed my own inclinations, I should have made my selection only from the Indian stories, but I did not think that would be fair. When the book came out, Messrs. Macmillans were kind enough to send me the reviews. One of my critics, who evidently had not read my introduction, took exception to the fact that I had included a number of stories which I myself did not so much like, her opinion being that an anthology should be an expression of the anthologist's personality; but that is surely to attach more importance to the anthologist than to the work of the author he is anthologising, so it is perfectly absurd. In order to show the range of Kipling's talent I felt bound to insert at least a number of those stories.

As you know, he began to write stories when he was still a busy journalist in India and he has told us, in *Something of Myself,* how he got the experience of which, later, he was able to make such magnificent use. He had the great good fortune to find, ready to his hand, a field that was yet untilled. By the time he came back to England, at the age of 24, he was already well known and during the next ten years he wrote a series of stories which made him world-famous. Their success was enormous and he was probably the most widely-read author of his day. But the critics carped and some of them, indeed, violently attacked him.

It must be admitted he laid himself open to attack. As a writer, though not as a man, he was blatantly cocksure. He had certain mannerisms of style which were in contrast with good taste, and he repeated too often certain expressions which he himself had turned into rather tiresome clichés. Sometimes he was guilty of vulgarisms which his youth and social inexperience explained and excused. But these were minor defects which should not have blinded his critics to his originality and his mastery of technique. The fact remains that a number of the most intelligent of his contemporaries bristled with distaste when they read his stories.

Max Beerbohm's Parody

You have all read, or should have read, Max Beerbohm's charming book. I may remind you, too, of a series of parodies which he wrote on a number of authors who were then very much in the public eye. Max Beerbohm is the most amiable and indulgent of men, and in these parodies, though he mocked at his victims, his parodies, with one exception, were kindly. The exception is Rudyard Kipling. His parody on Kipling was venomous, and venomous, too, was the caricature he drew of him. I have asked myself why so broadminded and tolerant a creature as dear Max should have been raised to such a pitch of acrimony. I can only suppose it was not the man

he disliked so much as what he stood for.

In France, writers are very much apt to be judged not so much on their literary merits as on their political ideas and religious beliefs. In this country, perhaps only because we do not take sides so strenuously, this seldom occurs. On the whole, our critics accept the position an author has taken and, whether he is a Catholic or an agnostic, right-wing or left-wing, they try, generally with success, not to let their own opinions influence their judgment of the book they have under review. In Rudyard Kipling's day a number of the critics found it quite impossible to do this.

The only explanation I can offer for this is that Kipling was a Tory—even a rabid Tory—and the intelligentsia at that time were, for the most part. Liberals. They loathed his politics and regarded the influence he wielded as fearfully injurious. And he was an Imperialist—he was passionately proud of the British Empire and thought it the greatest instrument for good the world had ever known. He did a great deal, both in verse and prose, to make the British people conscious of their greatness, and to awaken them to the responsibilities which that greatness imposed upon them.

He was repeatedly offered one or other of the honours which it is the privilege of the Government and the Crown to confer on those who deserve well of their country. He refused every such offer, because he thought that if he accepted one it would hamper his freedom to speak his mind when he saw steps being taken which he thought were mischievous.

Notwithstanding his great admiration for the British Empire, he knew that all was not well with it. He saw that there were abuses which should be abolished, and errors of policy which he thought should be corrected. He did not think the British rule in India was perfect, for it was conducted by fallible men and he knew as well as anybody that some of them were insular, some were wrong-headed, some were not competent.

But for all that, he was convinced that the Government given to the teeming millions of India was better than any government they had had before the British occupation, and he was convinced that it was better than any they would have after, when, as he foresaw, the British retired to leave the Indians to govern themselves. It has yet to be proved that he was wrong.

But world opinion has revolted against Kipling's obstinate assurance that there were races born to rule and races born to serve. He fought against ideas that were gradually gaining hold of the general conscience and he was defeated.

However, that is now ancient history. Except for one or two reviews I have recently read, I should have thought the angry passions he aroused were spent.

He Loved Action

Whether we are right-wing or left-wing, whether we applaud or deplore the series of events that has converted the British Empire into a Commonwealth of Nations, we really should be able to read Kipling's stories with composure.

If his stories are less read now, or at least less-esteemed than they were when he was at the height of his fame, it is, I think, because of the prevalent and passing fashion that stories do not depend so much on incident as on atmosphere, delineation of character and analyses of states of mind. That is not the kind of story Kipling wanted to write and perhaps it was not the kind of story he would have written very well.

He had inventiveness, versatility, a vital and keen sense of the dramatic and a boisterous sense of humour, tenderness and pathos. He was able, as no one else, to present the colour and splendour of the East, its mystery and romance. But it must be admitted

he was more concerned with the outer man and his behaviour in critical circumstances than with the man within, the twistings and turnings of the human heart. He loved action and his stories had movement.

A great number of them, perhaps most of them, are founded on anecdote, but that is nothing to their discredit. Since the beginning of history, stories have been founded on anecdote. The important thing is what the author does with his anecdote; but on that account Kipling has been called, in disparagement, a mere story-teller. There is no such thing as a mere story-teller ; and if there were, Kipling would not have been one.

An author, by the choice of his subjects and the characters he selects to deal with those subjects, willy nilly, offers a criticism of life.

That is what Kipling did in the famous *Plain Tales from the Hills.* It seems to me that a perspicacious reader of those early stories might have foreseen how inevitable it was that the British would eventually leave India.

In later, better stories, he dealt with men and women who left their home and their friends to pass their working lives in India. I speak not of those in high places who achieved distinction and enjoyed the blessed intoxication of power, but of those who, in the torture of the hot weather and in the misery of the rains, performed the modest but necessary functions on which the welfare of the country depends. He wrote of those who built bridges and maintained the roads, kept order and administered justice and those who, in time of famine, fed the hungry and, in time of pestilence, tended the sick.

With small hope of recognition and little more than a bare living wage, they gave their youth and strength and sometimes their lives to serve the people of India.

It was no callous-hearted man who could discern beauty in the obscure lives of those ordinary and, to all appearances, commonplace people. And it was no mean writer who was able, with virtuosity, to set it all forth for all the world to recognise.

I think, and I should like you to agree with me, that these particular stories proclaim his mastery and that they will persist through the ages as a worthy monument to a not inglorious period in the history of our country."

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

THE Annual Conference of the members of the Society was held at Greenwich House, London, E.C.I, on Tuesday, October 28th, 1952, Commander R. D. Merriman in the chair.

The Annual Report and Accounts were adopted and the President, Vice-Presidents and the Honorary Officers of the Society were re-elected for the ensuing twelve months. The proceedings closed with a vote of thanks to our Auditors, who were re-elected for the coming year, and especially to Mr. J. R. Turnbull and Mr. Alex Pennington for their great help during the past season.

At a subsequent meeting of the Council, Mr. B. M. Bazley was re-elected Chairman of the Council for a further term of office.

NEW MEMBERS of the Society recently elected are: Colonel Ion S. Munro, Mr. W. H. King, Mr. W. C. Puckey, Mr. R. E. Pennoyer (all London).

Kipling: A New Aspect

by Bonamy Dobrée

[By courtesy of Professor Bonamy Dobrée and the B.B.C, we reproduce below the first part of a broadcast talk given in the Third Programme from London. The second part will be published in our next issue.]

THE more I read Kipling, the more I find him a baffling, complex writer; and I would like to talk about an odd, recurring, and in my opinion important, element in his make-up which nobody has much noticed. I believe it may be very relevant to our present-day atmosphere of strain, and, well, *angst* if you like. Though a great deal has been written about him in the last twenty years, not only here, but in France, in Italy, and latterly in America, I'm all the same not satisfied. Whenever I read about him, say, in Edward Shanks' pioneer study, or in the essays by Hilton Brown and Rupert Croft-Cooke, all of them mainly about his prose, something nags at my mind, telling me: " No; that isn't quite it. It isn't there exactly that he matters! " Something more, indeed, has been done about his poetry, notably by T. S. Eliot in his enormously valuable study: but what he actually chose for his anthology is a little tendentious, because he was making out the case for Kipling as a superb ballad-writer and hymn-writer. He's far more than that, far subtler and more sensitive, as was hinted by T. R. Henn, but not much more than hinted, in *The Apple and the Spectroscope.* Kipling has to be seen, too, as a man who often wrote poems which are complementary of his stories. But, taken all in all, I find that in nearly everything written about him the discussion is still too much overshadowed by politics; not very long since, for example, by Edmund Wilson in *The Wound and the Bow.* Surely, now that the tumult and the shouting have died, it ought to be possible to see Kipling objectively: he's no longer part of the political picture.

Not Chauvinistic

I don't deny that one has to look at his Imperialism. But it's not Chauvinistic, as most people used to think, since he always upbraided the jingo. Actually, his conception of the Empire was in the tradition of the great myth of beneficent world-government which stirred Shakespeare when he wrote *Henry VIII,* and which comes out in Denham, and more grandly in Dryden and Pope. It's a poetic idea. Further, the Empire was important for Kipling because it was something a man could devote himself to, as the object of the kind of faith Kipling was always looking for. Power, he felt deeply, is given to man, not for goods or gear, but for the Thing, the Thing bigger than himself which will demand complete self-abnegation. " I tell you now," he once wrote, " that the faith that takes care that a man shall keep faith, even though he may save his soul by breaking faith, is the faith for a man to believe in." Having seen men broken, in soul as well as body, in selflessly carrying out the daily work of the Empire, unthanked, unrewarded, even reviled, he gave the Empire his conditional allegiance. And then, because he accepted, especially in his early days, the fact that men did horrible things to each other, he could not be a philosophic 'optimist' à *la* Shaftesbury, but was, rather, a 'pessimist' in the line of Swift. He couldn't help, therefore, rejecting the liberal idea of man as a benevolent

creature—in so doing he trod on a good many ' advanced ' toes—and as a result is continually being accused of illiberalism, as, for instance, by Lionel Trilling in his recent fine book, *The Liberal Imagination.* How far Kipling may be right as against his critics in that respect, the history of the world in the last fifty years may help us to judge.

But I'm not concerned to defend Kipling on that sort of issue ; I want, rather, to penetrate a region which nobody seems to have explored, into something which goes to offset that apparently callous, almost cruel element in him which outrages a good many people—as in the story of "Mary Postgate "—and made Harold Laski, for example, say that Kipling " will symbolise the literature of hate, of malignant grandiosity." This attitude is one that persists ; we get, for instance, V. de S. Pinto in his just published volume, *Crisis in English Poetry,* regarding him as the apostle of brute force. I utterly disagree. It seems to me, on the contrary, that he symbolises, not hate, but a deep compassion ; not malignant grandiosity and brute force, but humility and tenderness amounting to deep pity. Reading him lately, I've been particularly impressed by this note of his, repeatedly and emphatically struck ; and, more significant still, by his intense curiosity about and passion for healing, and the means of healing. And that is my theme here.

A Curious Thread

First, however, I ought to bring out a curious thread which runs through all his work. It is what I can describe only as his " descents into hell," not merely into those places where the soul is lonely and has to face itself, but into the overwhelming hells which blot out. Take this description : " Just then ... I was aware of a little grey shadow, as it might have been a snowflake seen against the light, floating at an immense distance in the background of my brain. It annoyed me, and I shook my head to get rid of it. Then my brain telegraphed that it was the forerunner of a swift-striding gloom. . . . The gloom overtook me . . . and my amazed and angry soul dropped, gulf by gulf, into that horror of great darkness which is spoken of in the Bible." That's a passage, outrageously cut, from a story called " The House Surgeon," published in *Actions and Reactions.* It is followed by a poem, which some find insensitive, but which is written in the direct language and rhythm of hymns The first lines read :

If thought can reach to Heaven,
On Heaven let it dwell,
For fear that Thought be given
Like power to reach to Hell . . .

lines which are revealing enough. Again, a typical periodic descent into the abyss overtakes the two people of the story, " In the Same Boat," to be found in *A Diversity of Creatures,* published in 1917 : and in his two last books Kipling returns again and again to the theme of the great darkness.

He has dwelt on the same sort of thing in his earlier stories. Perhaps you will remember " At the End of the Passage " in *Life's Handicap,* which came out in 1891, in which the desperately overworked Indian Civilian dies because, as his Indian servant commented, he had " descended into the Dark Places." From the beginning, then, Kipling had been drawn to tales of mental breakdown, of suffering made unbearable from one cause or another : that, say, of the lighthouse-keeper who went mad from loneliness, or the reproved subaltern who shot himself in despair. There are dozens of them. But a change came over his treatment of the theme. In his younger days, he was eager only

to tell the stories as part of the enthralling, darkly striated pageant of life; later he became interested in the causes, and finally he was absorbed in the healing of the horror—and this is the point I want to expand here. Obviously he knew all about the horror; as he said after the extract I quoted, the state " has to be experienced to be appreciated " : and you don't have to read far to know how agonisingly he had himself experienced. Perhaps that is why to some people he seems too callous about physical pain; he did certainly despise people who feared it, knowing that it was nothing as compared with spiritual agony. This he states unequivocally in the " Hymn to Physical Pain " which occurs in the very last volume of his stories. I'll quote the first and last stanzas :

Dread Mother of Forgetfulness,
  Who, when Thy reign begins,
Wipest away the Soul's distress,
  And memory of her sins . . .
Wherefore we praise Thee in the deep,
  And on our beds we pray
For Thy return, that thou may'st keep
  The Pains of Hell at bay !

It is clear that Kipling, who suffered a good deal of physical pain in his later life, was at intervals catastrophically disturbed.

Too Much Strain

Looking at the stories concerned with these states, you see that they all come about from too much strain on people. The sense of this lay, I think, far back in Kipling's experience, when, as a small boy living in the house at Southsea while his parents were in India, he underwent the purgatory he described in the terrible story, " Baa, Baa, Black Sheep." But the early tales, which have as their climax a breakdown from strain, don't on the whole take the matter any further : in the later stories, however, Kipling became, significantly, interested not so much in the states of horror themselves as in their cure; the cure, if you like, of neuroses which are the effect of strain, usually caused by devotion to duty, often in the war, but sometimes through the operation of sheer fate. Together with this, Kipling grew to be ever more deeply interested in the amount of strain a human being could stand without breaking down. Partly for this, he evolved those strange stories which picture what he called 'the Order Above,' which, by a sort of inverted Platonism, he regarded as a reflection of 'the Order Below' symbolised by the archangels, Satan, and other heavenly principalities and powers. In the last of these tales, " Uncovenanted Mercies," the souls of men and women are 'reconditioned' for service as guardian angels, the final point of the process being, as Satan puts it, " a full test for Ultimate Breaking Strain." The technical phrase struck Kipling, and the year before his death he published " Hymn of Breaking Strain," the load to which men are ruthlessly subjected. A portion of it runs :

The careful text-books measure
  (Let all who build beware)
The load, the shock, the pressure
  Material can bear . . .
But, in our daily dealing
  With stone and steel, we find,
The Gods have no such feeling
  Of justice toward mankind.
To no set gauge they make us—
  For no laid course prepare—
But presently o'ertake us
  With loads we cannot bear :
  Too merciless to bear.

But Kipling will not encourage whining. If, he ends, man serves 'the veiled and secret Power, in spite of being broken, because of being broken,' he can stand up and build anew.

(To be concluded)

The Autograph—Adjunct to a Literary Career

by A. W. Yeats

(University of Texas, Austin, Texas)

[The following essay is reproduced from the Spring, 1952, issue of the 'Autograph Collectors' Journal,' New York, by courtesy of the Editor. The footnotes are at the end of the text.]

A WRITER signs copies of his works for one reason—to personalize the impersonal printed page. He gives his autograph to his friends as a gesture of private esteem; for the more impersonal public, his autograph is an effort to share something of himself with his lesser known literary friends. Autographed issues as a selling device came into vogue around the turn of the present century, but such a practice was almost unknown to the earlier centuries of English printing. Only within the last half-century has the practice become in a measure established. Although two modern authors, George Bernard Shaw and Rudyard Kipling, have made almost phenomenal use of this book-selling device, Kipling's practice is the more interesting of the two.

Kipling's first book offered to the public[1] was in many ways prophetic of the scores to follow. *Departmental Ditties and Other Verses* (1886) **first** appeared in narrow tan wrappers designed to resemble an official British departmental franking form, complete with imitation seal and red cloth tape around the center. These envelopes were addressed to "All Heads of Departments and Anglo-Indians" in facsimile script. It is interesting to observe that the youthful Kipling anticipated later publishing practice because this volume of verse bore his *facsimile signature* as Assistant in the "Department of Public Journalism, Lahore District." That he was pleased with both the idea and its success is indicated in his remark that "among a pile of papers [it] would have deceived a dark of twenty years' service."[2] The book sold rapidly and was re-issued many times in more conventional form, but its author said of it:

> I loved it best when it was a little brown baby with a pink string around its stomach; a child's child, ignorant that it was afflicted with all the most modern ailments; and before people learned beyond doubt how its author lay awake of nights in India plotting and scheming to write something that would "take" with the English public.[3]

Plain Tales from the Hills (1888) carried no autograph identification, but the Indian Railway Library Series (1888-1890)[4] which followed began a literary tradition without parallel in the records of English literature. Each of the six Kipling volumes in this series carried on its cover the head of an elephant, varied slightly from volume to volume, but each resembling the other five. From that time on nearly every important Kipling volume, including his posthumous autobiography (1937), carried an elephant's head (a Ganesha) device on its cover or carried single or multiple swastikas, which is also an elephant symbol,[5] on its title pages. These symbols were omitted on many of the earlier American editions, and, naturally enough, they did not appear where their use would have been in-

appropriate, as on the war publications and on books devoted to stories about other animals.

Rudyard's father, John Lockwood Kipling, designed or supervised the designing of the covers of his son's six books previously mentioned. His own volume, *Beast and Man in India,* shows clearly the elder Kipling's sympathetic interest in animals and his particular fondness for the elephant, and an attractive sketch of one graced the cover of his own book. Taking up the cue suggested by his artist-father, Rudyard chose *both* elephant devices as his identifying printed signature.

A Registered Trade Mark

By 1930 the Ganesha had become such an individualized symbol that Kipling sought to protect his financial and literary interest in it by applying to the United States and British Governments to register three[6] forms of the device as a personal trade mark. His applications were granted, and to him goes the distinction of possessing the only literary trade mark device registered by an author in this country and in England. The nearest parallel is Samuel L. Clemens' protection of the name " Mark Twain " for much the same reasons. To American readers the most familiar form of this device is that used by Doubleday, Doran and Company, Charles Scribner's Sons, and The Macmillan Company, the publishers of the greater body of Kipling's works. The earlier forms of the Ganesha which appeared on the Indian Railway Series, while protected by governmental registry, seem to have been largely abandoned in favor of the standardized form of later years.

Consciously or unconsciously, Kipling stamped his personality on the bindings and title pages of his books, rendering them as individual as their contents. Even the style of his autograph signature was personalized. His usual custom was to draw a line through his name as printed on the various title pages of his works and place his signature immediately above or below the deletion. When an inscription accompanied the autograph, it usually appeared above the title.[7]

This signature, in great demand from 1890 onward, is rare, for he was by nature somewhat retiring and gave few autographs except to acquaintances or to readers who wrote requesting them. His first gesture to an autograph - hungry public was as generous as it was humorous :

> Autograph collectors applied so frequently to Kipling for his signature that in self-defence he caused to be printed a little broadside or card, which stated that when he saw the applicant's name in the *New York Tribune* in the list of contributors of $2.50 to the "Tribune Fresh Air Fund." he would send his autograph. During the winter of 1894 and 1895 he distributed over two hundred to applicants.[8]

De Luxe and Limited Editions

Kipling's phenomenal popularity as a young author fortunately did no damage to his creative ability. He did not lower his artistic standards nor stoop to capitalize on the demands for his signature. He preferred to earn his income simply by writing, and be it said to his credit that he had a quarter of a century of steady writing behind him and a bibliography of 310 separate publications before his first autographed limited issue appeared in 1909. He was not, however, unmindful of the value of special printings, and when the time had come, he capitalized upon them for a substantial profit. Through the years from 1892-1910 ten of his many pub-

lications appeared in limited issues in special bindings or on special paper. Four more appeared before his death. These issues were printed from the types set for the regular trade editions, the number of copies usually being small—one or two hundred, never more than five hundred. His belief was that his books belonged to the masses, and it was to the common man that he addressed his art. His first books, The Indian Railway Library Series, were paper-backed volumes which sold for one rupee, and this preference for the inexpensive volume continued throughout his career. He knew, however, that the discriminating purchaser preferred books with superior bindings and quality paper. It was to this type of purchaser that he offered the many de luxe issues and autographed editions of his works.

From 1909 onward he used the device of the special printing or the autographed edition with more frequency. Fourteen autographed special issues and autographed editions of his works have appeared, and shrewd business acumen seemed to guide him both in his business methods and in his selection of these works. In general, his practice was to follow up with special collected editions those of his works already popular in trade, taking care that the special edition was not a mere reprint. When new plates were made for the special edition, invariably there appeared in the volume some hitherto uncollected work or some limited number of poems or stories published for the first time. Hence each autographed volume became in effect a first edition. Much the same practice was followed in printing the more important editions of his complete works. " The Outward Bound " edition, the Edition de Luxe, and the Sussex edition of his complete works all vary somewhat in content. For example, the Sussex edition appeared posthumously and was limited to five hundred signed sets of thirty-five volumes. Each volume was bound in fine leather, printed on hand-made paper, boxed in individual slip cases, and sold at the handsome price of fifty shillings per volume. Yet the unique value of this edition lies not so much in its format but in the fact that it contains two volumes of uncollected material found in no other of the so-called " complete works." His important collected editions, like so many of his autographed editions, are also first editions . . .

His success as a man of letters is ample evidence of his literary industry, his fine business acumen, and, in a more limited way, to his wise use of the autograph.

For the benefit of readers who may be interested in the special and autographed Kipling issues, the following limited bibliography is given :

1892 *Lyra Heroical a Book of Verses for Boys,* ed. by W. E. Henley. London : (Two poems by Rudyard Kipling) 100 copies on lg. paper ; 20 on Japan paper.

1892 *Barrack-Room, Ballads and Other Verses.* London : 225 copies on lg. paper ; 30 on Japan paper.

1896 *The Seven Seas.* London : 150 copies on hand-made paper ; 30 on Japan paper.

1898 *An Almanac of Twelve Sports.* London : a few copies on Japanese vellum.

1898 *The Vampire.* New York: 500 copies on Enfield deckle-edge paper ; 125 on Japan paper.

1898 *Collectanea.* New York : 500 copies on Enfield deckle-edge paper ; 100 on Japanese vellum.

1898-99 *The Dipsy Chanty.* New York : Suppressed ; about 60 copies in circulation from 100 illuminated copies and 950 plain copies.

1898 *Departmental Ditties and Other Verses,* 9th edition. London :

150 copies on lg. paper; 12 on Japan paper.

1899 *The Betrothed.* New York: 500 copies on Strathmore deckle-edge paper; 100 on Japan paper.

1903 *The Five Nations.* London: 200 copies on lg. paper; 30 on Japan paper.

1908 *The Flag, the Book of the Union Jack Club,* ed. by H. F. Trippel. Contains Kipling's "The Marred Drives of Windsor." 150 copies of the Royal Edition on hand-made paper, bound in morocco, and presented to members of the Royal Family and to the contributors.

1919 *The Years Between.* London: 200 copies on lg. paper; 30 on Japan paper.

1929 *The English Way.* London: A large paper edition in addition to a trade edition.

1929 *Lamentable Comedy of Willow Wood.* San Francisco: 100 numbered copies.

1897-1923 *The Writings in Prose and Verse of Rudyard Kipling,* "Outward Bound" edition. 30 vols. 204 copies on Japan paper.

Autographed Issues and Editions—

1894-95 "*Tribune* Fresh Air Fund," (Broadside), signed; over 200 given away.

1909 *A Song of the English.* London: 500 copies on special paper signed by the artist; 50 copies on vellum signed by artist and by author.

1910 *Collected Verse.* New York: limited edition of 150 copies; 125 copies on hand-made paper, signed.

1912 *Collected Verse.* London: 500 copies on hand-made paper; 100 copies printed on vellum, signed.

1918 *The Irish Guards.* New York: Autographed edition of 100 copies, signed.

1919 *Inclusive Verse 1885-1918,* three vols., English edition. London: 100 sets on hand-made paper, first volume of each set signed.

1919 *Inclusive Verse 1885-1918,* three vols., American edition. New York: 250 sets on large paper, first volume of each set signed.

1920 *The Feet of the Young Men.* New York: Limited edition of 377 copies, signed.

1920 *The Man to Watch.* San Francisco: Limited edition of 170 copies, signed.

1913-1919 *The Bombay Edition of the Works of Rudyard Kipling,* 25 vols. London: 1,050 sets, first volume of each set signed.

1926 *Sea and Sussex.* London: Special issue of 500 copies on lg. paper, signed.

1927 *Songs of the Sea.* London: Special issue of 500 copies on lg. paper, signed.

1929 *Poems 1886-1929.* London: 3 vols. 525 sets printed, first volume of each set signed.

1929 *Poems 1886-1929.* New York: 3 vols. 537 sets printed, 12 sets for presentation; 525 sets with first volume signed.

1934 *Collected Dog Stories.* Limited American edition. New York: 450 copies signed by the artist, M. Kirmse.

1934 *Collected Dog Stories.* Small paper edition. New York: contains a facsimile signature of Rudyard Kipling.

1937-39 *The Sussex Edition of the Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Rudyard Kipling.* 35 volumes. London: Limited autographed edition of 500 sets, first volume of each set signed.

[1] *Schoolboy Lyrics* (1881) was printed for private circulation; *Echoes* (1884) and *Quartette* (1885) were family projects.

[2] Rudyard Kipling, "My First Book," *The Idler,* Christmas Number, London, 1892. the author's signed typescript of which is in the Rare Books Collection of the University of Texas.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Soldiers Three, The Story of the Gadsbys, In Black and White, Under the Deodars, The Phantom Rickshaw,* and *Wee Willie Winkie.*

[5] Cf: John Lockwood Kipling, *Beast and Man in India* (London, 1891), p. 232 for a discussion of the symbolism of these two devices.

[6] *The Kipling Journal,* No. 17, April, 1931, p. 23.

' His characteristic style is reproduced in Flora V. Livingston's *Bibliography of Rudyard Kipling* ,(New York, 1927), p. 208.

[8] *Ibid,* p. 142.

Letter Bag

Correspondents are asked to keep letters for publication as short as possible

"A Ruling Wanted "

In " A Ruling Wanted " the question is : Who wrote the lines beginning *Cur mundus militat sub vana gloria* ? Some years ago, I was reading these stories with a class at the Presbyterian Ladies' College, Melbourne. Not one knew a word of Latin, so naturally the question ' What does it mean ? ' arose. I'm no Latin scholar, but I made a free—*very* free—translation for them. For what it is worth, here it is :

Why wars the world on empty glory bent
Whose transitory splendour wanes so fast?
Like fragile potter's vessel, worn and spent,
It yields itself in crumbling dust at last.
What has become of Caesar, great in sway?
Or Dives feasting at his sumptuous board?
Say whither Tullius . . .

—Mrs. Rhoda E. Brown, 332 Barkers Road, Melbourne, E.2, Australia.

" Sinister Fiddlers "

Will you ask Mr. Short to have another look at the illustration on page 99 (uniform) of *Captains Courageous* and his note, " Sinister Fiddlers," on page 2 of *Journal* No. 102? If the draughtsman's work was reversed in engraving, the picture would show Tom Platt playing in the normal right-handed way, but Manuel would be playing his " machette " left-handed, which I believe is also most unusual ; then Dan is shown in the picture playing the accordion right-handed, which is also normal. I think it was intended to show Tom Platt was left-handed.—R.E.H.

(Mr. Short writes: " This correspondent may well be right, and Tom Platt was left-handed. My point was rather to justify Hogarth, as against the ' John o' London ' criticism. Certainly the point about the (machette player seems to rule out the reversal theory re the Kipling plate."—ED.)

Rudyard Kipling's Fame

Is it just possible that Mr. Ernest Short is a little severe on The Raymondiferous Mortimer (a dreadful but irresistible crib from Stalky) ? When Mr. Mortimer says that he (Kipling) " is commonly disliked " he is not far from the truth. There is quite a lot to be disliked in Kipling's writings. A fearless writer, his politics are not everyone's cup of tea. We can't all be unabashed imperialists and to call everyone (as Mr. Short implies) who do not agree with Kipling's views a " little Englander " is not quite fair. One of his best poems, " Cleared," caused a lot of indignation. He was not a true prophet in "An Imperial Rescript," which makes strange reading in these days of " closed shops."

When one comes to Kipling's style and technique, there are many who do not like dialect stories, especially when he gets the dialect wrong as he did with Mulvaney's brogue. Did any Irishman pronounce "cart" as "kyart" ?

But criticisms such as these count for nothing when considering a writer's claim to a niche in the Temple of Fame. Surely it is enough to say that a writer does not get the Nobel Prize for Literature as well as honorary degrees of seven universities for nothing?

Is the title " Mr. Maugham to the Rescue " really so insulting as Mr. Short seems to think? Like Kipling, Mr. Maugham is a master of the short story but of the modern and sophisticated type. To find him not only an upholder (albeit a critical one) but a disciple of Kipling is rather a case of " Saul among the Prophets " and need cause no concern. Kipling is not forgotten but he is not appreciated as he deserves and, if Mr. Somerset Maugham's book recalls him to the memory of discriminating (not necessarily fastidious) readers, so much the better.

What is more of an insult is when the champions of Kipling will persist in booming Kipling at his worst. That is when he lays on the sentiment with

a spade. True he does this effectively and his mastery of language and vividness of description count for a lot, but there are some who will agree with Mr. Edward Shand who has written that " For a writer to do this kind of thing effectively is only to magnify the offence. " William the Conqueror " is Kipling at his very best—it can be ranked with "Bread upon the Waters " and " The Bridge Builders." " The Maltese Cat " is also an excellent and vigorously written yarn, but why does Mr. Short bracket these with a " tear-jerker" like "Only a Subaltern." Also " They " and of course " The Brushwood Boy." One can't get away from him. Even Mr. Maugham is a " Brushwood Boy " addict. One can only be thankful that neither Mr. Maugham nor Mr. Short dragged in the " Story of the Gadsbys."

The student of Kipling may find it of interest to consider the period in the early eighteen-nineties when Kipling was a young professional writer with a wife to support. He is not to be blamed for studying the market for his wares. He knew that in America sentiment sells like hot cakes so he gave the public what it wanted and was prepared to pay for. Again there is nothing wrong with that, but it is hard to forgive him for ruining his best book, and one of the finest novels in the English language by the alternative " happy ending " to " The Light that Failed " to satisfy the readers of Lippincott's magazine. Indeed one can say that most of Kipling's best work was in an earlier period as an Indian journalist. Probably his best short story belongs to this period and is not often mentioned nowadays. This is "A Bank Fraud." In a sense it is unique for Kipling. The hero is not a service man nor a "Pukka Sahib" but a civilian and a box-wallah at that. He is also a man with plenty of human failings. We are told that " His speech was coarse. He stuck a trusting junior with a horse and won gymkhanas in a doubtful way." He knew his job from A to Z but he also knew how to play. It even took the form of giving large Sunday breakfast parties where he and his friends told sultry stories. But, at a time of real crisis he acted like a real Christian and a gentleman. In fact " Twixt vice and folly turned aside and straight to cloak them Hed." Those who may have " forgotten " Kipling would do well to read that story as a reminder, bearing in mind that he was little more than a boy of twenty-five when he wrote it.— B. W. ALLEN, Cilrhiw, Narberth, Pembrokeshire.

Parodies

Apropos of Mr. Ernest Short's interesting note on parodies, some excellent ones have appeared in French. One particularly worth remembering is included in a small volume of parodies called " Rather like . . . " which was published by Herbert Jenkins in about 1920 or 1921. It was written by one of our members, M. Jules Castier, whose translations of Kipling's verse are so widely known and appreciated, and was entitled " The Song of the Penny Whistle." Another most amusing French parody on " If," by M. Maurice Dekobra, was quoted quite recently in the *Kipling Journal.* —C. H. Lynch-Robinson.

The Dog Hervey

This story has always interested me and I hope you will allow me to ask members to clear up one thing in it for me.

That queer girl, Miss Sichliffe, is surely the plainest heroine in any story in English, yet she is one of Kipling's most successful women and I agree that Kipling's women are the best of all English authors.

The story has been referred to nine times in our Journals but not adequately dealt with in any of them : even my fellow M.O.C. Victor Bonney (On Him be the Blessing) makes a slight mistake (see *Journal* No. 83). In the story we have references to : —

> Narcotic and/or liquor addicts and their cures : Dogs as pets and their owners; Johnson and Boswell and their friends ; Richard Cromwell, the Second ' Protector ' of England (1658-1660) ; George du Maurier's " Trilby " ; Jean Inglelow's verses, " Sailing Beyond Seas " ; also Freemasonry and "As meek as Moses " ;

but what does " But that's Little Bingo" mean? — M.O.C.

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