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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, 15s. (*Journal* 10s. extra); Overseas Members, 15s. per annum, which includes receipt of the *Kipling Journal* quarterly.

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## Notes

### Bateman's in May

**B**ATEMAN'S in May is at its loveliest. I motored over on a Sunday early in the month and found it in all the glory of Spring. The Hermit of Burwash might have been strolling between the yew hedges and enjoying the beauties he added so generously after the beginning of the century, when he moved in from Rottingdean and began to build up the home and garden which justified his loving foresight so fully. The aubretia bed above the lake made a second patch of mauve in the water, and the splendid White Willow, one of the noblest of its kind, added a benign shade to the adjoining lawn. Facing the walled garden, with its trained pear trees, is a tree which Kipling himself planted and inscribed :

ME PLANTUM POSUIT  
R K  
MDCCCCV

On Tuesday, July 13th, Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Parish, the tenants of the National Trust, will be welcoming the Kipling Society to this haunt of beauty and my readers will be able to enjoy not only the gardens, but the numberless relics of the poet and novelist which are enshrined at Bateman's.

### Rung Ho, Maugham Sahib

Mr. A. J. Liebling is either an elderly man who has failed to learn wisdom or prematurely young, inasmuch as, having once possessed insight, he has failed to retain the quality. In either

case he should not air the unhappy opinions upon Rudyard Kipling in the columns of the *New Yorker*, as he so unwisely did on April 17. Major Barry, a member of the Council of the Kipling Society, has drawn our attention to the article.

Mr. Liebling's competence to criticise Kipling can be judged by the opening paragraph of his *Rung Ho, Maugham Sahib* :—

" Rudyard Kipling, born in 1865, was a minor writer, but a major disaster for the British Empire."

When Mr. Liebling came upon the dust cover of Mr. Maugham's book, he tells us that he began to fall under the spell of the short story writer, but he did not sacrifice that cherished opening sentence. No blotting of his copy for Mr. Liebling. He duly printed the absurdity which he had devised before he even opened the book he had to review.

It would seem that up to the age of seventeen young Liebling was a Kipling fan. His mother had given him a ten volume edition on his eleventh birthday, whereupon he decided that here was " our greatest story teller." " Kipling captured me completely." But by the time Mr. Liebling was a freshman at college, Kipling, alas, was outmoded and the ten-volume edition was discarded.

In case any member of the Kipling Society may be under the impression that Rudyard Kipling is the only great Englishman who has fallen under Mr. Liebling's displeasure, it may be added

that Churchill's speeches are described as "incurable grandiloquence" and the statesman's style is said to have been inherited from Kipling, as Churchill was "saturated with Kipling when he was a young journalist." After this, one is prepared for the pronouncement that "Kipling seldom wrote a good story but he often wrote parts of a bad one."

I apologise for the length of this protest but if any readers should raise a protest against such a folly of criticism, surely it is those who subscribe to the *Kipling Journal*. We at least have read our author between the ages of seventeen and fifty-seven, and not done him the injustice of 'skipping' two score pages of the book Mr. Liebling was proposing to review.

### **Our Victoria (Australia) Branch**

A pleasanter theme! Sir Archie Michaelis, President of the Melbourne Branch, has been interesting the Victorian members of the Royal Empire Society in Rudyard Kipling and his works. In Australia the interest in the poet of Empire has persisted unabated, if only because of what Sir Archie Michaelis describes as Kipling's deeper intention, the desire to bring home to his readers the power for good of what many of us are still proud to call the British Empire and the need for those of us who believe in this power to work whole-heartedly to keep that spirit alive. Our Melbourne branch, like the centre of the circle in London, arranges talks and discussions on aspects of our poet's work and its best efforts are directed to recruiting Kipling lovers from the younger generation.

### **An Actor's Memorial**

A tablet in memory of the actors killed in the first World War was unveiled by Sir Johnston Forbes Robert-

son, the famous actor and the foremost Hamlet of his day and generation. It can be seen in Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-on-Avon, the burial-place of Shakespeare. Lovers of Kipling may care to write the epitaph into their copy of one of his books. It reads:—

"We counterfeited once for your disport,  
Men's joy and sorrow; but our day has passed,  
We pray your pardon all where we fell short,  
Seeing we were your servants to this last."

### **Aslam Khan, Horse Coper, "Who seldom sold a Wrong 'un"**

Have readers of *Kim* forgotten Mahbub Ali? I was reminded of him by an article in the *Tatler* of February 24, under the pen-name, Sabretache. Aslam Khan sold more racing and polo ponies to subalterns than any other man in Indian history. Kipling was in Lahore at the time, and it may be that there was factual evidence before the novelist when he told how the ladies of Lahore made Mahbub Ali extremely drunk, so drunk that he was in danger of having his throat cut before he handed over the pedigree of the White Stallion to Kim for the Officer in Umballa. Aslam Khan was a Pathan, and, we are told, seldom sold a wrong 'un!

### **A Pioneer Editor Speaks**

Mr. Edwin Haward, one-time editor of the *Pioneer*, has been writing to *The Listener* correcting some oft-repeated inaccuracies regarding Kipling's social activities during his journalist years in India. He was a member of the Punjab Club, when it occupied its original building, afterwards Medou's Hotel and, later still, the home of the Allahabad Club. Mr. Haward knows because Kipling himself was on the *Pioneer* staff. When on leave in Simla, Kipling was a member of the Amateur

Dramatic Club. He played the part of Brisemouche when the Club produced *A Scrap of Paper*, in aid of the building fund of the Roman Catholic Church. This was at Lady Dufferin's special request. A programme with

Kipling's Prologue, as spoken by his sister before a Simla Dramatic Society show, must be among the rarer objects in *Kiplingiana*. I wonder if a copy of the Prologue exists after sixty and more years. ERNEST SHORT

## Re-Echoes of the Echo Club

by Ann M. Weygandt

(University of Delaware, U.S.A.)

KIPLING had a long memory for his literary favourites. Some of these were well-known writings; others were private loves of his own, now fallen into obscurity. One obvious example of his faithfulness to childhood preferences is his continued partiality for Bishop Corbet's "Fairies' Farewell." He met it first, the opening chapter of *Something of Myself* tells us, in a story read at Southsea; salted it down, and employed it more than thirty years later in *Puck of Pook's Hill* and *Rewards and Fairies*. Another instance of Kipling's recollection and use of reading has not, I think, been noticed, probably because of the relative unimportance of the poet to whom he is indebted—Bayard Taylor, a minor American Victorian.

### Monadnock

We know, again from *Something of Myself*, chapter I, that before the end of 1878, when he was about thirteen, Kipling was reading Emerson. In "From Tideway to Tideway" ("In Sight of Monadnock," 1892—*Letters of Travel*), he mentions his first acquaintance with Monadnock, made "in a shameless parody of Emerson's style before ever style or verse had interest for me." He adds that the mountain's name led him "to and through Emerson." The implication is that he met the parody before the

original—hence before the end of 1878. He remembered the word Monadnock, he says, "because of a rhyme in which one was

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

This "shameless parody" I have run to earth in Bayard Taylor's *The Echo Club, and Other Literary Diversions*, first published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, January-July 1872 (see Richard Croom Beatty's *Bayard Taylor, Laureate of the Gilded Age*, p. 300), and collected in a single volume issued by Osgood, Boston, 1876, and Chatto & Windus, London, 1877. Further investigation suggests that *The Echo Club* was at least partly responsible for four other quotations made by Kipling and published as far apart as 1889, 1902 and 1932. If I am right, Kipling read the collection within six years of its first printing—it is tempting to suppose in the London edition when it was new—and never forgot it. What was there to remember?

The *Echo Club* purports to be the chronicle of a group of New York parodists who met in the evenings to discuss poetry and write imitations of their contemporaries. Actually, all the parodies are the work of Taylor, who presents his own comments under the names of the various club mem-

bers. The parody of Emerson, a set of verses entitled "All or Nothing," was offered on "Night the Second." Kipling did not recall it perfectly; parts of stanzas two and three have combined themselves to produce the lines he includes in "From Tideway to Tideway." The relevant lines are four to eight in each stanza:

I am buskined by the goddess  
Of Monadnock's crest  
And my wings extended  
Touch the East and West.

I am crowned coeval  
With the Saurian eggs,  
And my fancy firmly  
Stands on its own legs.

This burlesque of Emerson may not have been the only contribution to Kipling's Emersoniana that *The Echo Club* provided. During their discussion of the New England poet's qualities, the echoers quote a number of his lines. Four are those from "Woodnotes," used by Kipling as a chapter heading to Chapter XI of *From Sea to Sea* (July 30, 1889):

Thou canst not wave thy staff in air  
Or dip thy paddle in the lake,  
But it carves the bow of beauty there  
And the ripples in rhyme the oar  
forsake.

It seems as if a memory of Taylor's citation might have reinforced Kipling's own first-hand knowledge of the passage.

### Misquotation

On "Night the Fourth" of the *Echo Club's* diversions there is a reference to a poem by Oliver Wendell Holmes, and a bit of it is quoted—the same bit quoted by Kipling in *From Sea to Sea*, Part II, Chapter XXVI, when he is describing newspapers in the Western United States in 1889 (December 12). Of course, Kipling might have read these lines in "Astraea" itself; he betrays knowledge of Holmes more than once. But

Taylor had misquoted from "Astraea," and Kipling misquotes in exactly the same way. Since Kipling was familiar with *The Echo Club*, it seems unlikely that the identical misquotation is a coincidence. The lines as Holmes wrote them referred to New York authors

Whose wide renown beyond their  
own abode  
Extends for miles along the Har-  
lem road.

Taylor's version ran:

Whose fame, beyond their own  
abode,  
Extends—for miles along the Har-  
lem road.

Kipling's use of the passage is apt in its context. On his way north through California to Oregon, he finds the local newspapers "narrow as the cutting edge of a chisel and twice as keen"—filled with the prices of stock, notices of improved reaping and binding machines, movements of eminent citizens—'whose fame beyond their own abode extends—for miles along the Harlem road.'

Another apparent reminiscence of *The Echo Club* occurs in "The Files" (1903). Since Kipling refers to Thomas Holley Chivers only once, and that in allusion to a passage cited by Taylor, we may assume that he derived his knowledge of Chivers from the "Diversions." On "Night the Third" the member known as "the Ancient" introduces Chivers' work to his friends. The Ancient lists a number of titles, quotes a particularly atrocious simile, and recites the refrain to "The Poet's Vocation" in *Eonchs of Ruby*. This last passage is caught up and repeated in "The Files," a sort of sub-editor's patter song dealing with the desirability of keeping one's perspective. After indulging in a pun, a variety of Byronesque rhymes, and many references to stale news once rated epoch-making, Kip-

ling suddenly breaks forth to assert that the man who remembers the files is not unduly impressed.

When the Conchimarian horns  
Of the reboantic Norns  
Usher gentlemen and ladies  
With new lights from Heaven and  
Hades,  
Guaranteeing to Eternity  
All yesterday's modernity.

Apparently when Kipling needed to suggest the tumultuous heralding of some nine-days'-wonder, the emptiness and impermanence of its fame, there came to his mind Olivers' flamboyant rhetoric as quoted by Taylor :

In the music of the morns  
Blown through the Conchimarian  
horns,  
Down the dark vistas of the  
reboantic Norns,  
To the Genius of Eternity  
Crying 'Come to me! Come to  
me!'

The passage had just the right flavour of meaningless pomposity to convey his attitude.

Kipling's latest use of *The Echo Club* is the most difficult to establish. It is, perhaps, no more than possible that he had Taylor's parody of Buchanan Read in mind when he was writing "Aunt Ellen" (1932), which appeared fifty-four years after his first acquaintance with Taylor. Perhaps he is not quoting at all when he describes fastening an eiderdown quilt to the back of a two-seater. He in-

forms us that he tied most of the knots with his gloves on, "but, to compensate, I wove Saunders' reef-points into the rear of the car as carefully as the pendulous oriole stays her nest." He *may* not be quoting. To my ears, however, this sentence has the ring of an allusion; and the third stanza of Taylor's take-off on Read's pastoral manner, "A Sylvan Scene," begins as follows :

The twilight oriole sang her  
valentine

From pendulous nests above the  
stable-sill.

It does not seem entirely implausible to suppose that Kipling's reason for connecting the adjective "pendulous" with the oriole was a memory of these lines. He would have enjoyed such a Latinate mouthful even at thirteen.

The only incontestable fact I have brought forward is that *The Echo Club* was the source of the Emerson parody Kipling remembered. None-the-less, it seems almost certain that Kipling met the lines from "Astraea" in *The Echo Club*; two of the other passages he quotes are singled out for attention there; and his "pendulous oriole" may owe its existence to Taylor, too. It appears that Kipling remembered different portions of a minor American poet's literary diversions surely for twelve or fourteen years, probably for twenty-five, and conceivably for more than fifty.

## R. K's GREAT IDEALS

MEMBERS who wish to support our efforts to keep the memory of Rudyard Kipling green, and to bring his great ideals before the coming generations of young people, may do so by remembering the Kipling Society in their wills. Such legacies afford proof of a desire that our work should go on beyond the span of the donor's lifetime, and afford great encouragement to those who believe that the creed of Kipling is everlasting.

The following simple form of bequest should be used :

"I bequeath to The Kipling Society, Greenwich House 11 Newgate Street, London, E.C.1, the sum of (£ \_\_\_\_\_), free of duty, to be applicable for the general purposes of the Society. And I declare that the receipt of the Hon. Treasurer or other proper official for the time being of the Society shall be of a good and sufficient discharge to my Executors."

## What they said about Kipling's Works

By Basil M. Bazley

WHEN reading through the immense amount of paper which has been covered by the pens of reviewers and critics, of widely different types and sympathies, we are presented with a comprehensive picture of the widespread influence of Kipling, not only during his long 'literary' life but extending as far as one can see into the future—"the magic remains," as one critic says. From this collection of opinions it is plainly apparent that, from first to last, whether his art aroused admiration or recrimination, Kipling commands attention. There is a difference between the early adverse criticism and that of later years; while the note of bitterness is equally strong in both groups, the more recent pronouncements very often exhibit a puerility that was absent from the articles by the men of the 'nineties.

### A Very Great Decade

Mention of this very great decade in Britain's record of Art and Literature brings to mind a wonderful book, *The Eighteen Nineties* by Holbrook Jackson, first issued in 1913, since when it has passed through at least seven editions; it gives an informative study of the period, charmingly presented, and has particular interest to us for its study of Kipling's work. From this we get an idea of the impact of Kipling on the London of 1890: "This came to us, bringing with them the scent and heat, the colour and passion of the East in all its splendours and seductiveness, the now world-famous series of short stories." Then follows an estimate of Kipling's genius, perhaps the best that has yet appeared in our language; we

learn that, in an epoch when authors sought new things, here was one who found something even newer: "He reasserted the claims of virility and actuality, and, if you like, of vulgarity—that underlying grossness of life which is Nature's safeguard. . . . But his realism never, as in the case of the French realists, looked upon mere frankness as an end in itself. He was never a realist for realism's sake; he faced facts only because he recognised in them the essentials of romance." It was "the desire of one man to tell another what he has seen, heard or experienced, and to tell it in the most effective way." This gives an accurate impression of Kipling's method of writing—a method that made him welcome on the Lower Deck or in ships' engine-rooms—in any place where men collected together. Mr. Jackson points out that Kipling's vision of the British Empire gave men high ideals to live up to; without these, it would perish; that those of the opposing school of thought misunderstood his vision was not Kipling's fault—he, "as prophet and bard of Empire, was high above all pettiness, and inspired by a genuine romantic passion." Other sides of his varied genius are noted here: that he could enter "into the wonder spirit of childhood" and was "equally at home in the realm of fancy and on the borderland of human experience." In this essay there is no paean of blind admiration; "sometimes he has fallen into verses which are incredibly lacking even in the most ordinary characteristics of poetry." But of how many of our great writers could it be said, as Mr. Jackson does of Kipling: "Strip from his output every weed, every unworthy production, and there

will remain not one masterpiece, but a dozen, and in most branches of literature—novel, short story, ballad lyric, dialogue and descriptive essay."

### An American View

One year earlier, an excellent book appeared in the U.S.A.—*Some English Story Tellers*, by F. T. Cooper—containing fifteen short appreciations of our writers of that day. The Kipling section has considerable merit, though Mr. Cooper tells us on his first page that "there is really very little that is new to say about an author who has entrenched himself in the hearts of the Anglo-Saxon world more widely and more solidly than any other writer since Dickens—who, more than any other, has enriched the language of the people with words and phrases that have become part of our verbal medium of exchange, the legal tender of our common speech." We can heartily agree with the writer's opinion that Kipling "has grown and broadened with the passage of years"—I, for one, have never subscribed to the theory that there was a falling-off after *Soldiers Three*—he frees himself from the use of the amazing coincidence, which is at times too prominent in his early work. It is curious to note that Mr. Cooper, though an American, thinks well of *The Five Nations*, which he calls "an apotheosis of Anglo-Saxon supremacy"; he sees the literary merit of these verses apart from their Imperialist sentiment, and acclaims the technique of poems like "The Sea and the Hills." *Kim*, he holds to be "the author's highest attainment in fiction," and states that "'Beyond the Pale,' 'On the City Wall,' and 'Without Benefit of Clergy' are among the great short stories of the world. They bear the test of uncounted re-readings, they wear well." Highly commended

also is "An Habitation Enforced," and "Mrs. Bathurst" is awarded good marks. As an example of a prophecy fulfilled we can chronicle the summing up: "It is because he can thus work magic with words, because he has an unmatched genius for taking life as a whole, with all its crudeness, its sordidness, its materialism, and weaving it into pictures of haunting mystery and romance, that Mr. Kipling holds among story-tellers of today (1912) a prestige which shall not soon be taken from him." The other sketches in this book are all good and almost French in their analytical power.

### Frankly Unfavourable Opinions

Now let us turn, for a change, to some frankly unfavourable opinions. About 1908, when the Lloyd George Little-England clique was in its full bloom of intolerant ignorance, A. G. Gardiner in *Prophets, Priests and Kings* stepped forward to assay Kipling's literary merit in the light (or darkness) of the then Government's anti-Imperialist policy. How a writer of this calibre came to pen such intemperate phrases must remain an enigma; in his view, Kipling lived in "a world filled with sudden and sinister shapes—not men, but the baleful caricatures of men; not women, but Maenad sisters with wild and blood-shot eyes and fearful dishevelled locks" (where, one may ask?). Then we read this: "Mr. Kipling is a precocious boy with a camera. He has the gift of vision, but not the gift of thought. . . . He knows all about life; but he does not know life, because he does not know the heart of man." This is followed by the apocryphal story of Kipling, as a child, on a liner, playing pranks "at the expense of a mild Hindoo, kneeling on board at his devotions." We

are informed that Kipling's England is not the England of Shakespeare and Milton (did Mr. Gardiner approve of Henry V?); and that he knew nothing of England. Finally, that his outlook is that "of the unschooled mind, vivid and virile, confident but crude, subject to fierce antipathies and lacking that faculty of sympathy that is the highest tribute of humanity." With this last diatribe we may leave Mr. Gardiner—there are none so blind as those who cannot see.

From this ranting we may pass to *The Upton Letters* (1905), in which Mr. A. C. Benson—one of three gifted brothers—tells us that he dislikes *Stalky & Co.*: "It is an amazing book, the cleverness, the freshness, the incredible originality of it all"; but it is not a fair picture of school life, "if it is really reminiscent . . . the school must have been a very peculiar one" (it was, so Kipling says). This criticism was written before that later story, "The United Idolators," appeared; in that Mr. Benson would have found most of his fears dispelled in advance. He makes the objection that "in the\* first place, the interest is concentrated upon a group of very unusual boys"—it is to be feared that if the heroes of a school tale were ordinary they would arouse little enthusiasm. Besides, these boys—the coincidence is that they were contemporaries and friends, though this really was the case—are to be found, as I well know, in actual life, as well as in other previous tales of this class; there was *The Triple Alliance* in the *B.O.P.* for one. However, "everything is elongated, widened, magnified, exaggerated," and "there is an absence of restfulness," though, just before saying this, Mr. Benson complains of the dreary tract of silly sayings of clever boys. His

real complaint is "the presentation of the masters. Here I see portrayed with remorseless fidelity the faults and foibles of my own class." This portrayal is faithful; one meets Kipling's types in every kind of school, which is perhaps the reason that schoolmasters, as a rule, do not like it. They could, however, learn much from it, and, if they, like Mr. Benson, feel that theirs is "a dingy trade," let them turn to the introductory poem and read some of the finest things ever said about their profession. In fact, Kipling was the first to describe a schoolmaster thoroughly, and Mr. Benson, like some of his colleagues, did not like it. Curiously enough, he says that the only Kipling book he has re-read is *The Light that Failed*.

In the same year G. K. Chesterton published his *Heretics*, a collection of amusing essays on various subjects and people, written with his usual love of fantasy and paradox. Here we see antagonism of ideals without attacks on genius; unlike smaller-minded critics, he agrees with Kipling's "I saw nought common on Thy Earth," in perfect accord with M'Andrew: "Now the first and fairest thing to say about Rudyard Kipling is that he has borne a brilliant part in thus recovering the lost provinces of poetry. He has not been frightened by that brutal materialistic air which clings only to words; he has pierced through to the romantic, imaginative matter of the things themselves. He has perceived the significance and philosophy of steam and slang." Like the great French critics, Chesterton seeks to understand and elucidate Kipling's message: did he write some bad poetry—so did Wordsworth; did he say silly things—so did Plato; did he give way to political hysteria—so did Gladstone: "But no

one can reasonably doubt that he means steadily and sincerely to say something." In no small measure Chesterton has pierced to the root of the matter: "Now, Mr. Kipling is certainly wrong in his worship of militarism, but his opponents are, generally speaking, quite as wrong as he. . . . The fact is that what attracts Mr. Kipling to militarism is not the idea of courage, but the idea of discipline." In fact, much of this essay is a sermon preached from the text of M'Andrews' dictum: "Law, Orrder, Duty an' Restraint, Obedience, Discipline!" Chesterton, like Kipling, points out the need for these things in civilized life: "The real poetry, the 'true romance' which Mr. Kipling has taught, is the romance of the division of labour and the discipline of all the trades. He sings the arts of peace much more accurately than the arts of war. And his main contention is vital and valuable." Further on, Kipling is rebuked for being so much a globe-trotter that he scarcely knows England; there is a certain amount of truth in this statement, for it was only in the previous year that Kipling, in a letter printed in Filson Young's *The Complete Motorist*, confesses that England is new to him: "But the chief end of my car, so far as I am concerned, is the discovery of England." We must remember that it was only about this time that we begin to get those wonderful tales and poems which breathe the very spirit of the country, but how many critics have commented on this wanderlust so deftly? A few years later Chesterton

was as greatly delighted with the fairy fantasies of *Just So Stories* as he was with the romance of the 9.15.

### The Early Group

Though no chronological sequence is attempted here, it may be as well, before going farther, to look at the early group of critics, some of whom might be termed 'primitives.' The most important of these was Sir Edmund Gosse, for many years literary critic of *The Sunday Times*, who, in the *Century Magazine* of October, 1891, likened Kipling to Pierre Loti: "Each produces on the reader a peculiar thrill, a voluptuous and agitating sentiment of intellectual uneasiness, with the spontaneous art of which he has the secret." Although he deprecates the "broken and jagged style," Gosse says, "I want more and more like *Oliver Twist*." He prefers the Three Soldiers to Simla Society and revels in "The Taking of Lungtungpen—that little masterpiece," of which he says: "It possesses to the full that masculine buoyancy, that power of sustaining an extremely spirited narrative in a tone appreciative to the action, which is one of Mr. Kipling's rare gifts. . . . Only a very young man could have written it, perhaps, but still more certainly only a young man of genius." Tribute is paid to the faithfulness of the stories which deal with Indian native life, their daring, knowledge and beauty, this last particularly emphasised in "Beyond the Pale." The article ends with "the exquisite melody of his own ballad of 'Mandalay'."

(To be continued)

THE KIPLING SOCIETY SALES DEPARTMENT is able to supply the following to Members interested: POSTCARDS of Batemans, Rudyard Lake, or Kipling's Grave 9d. per doz.; BOOKPLATES, 1d. each; Members' List, 6d.; and extra copies of *The Kipling Journal* at 2/6d. per copy—except for certain rare numbers. Enquiries should be addressed to The Secretary, Kipling Society, c/o Airborne Forces Security Fund, Greenwich House, 11, Newgate Street, London, E.C.1.

## How Much Longer ?

by the Honorary Secretary

OUR Editor has asked me to write for the Summer issue of the Journal twelve hundred words on the future of the Society. But why me? If one wants to know how the Society is doing, no doubt the man to tackle is the Secretary. But that won't do here, for the progress of the Kipling Society depends upon the popularity of Kipling's works, which in turn depends upon a multitude of new and as yet imperfectly understood influences which are astir in the world today. These influences are throwing into the melting pot all our hitherto generally accepted conceptions of public and private morality, of political life, of social responsibility, of art in all its manifestations, and of the fundamental truths of the Christian religion. Now, to appraise these matters intelligently—and they are all interlocked—requires a standard of erudition which is beyond my reach. I have only had a public school education, which is tantamount to no education at all; hence I am to this day practically illiterate. All that I can do, therefore, to comply with the Editor's request is to proceed on the basis that a cat may look at a king, and record my own impressions as to how some people seem to me to be reacting towards Kipling, and why. Owing to limitation of space, I can refer only to his prose.

### The Iconoclasts

The attack upon literature by our restless iconoclasts came comparatively late in the dismal and accursed drive to complicate life and debauch the arts. Its development followed the familiar paths already trodden by

jazz music, boogie-woogie dancing, nightmare sculpture, suprealistic painting, extentionalism and what-have-you. The aim in all these things appears to be to achieve complete incomprehensibility so that anything can be interpreted by anybody just as they like. Thus, a picture of something looking like a slab of decaying halibut on a dish in the dining room of a British Railways hotel may safely be labelled "Portrait of a Lady in her Bath," and will subsequently be enthusiastically acclaimed as such. The modern short story (for, as students of Kipling, the short story is our major prose interest) is not, and must not be, a short story at all. It must be unintelligible to the ordinary reader and must bear no resemblance whatever to anything ever written by people like Kipling, De Maupassant, Edgar Allan Poe, Saki, or Somerset Maugham. Now, if this kind of writing really does mean something, and if anybody really can appreciate it and like it, it can only be as a purely technical *tour-de-force*. In that case it can have no emotional appeal, and if it has no emotional appeal it is not Art. To ask such people to read Kipling would be as sensible as asking a Mau - Mau witch - doctor to read Chaucer. How long this concerted procession to perdition is going to last, and what the public reaction will be when these abnormal phenomena either die out or are kicked out, is anybody's guess.

I rather think myself that the popularity of Kipling's works is on the decline. This is not due, of course, to the crazy pictures, the tom-tomming jazz or any of the other debasements

of the arts. But the arts have been debased by the same influences that have contributed to the loss of Kipling's popularity; the almost complete disappearance, for instance, of graceful living and the proletarian and plutocratic contempt for it; the lowering of moral values; the loss of faith in everything; the vicious circle of cynicism, boredom, indifference, and triviality; the absence of hope. That is not the sort of community in which Kipling is appreciated. But we cannot get out of the difficulty as easily as that. Many writers of a past epoch are popular today and there are many signs of a revival of interest in the works of Victorian novelists. Why, then, this coldness towards Kipling?

### The Code

After innumerable discussions with those who do not like Kipling, I have come to the conclusion that some of Kipling's habits, faults, or whatever they may be called, have a strong irritation-potency and have spread—in the minds of a great many people who ought to know better—from the stories in which they appear, to the whole of his writing. In many of his stories, especially in his soldier stories, there is a certain priggishness about his characters which irritates and repels. Kipling, it is true, correctly interprets the traditions and code of honour of the British officers of his time. But he is, as Somerset Maugham has observed, quite ignorant about some things. This is one of them, for the mistake he makes here is that his officers are incessantly talking about their code. In any good regiment, even in my time, such things were never mentioned. Young officers were expected to understand the code and live up to it by absorbing it

instinctively from the example set by their brother officers. Kipling's picture of senior officers in the mess addressing juniors as "Young 'un," and patronizingly treating them to pompous clichés, makes the young people of today, who believe in its reality, contemptuous and impatient of those times and inclined to drop any further reading of Kipling forthwith. Furthermore, according to today's standards, Kipling is so obsessed with moral values that he takes sides in his own stories. The only possible way to dramatise a virtue or an idea is to put onto your stage characters imbued with it and to let their actions speak for themselves. But to have these virtues, so to speak, listed and drummed into the reader, with the characters in the story merely acting as mannequins to illustrate them like models in a women's dress show, produces an atmosphere of intolerable priggishness which is quite foreign to the British character and temperament. Such stories, of course, are in a small minority, but my experience has been that it is pure waste of breath to point this out to prospective converts to Kipling. It seems that these things create in the minds of new readers a prejudice against Kipling from the outset. As one of them once put it to me: "If you go into a restaurant and get a dish you find quite revolting, you just clear out and don't come back again!" Another remark from one of these young people has remained in my mind. "Why, dash it all, ninety per cent. of even his animals are prigs!"

### Always a Public

And where do we go from there? Personally, none of these things shake my belief that there will always be a public for Kipling, mainly perhaps

amongst the older people, for the old are much more tolerant than the young, and it is the elderly who get tired and exasperated with the destruction and restlessness of the times, and who feel the urge to go back to the age when relaxation and peace are to be found in the beauty of simplicity. In other words, I think the Kipling Society will always be able to main-

tain the present membership of from five to six hundred, but I do not believe that we shall ever be able to increase it. In the meanwhile, I wish to heaven somebody would ban "The Brushwood Boy." That infernal story seems to have been specially written to add to my difficulties in trying to get new members . . .

C. H. L.-R.

## Looking Back

by W. G. B. Maitland

**T**WENTY-SEVEN years ago saw the birth of the Kipling Society—the dream-child of Mr. J. H. C. Brooking, who, after many set-backs, finally brought about its successful birth in the Spring of 1927. His determination to make his venture a success was probably equalled only by my own pleasure—and here, perhaps, I might try to repay a somewhat belated debt of gratitude to Mr. Brooking for providing me with an interest which has remained undiminished for over a quarter of a century.

It is interesting to look back over those twenty-seven years and turn the pages of the *Journal*—one hundred and nine numbers!

Well do I remember that first issue and the excitement with which I read the memories of *Westward Ho!* which J. H. Taylor, the famous golf professional, 'Stalky' and Beresford had to tell. I was at that time just beginning to take more than a casual interest in Kipling. The *Journal* added zest to my interest.

### The First Meeting

Such experts as Capt. E. W. Martindell, Sir George MacMunn, and others made those first meetings something to remember.

Capt. Martindell reading from his

wonderful and almost inexhaustible store of Uncollected Kipling; Sir George MacMunn's stories of the India he knew so well, and of which Kipling has written. His tracings of Kipling origins: 'Snarleyow,' the gun-horse, and Quartermaster - Sergeant George Bancroft, *Danny Deever*, *Ford o' Kabul River*, *The Drums of the Fore and Aft* which was based, Sir George told us, on the battle of Mirwand, *Love o' Women*, Mahbub Ali and a host of others. The musical part of the meetings was provided by Major Corbett Smith who sang, often to his own accompaniment, the Kipling songs so familiar to us all. Major-General Dunsterville who, as the original 'Stalky,' and our first President, told stories of those *Westward Ho!* days when with Beresford as 'M'Turk,' he shared a study with Kipling. It was Beresford with his dry Irish humour who told us, amongst other things, that it was he who gave Kipling the nickname 'Beetle' by which we came to know him in the pages of *Stalky & Co.*

Then there were those annual luncheons when we sat down, well over one hundred strong, to listen to the speeches given in honour of Rudyard Kipling by the illustrious many—some

of whom were his contemporaries—who came to grace our board as guests of honour and who spoke of their knowledge and admiration for Kipling. Even the menu cards had a Kipling flavour with quotations from his works and, not infrequently, adorned with some little-known poem or an illustration depicting a Kipling scene.

In those early *Journals* men who had known Kipling in India wrote their recollections of him. Mr. Brooking wrote of "How the Kiplian got its Society," of his difficulties, the obstacles he came up against and how, finally, he overcame them all and launched the Society.

### " International Kipling Fellowship

Nor was Great Britain the only country represented in the Society's membership. The United States and France have both been well to the fore. Rear-Admiral Lloyd H. Chandler, U.S.N., whose monumental summary of the works of Rudyard Kipling has been of such inestimable value to the serious student of Kipling, was a frequent contributor to the *Journal*. His visit to England in 1930 was a high-light in the history of the Society and a lasting memory to the writer. The paper he read at a meeting serves as a reminder of a man with a great personality and a keen admirer of Kipling. Ellis Ames Ballard of Philadelphia, whose private collection of Kiplingiana was unique in its very completeness. William Carpenter of Evanston, whose visit to England on a Kipling hunt led him to Westward Ho ! of which he wrote an account in his privately published book, *Kipling College*. Carl T. Naumberg, our first hon. secretary in the U.S.A., and to whom we owe so much for keeping the Society's flag flying in America. Mrs. Flora V. Livingston of Cambridge,

Mass., whose vast Kipling Bibliography is a bookshelf companion to the bibliography that master Kiplingite, Capt. Martindell, produced in 1923, H. de Lancey Ferguson of Ohio, whose intense study of Kipling's working methods led him to write a most learned treatise on Kipling's revision of his works. Mr. de Lancey Ferguson also traced the route followed by the narrator of *Steam Tactics*, that delightful frolic in *Traffics and Discoveries*. All these played their parts in welding the Society into an International Kipling Fellowship. They, too, live on in the pages of the *Journal*.

France gave us Andre Maurois, Andre Chevrillon and Jules Castier. Maurois' writings on Kipling are famous and Chevrillon's *Three Studies in English Literature* contains what is, perhaps, the finest essay on Kipling ever written.

Mrs. A. M. Fleming, Rudyard Kipling's sister, used to hold us enthralled with intimate studies of her brother. Miss Flora Macdonald, his cousin, has her memories too, and these she often shared with us. Rarely was there a meeting at which she did not take part in the discussion and relate some little anecdote. All these intimacies have been recorded and are preserved in the *Journal*. During the discussions which invariably followed the lecture we could always count on Mr. B. M. Bazley, who later so ably edited the *Journal* until the 1939 war. The late J. P. Collins, too, was a most welcome speaker at our meetings.

What fun we had ! Kipling was still writing : his first editions were commanding high prices in the salerooms. When in January, 1936, he passed from us a deep shadow was cast over the English-speaking world. Surely no one, save our beloved King, who followed him so quickly across the Great Divide, had such a host of mourners.

Even six years of war could not divide us, scattered and evacuated as we were, and although we could not hold our meetings we still had the *Journal*.

Turning back the pages to that famous No. 1 in April, 1927, one is struck by the immense store of treasure lying there. We tend to forget what

we have heard and read, and we could profit if we were to dig up that treasure. A summary of those good things would be interesting. It is a task worth tackling.

Now, twenty-seven years later, 1954 sees us still triumphantly united in a common bond of admiration. It is a good record.

*NEW MEMBERS of the Society recently elected are:* LONDON—Mr. G. S. Tucker, Mr. J. Lyon Chapple, Mr. T. H. Thurburn, Mr. A. L. Kipling, Mr. W. A. G. Smith, Mrs. Sutcliffe; AUCKLAND, N.Z.—Miss M. Astley, Miss Widowson; FRANCE—M. Jean C. Surleau; VICTORIA—Mrs. N. E. Lucas, Mrs. Chapple; U.S.A.—Mr. B. W. Druckenmiller, Mr. Charles A. Motsch (Afghanistan).

## Concerning 'Danny Deever'

and a murder at Ranikhet, India, in 1886

WHEN, in September 1886, Kipling wrote "Danny Deever," had he in mind the murder of Lance-Sergeant Carmody at Ranikhet? The interesting question of this possible 'origin' is raised by Mr. R. E. Harbord, who sends us the following report from the August 1952 issue of *The Green Tiger*, the official journal of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment (17th Foot), with his own note on the poem. The report, headed "A Military Execution in India," is taken from a MS. recently presented to the Museum of the Regiment, and runs:

"On January 10th 1887 at Lucknow, Bengal, East India. This morning at 8.15 a.m. the battalion fell in for parade for the purpose of going to witness the execution of No. 2638 Pte. George Flaxman, of the 2nd Battalion Leicestershire Regiment, for the wilful murder of Lance Sergeant William Carmody of the 1st Battalion Leicestershire Regiment at Ranekit\* on or about the 9th of September 1886.

After being inspected and formed

*\*The current spelling of this word appears to be Ranikhet.*

up, we were marched on to the General Parade Ground and formed into line. The 17th Lancers were formed up on the right front, Bengal Native Cavalry, Bengal Native Infantry and the Royal Horse Artillery were facing the left front, and the 2nd Battalion Leicestershire Regiment facing the scaffold. After standing at ease for a few minutes, the Major General, Sir Charles Gough, K.C.B., v.c. and his staff arrived and inspected the scaffold, and shortly after that the condemned man arrived in a covered conveyance, accompanied by the Church of England Minister and an escort of twelve men with fixed bayonets; about 200 yards in rear of the troops of the garrison the band of the Leicestershire Regiment was formed up in readiness to play the culprit to the scaffold. In the rear of the band was a gun carriage drawn by two bullocks, on which they placed a coffin, when the condemned man dismounted from the covered waggon he was escorted up to the Gun Carriage, his chest nearly touching his own coffin, after being halted a few minutes, the Drum Major gave the word slow march, and the Band struck up with the Dead March in Saul which sent a thrill through every living soul on that parade ground; he marched with a firm step and his

head slightly bent and the Minister praying as they marched slowly along. It was very touching to all. A number of native soldiers and a few British soldiers asked leave to fall out of the ranks for they could not bear to see the sight.

The Band played the culprit to the scaffold and then halted, and the escort and prisoner turned about facing the Regiment . . . and then the Chief Warder and two assistants from Lucknow Military Prison went up to him, bade him goodbye and took the handcuffs off him; they then bound his hands behind with a part of the silk rope they were to hang him with. They then said quick march, and when he got to the scaffold he halted and kicked his boots off, and then ran up the steps of the scaffold as if he was the executioner and not the condemned man who was to die. When he got under the rope one of the warders adjusted the Black Cap, and then a native ran up the steps and placed the rope round his neck. Now he was not aware that the native was going to hang him, but anyhow he must have smelt him for he said, 'go away, you black.' The native then drew the bolt and he was no more. After hanging a few minutes the black cloth that covered the grave was removed, and all the troops marched past him; he hung with his head on one side and there was blood on the coat, he looked an awful sight.

They gave him a drop of 8ft. 3ins. Twenty three minutes from the time he paraded he was in the coffin, and on the way to the grave yard.

During the time he was waiting for his death the Minister visited him, but he would not confess, nor would he pray, for he always said that he was innocent. The Minister did not think that he was the one that did the deed, but he was one of the party. A Military Execution is one of the worst sights a man can ever witness, to see a man marching behind his own coffin and the drums trimmed with crepe, the band playing his own dead march, it is most solemn.

Three men dealt a pack of cards and agreed that the one who had the ace of spades should shoot the Sergeant.

It was supposed that he had the ace and did the deed."

"I have no doubt," writes Mr. Harbord, "that Kipling had the murder at Ranikhet in September 1886 in mind when he wrote these verses. A private of the Leicestershire Regiment (now the Royal Leicestershire Regiment) had shot a lance-sergeant. My authority was Lieut. - General Sir George MacMunn, our honoured Vice-President and for so long Chairman of Council, recently deceased (R.I.P.), who often mentioned Kipling origins to me when I was, for a short time, on his staff in Mesopotamia and also at Sackville College. Sir George thought the poem had been started by Kipling shortly after the public military execution at Lucknow in January, 1887, and put aside for a year or two, possibly to be revived by another shooting, at Ranikhet in 1889, this time of an officer of Sir George's Battery by a gunner, who was also militarily executed.

"I do not think Kipling was actually at Lucknow and saw the public execution in 1886, for he was still stationed in Lahore—600 miles away, but the poem\* was undoubtedly written between 1886 and February 22nd, 1890, when it was first published in *The Scots Observer* of Edinburgh.

"Kipling left Lahore for Allahabad late in 1887, and left India in 1889 for England via the East.

"Probably the poem was finished off as soon as Kipling was free to produce what Lord David Cecil called a 'masterpiece of eerie terror.' "

\*T. S. Eliot writes of it: "One of the most interesting exercises in the combination of heavy beat and variation of pace is found in 'Danny Deeveer,' a poem which is technically, as well as in content remarkable . . ."

## Branch News

### Victoria, B.C., Canada

Recent reports received from Mrs. Barclay, the Hon. Secretary, show that the Victoria, B.C., Branch maintains its activities with success. At the Annual Dinner of the Branch, at which Professor Burr presided, seventeen out of the full membership of twenty-three attended, with twenty-one guests.

### Auckland, New Zealand

Mrs. Buchanan, the Hon. Secretary, who reports the holding of eight meetings of the Branch during the season,

notes that the average attendance was 21 members. Addresses have been given by Sir Stephen Allen and Dr. R. B. Phillipps, of Cambridge. She writes :

"The inspired voyage of Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh has been throughout New Zealand a visit to the people, young and old, of every part of the country, from Waitangi to the Bluff. The memory of their visit will have an enduring influence for good in many directions, especially in the meaning of the power of simplicity and sincerity."

## Mr. Gerard E. Fox

WE greatly regret to record the death of Mr. Gerard E. Fox, an old and valued member of the Kipling Society, who has passed away in his 89th year. Mr. Fox, who was a former president of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce, and a well-known figure in the musical and literary life of the city, always acknowledged the debt he owed to Kipling's poetry. He had read and studied it in his own individual way, and was convinced of the greatness of so much of it—particularly of many poems not generally well known. He thought that, as a whole, Kipling was neglected as a poet, but foresaw the time when he would come into his own.

Tributes to a man who was "forthright and fearless, loving and beloved : a man of deep integrity with a healthy hatred of humbug, or anything that was false, shady or pretentious," were paid by Canon L. G. Mannerling at the funeral service at Bristol Cathedral, who said : "He gave up very much of his time to helping students who were taking up a musical career, and he was justly proud of the attainments of his son, Douglas, the director of music at Clifton College. In addition to music, he found a great solace in poetry."

On behalf of friends in the Kipling Society we extend our deepest sympathy with the family in their bereavement.

## Letter Bag

*(Correspondents are asked to keep their letters as short as possible)*

### Keeping Him Alive

I belong to a Writers' Circle of about 100 members, all of whom are intelligent, well-read people. During the last year or two I have put out an occasional feeler about Kipling, in order to test the response. This has been most disappointing. I once made the heroine of a story of my own say she was a Kiplingite; this instantly met the criticism, from a dozen people,

that "nobody young reads Kipling nowadays." The other day I mentioned him at a brains trust : he fell quite flat. Most people knew nothing of him at all, one ignoramus said his stories were 'padded,' and one successful novelist said she had no use for Kipling in any shape or form.

Hilton Brown, in his book published in 1945, says it may well be touch and go whether Kipling comes back or not.

What a tragedy if he doesn't! What a loss for future generations if he is allowed to slip from us now. And I'm terribly afraid he *is* slipping; look at my hundred writers.

How can we in the Kipling Society help to stop him? I'm sure that all our members should make this Priority One. But when you consider the huge field covered by his work, it's hard to know where to begin when someone starts running him down. It is here I should like to make some suggestions.

The criticisms one hears nearly all come from people who are either quite ignorant of his work, or else only know a small part of it. They generally take the form of 'dated,' jingoistic, too Indian, too historical, too involved, or—sometimes—'only for children.' What *simple* answer can we give to this?

To my mind, the way to set about it is: try to persuade the critic to read three of the stories of *England: "An Habitation Enforced," "Friendly Brook"* and *"My Son's Wife."* I'm not saying these are the 'best' stories, but I do regard them as a solid block of gold, around which the rest lie scattered like nuggets. For they are timeless, they are simple, they offend nobody, and they are about *ourselves*. They give the lie to *all* the criticisms. And you may bet your bottom dollar that the person who has just been slinging mud at R.K. has never even *heard* of them!

If we can once persuade the unbeliever to speak well of these stories, we've 'got' him—for then we can disclose the sheer joy that awaits him in any direction he likes to choose: historical, biblical, medical, comic, literary, heavenly—it's unending, and almost certainly he'll have *no conception* that Kipling covered such a field.

If any of us is ever able to address a gathering of people on Kipling, I would recommend the same line: "Give Kipling a chance, by reading these three stories—and having read them, ask yourselves if you think they deserve to be lost to future generations."

Finally, if we do make any converts, then we must beg them, cajole them, pester them and *bully* them into 'educating' their children. Don't be satisfied with: "They've got the run

of my Kipling shelves"; what's the use of that, if they never 'run' there? Tell them to read their children stories, to give them *Son of Empire*, to leave books lying about under their noses—for if we can only establish him firmly in the next generation, we're 'home'!

I'd be glad to hear other suggestions (particularly on how to deal with the *indifferent* person), for "Keeping him alive" is, I am sure, our principal job.—A. E. BAGWELL PUREFOY, 80 Riddlesdown Road, Purley, Surrey.

### Who was Nella Braddy?

In the *Kipling Journal* for last October, there was a letter (from Mr. Steuart of Edinburgh) asking who Nella Braddy, author of *A Son of Empire* (a biography of R.K.) was. I have managed to get some data on her from Messrs. Julian Messner, the American publishers, as follows:—

"Nella Braddy was born in Georgia, brought up in Florida, attended Converse College in South Carolina, and has done graduate work at Columbia University in New York, during the course of which she discovered several short stories by O. Henry which had not previously appeared in book form. These were subsequently brought out as *O. Henryana* in a limited edition published by Doubleday, Page & Co. (now Doubleday and Co.).

"This led to an editorial position on the staff of the publisher, during the tenure of which Miss Braddy edited or compiled many books, including: *The Standard Book of British and American Verse*, *Facts*, the *New Concise Pictorial Encyclopedia*, and edited *Midstream: The Story of My Later Life*, by Helen Keller.

"Miss Braddy is the author of *Anne Sullivan Macy*, *The Story Behind Helen Keller* and of magazine articles and book reviews. Her special interest has always been biography and autobiography, and in Kipling she has one of the most important and interesting subjects of our time.

"In private life, the author is Mrs. Keith Henney, and her husband is editor of *Electronics* and *Photo Technique* and author of several books on radio, color photography, etc."—ROSEMARY BAGWELL PUREFOY, Aylmar, Sherborne, Dorset.

# The Kipling Society

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