



The
KIPLING JOURNAL

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KIPLING SOCIETY



MARCH 1965

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THE KIPLING SOCIETY

THE Society was founded in 1927. 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), Lt.-Gen. Sir Frederick A. M. Browning, G.C.V.O., K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O. (1951-1960).

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, 25/- ; Overseas Members, 15/- ; Junior Members (under 18, anywhere), 10/- ; U.S.A. Branch, \$3.50 per annum. These include receipt of *The Kipling Journal* quarterly.

Until further notice the Society's Office at 323 High Holborn, W.C.1, will be open once a week, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please be sure to telephone before calling — HOLborn 7597 — as the day is not always the same.

THE KIPLING SOCIETY

Forthcoming Meetings

COUNCIL MEETING

The next Council Meeting will be held at 323 High Holborn at 2.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 19th May, 1965.

DISCUSSION MEETINGS

March 24th 1965, at the Ulster Room, Overseas House, Park Place, at 5.30 for 6 p.m.

Mrs. G. H. Newsom and Mr. Inwood will converse on *The Light That Failed*, with special observations on the historical background of Chapters II and XV. A discussion of the story by the whole meeting will follow.

May 12th. Same time and place.

A reading of 'The Bonds of Discipline', followed by a discussion led by Rear-Admiral P. W. Brock, C.B., D.S.O.

CENTENARY VISIT TO BATEMAN'S

Mr. and Mrs. Sutherland, the tenants, have kindly suggested that we come to Bateman's for a Centenary visit on Friday, May 7th — a non-public day. They will be the guests of the Society for lunch at 1 p.m. at The Rear, Burwash.

A coach will leave Charing Cross Underground Station at 10.15 a.m. on May 7th, arriving back in London about 7 p.m. **To make this hiring worth while, at least 15 seats need to be taken.**

The charge for members and guests, including lunch, will be 30s. for those going by the coach, and 20s. for those going by private car.

If you wish to come, be sure to notify the Hon. Secretary, Beckett Lodge, Beckett Avenue, Kenley, Surrey, enclosing the correct fee, **not later than first post Friday, 23rd April.** This will be the ONLY notice.

N.B. This outing is always great fun, but you MUST book early, as lunch room is limited.

CENTENARY LUNCHEON

The Centenary Luncheon will be held at the Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, W.C.2, on Wednesday, 27th October, 1965. The toast to 'The Unfading Genius of Rudyard Kipling' will be proposed by Nevill Coghill, Merton Professor of English Literature in the University of Oxford.

Application forms will go out in September.

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NEWS AND NOTES

THE CENTENARY YEAR

At the beginning of the year which will close with the centenary of Rudyard Kipling's birth at Bombay on 30th December, 1865, there seems to be 'a breathless hush' in the literary close — broken, metaphorically, by the sound of authors sharpening their pens. Doubtless as the year proceeds much of interest will appear in print: books, articles in learned and literary journals, features in periodicals and paragraphs in newspapers. The Editor will welcome and print in the *Journal* any information or lists that Members care to send him — wherever possible in advance of publication; and also any note of exhibitions or other celebrations.

Our own Kipling Society plans include the special visit to Bateman's on 7th May, and the Centenary Luncheon on 27th October, as detailed on page 1 of this issue; the production of a special Centenary Number of the *Journal* in December; and some such recognition of the actual Birthday as that suggested by the Hon. Secretary in his Notes (p. 24).

So far as special exhibitions are concerned, we have heard only of that in the Windsor Guildhall planned for December. It seems that the British Museum does not intend to mount one: which is disappointing as, besides the unrivalled collection of books, they also own the original manuscripts of *Kim*, most of the *Jungle Book* stories, many poems and a further selection of miscellaneous tales. There is no news so far from the Bodleian, which owns the manuscripts of the *Puck* stories besides a good collection of rare books, including one of the 'Two' copies of *Flies in Amber* with its three sequels.

The collection of famous essays on Kipling edited by Mr. Elliot Gilbert, has not, unfortunately, appeared early enough to be reviewed in this number of the *Journal*, but it is in the press. So also is Professor Morton N. Cohen's *Rudyard Kipling and Rider Haggard: The Record of a Friendship*, promised for early spring — a volume of particular interest since it contains many letters from Kipling here published for the first time.

'PLAIN TALES COLOURED'

A 'Fourth Leader' in *The Times* of 23rd December, 1964 with this title quoted in its entirety the letter from Major J. A. Board which appeared on page 25 of the December *Kipling Journal*, agreeing with most of his strictures though not those on the cast of the B.B.C.

' Indian Stories ' . . . Most unfortunately Major Board's letter was not intended for publication, and appeared even in *The Kipling Journal* under a misapprehension. However much we may have agreed with all or parts of Major Board's letter, and however grateful to him we may be for putting the case so clearly and forcibly, a most sincere apology is due to him for publishing the letter without his consent. A copy was sent to the Editor, simply for him to read — but he misunderstood the covering letter and thought that it was sent for inclusion in the *Journal*. He is truly sorry — and can only regret further that his mistake was aggravated, to the understandable annoyance of Major Board, by the quite unexpected reappearance of the letter in *The Times*.

MORE LETTERS TO CORMELL PRICE

Just over a year ago a collection of Kipling's letters to ' the Head ' fetched an unexpectedly high price in auction at Sotheby's. On 1st December, 1964 sixteen letters to him from Mrs. Lockwood Kipling and nine from her husband realized the even more amazing figure of £4,500. They were purchased by ' Mrs. Dickson ' on behalf of an unknown collector — and beyond the fact that they will remain in this country, nothing further is known of the identity of their purchaser or of their present whereabouts, though several unsubstantial guesses were made by the Press, which gave considerable publicity to the sale.

Quotations from five of the letters were printed in the Sale Catalogue, and phrases drawn from these gave plenty of scope for journalistic imagination. From the more factual point of view the extracts contain one or two crumbs of definite interest — as, for example, Lockwood Kipling's comment (15th June, 1878) that ' I should think he will always be inclined to shirk the collar and to interest himself in out of the way things ' — leading to the realization (fostered by Cormell Price), that journalism would prove the most suitable career for such a ' desultory soul '.

Another quotation (Alice Kipling to Cormell Price, 24th January, 1878, a week or so after Kipling had first entered the United Services College), ' This morning I had no letter from Ruddy — yesterday I had four. It is the roughness of the lads he seems to feel most — he doesn't grumble to me, but he is lonely and down ', confirms a passage in *Stalky & Co.* (p. 151) : ' Write home three times a day — yes, you brute, I've done that — askin' to be taken away.' Though indeed we already knew about this early unhappiness from Kipling's sister (see *Kipling Journal*, No. 44, p. 123, December, 1937) : ' for the first month or so he wrote to us, twice or thrice daily (and my mother cried bitterly over the letters) that he could neither eat nor sleep . . . I remember my mother going in tears to my aunt, Lady Burne-Jones, who told her that her son had written exactly the same sort of letters but was now very happy.'

The fact that Philip Burne-Jones reacted in the same way to his first term at Marlborough should serve as a good corrective to the sweeping assertions so often made that the bullying and general roughness at Westward Ho ! was so much worse than at the more famous Public Schools.

A JUNGLE BOOK MYSTERY

Mrs. Flora V. Livingston in her *Bibliography of Rudyard Kipling* (1927), p. 136, says, when describing the first American edition of *The Jungle Book* (1894) : "'Tiger! Tiger!' in the American edition has seven lines of text at the end, not in the English.' And Messrs. Stewart and Yeats, *Rudyard Kipling: A Bibliographical Catalogue* (1959, p. 122 repeat this : 'In the American edition, "Tiger! Tiger!" has seven lines at the end not found in the English edition.'

Now according to the copies in the Library of The Kipling Society — apparently first editions as described — the end of "Tiger! Tiger!" is precisely the same in the *St. Nicholas Magazine* (February 1894) where it first appeared, in the first American edition, and in the first and all subsequent English editions.

Was there some copyright or ghost edition — some Clouded Tiger — which Mrs. Livingston confused with the regular first edition? If it is simply a mistake it seems strange that Mrs. Livingston did not correct it in her extensive *Supplement*—and stranger still that Mr. Yeats should also have made it. Experts in the United States, please check, verify and explain for us in England who have no other copies of the American first edition with which to collate our own.

FORGED KIPLING LETTERS

In spite of the definite evidence produced in *Kipling Journal* No. 146 (June 1963), American bibliographers still question the genuineness of that rare Kipling item the privately printed *Letters to Guy Paget*. Further to substantiate the theory that 'Paget, M. P. was a liar', I was told when in the United States last year about the discovery of the letters due to the death of the forger in a motor accident . . .

Recently, when going through the back numbers of *The Kipling Journal*, I came across an article in No. 53 (April 1940) by Mr. W. G. B. Maitland describing a series of forged letters 'said to have been written by Rudyard Kipling to an American author.' Mr. Maitland's interesting article contains passages from the letters themselves, though nothing about the forger and supposed recipient. But further research has produced a cutting from *The Daily Telegraph* of 28th December, 1939 which gives the whole story.

'Since the death of Mrs. Rudyard Kipling last week it is possible to reveal that two years ago she was responsible for the withdrawal from circulation of a book containing forged letters, supposed to have been written by her husband to an American author, Mr. Sylvester Dorian,' begins the report. 'The forgeries were ingenious. Mr. Dorian was a student of Kipling, and had written a great deal about him. Apparently when he forged the letters he intended to keep them for some time after Mr. Kipling's death, but his own death in a car accident led to the discovery of the manuscripts and their sales by his executors.'

The letters were sold, under the impression that they were genuine, for about £2,000 to Mr. Howard Eric who had seventy-five copies printed in book form in December 1936 by the Southworth—Anthoesen Press, of Portland, Maine, U.S.A.

The fact that the letters were forged was proved by an English

collector, C. G. West, whose suspicions were aroused when he discovered that a passage in a letter supposed to have been written in 1925 was in fact a quotation from a biography of Bernard Shaw written by Frank Harris which was published in 1931. Apparently every one of the six forged letters in the book can be exposed by some such mistake or improbability.

All copies of the book are said to have been destroyed, on Mrs. Kipling's orders, except that owned by Mr. West who first exposed the forgery—and if indeed there is only one copy now in existence it seems probable that the American bibliographer who insists that the Paget Letters are forgeries is in fact confusing them with the Dorian Letters.

As I have already stated in No. 146 of the *Journal*, there is no possible doubt about the authenticity of the Paget letters. Their recipient was a distinguished public figure and well-known historian, and a personal friend of the Kipling family who visited him on several occasions. Guy Paget's son, the Rt. Hon. R. T. Paget, Q.C., M.P., remembers these visits and still owns the letters — which are not of any great literary or bibliographical interest, but a simple record of friendship and mutual interests extending over a period of twenty years. Finally, from the other side, Kipling's daughter possesses a copy of the printed Letters bearing an inscription to Kipling by Guy Paget presenting the book to him.

THINGS AND THE MAN

A short life of Kipling for children by Seon Manley has just appeared in New York. No copy has been received for review, nor any further details, but an American correspondent writes that it is a disappointing and uninspired effort, marred by many elementary mistakes of fact.

The December number of *English Literature in Transition* (Vol. 7, No. 4) arrived from Purdue University, Indiana, as these Notes were going to press. It contains three articles of interest to us: 'The Development of Kipling's Prose from 1883 Through *Plain Tales from the Hills*' by Louis L. Cornell; 'The Aesthetics of Violence' by Elliot L. Gilbert; and 'Kipling's Kim and Co-Existence' by John Munro. Two of these papers formed the basis of the Discussion on Kipling held in New York on 28 Dec: 1964 of which Professor Morton N. Cohen sends the account which follows.

R.L.G.

E.L.T. KIPLING DISCUSSION

This year's Conference on Literature in Transition, held in the Sheraton-Atlantic Hotel in New York City on December 28, 1964, as part of the Modern Language Association meetings, was devoted to 'Rudyard Kipling — A Centenary Revaluation.' The editors of *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* had published three papers on Kipling in the December issue of the journal, and two of these formed the basis for the meeting. Professor Louis L. Cornell (Columbia University), author of the first paper, 'The Development of Kipling's Prose from 1883 through *Plain Tales from the Hills*' summarised the content of his paper. He maintained that Kipling came to India wanting to be

an artist. But because of the journalistic demands made upon him, a split occurred in his work : in private he wrote the grotesque, supernatural tales that reflected his artistry, while in public he wrote material more fitting for a newspaper. The first sign of healing in the split, Professor Cornell averred, was in 'My Christmas at the Ajaibgaum Exhibition' ; later came 'In the House of Suddhoo,' in which he perfected his skill of unifying the disparate elements. Professor Cornell tried to explain Kipling's development by analysing *Plain Tales*. The themes of *Plain Tales*, he claimed, are important : Kipling penetrated the false appearances of Anglo-Indian life. The result is a quality of knowingness that is sometimes infuriating. At the same time he recognises many problems in Anglo-Indian life that are hard to solve. Professor Cornell concluded that *Plain Tales* represents a distinct achievement, a cadence in Kipling's development ; and that the stories appeared as a result of hard work, of Kipling's desire to develop his art. The stories in *Plain Tales* are not as simple-minded as some have thought them to be. They contain a doubleness of vision, and one story is a comment upon another. Certainly they embody a multiplicity of ways of viewing objects. Consequently we must look at Kipling and his art from many different points if we are, ultimately, to arrive at a whole view of his art.

Professor Elliot L. Gilbert (Brooklyn College), in his paper, entitled 'The Aesthetics of Violence', commented on the brutality, insensitivity, and violence in Kipling's work. Even the criticism of Kipling as an imperialist is often based on Kipling's violence, Professor Gilbert said. The question we must ask is whether Kipling in fact enjoys brutality and whether he invites the reader to enjoy it with him. Does he revel in pain? Edmund Wilson says so : he claims that Kipling's writings are occupational therapy, a reaction to his experiences in the House of Desolation. This may be true of his worst work, Professor Gilbert asserted, but not of his best. Kipling is essentially in sympathy with those who suffer pain. Brutality is the object of his best work, not the subject of it. Kipling is concerned with turning the experience of brutality into art, into beauty. In Kipling, the artist must begin with a heightened sensibility, he must be a person who sees the brutality and pain in the world. But not everyone who suffers pain is an artist. Kipling feels that given the heightened sensibility and the pain that one meets in life, the artist is able to become objective. Removed, separated from the experience, he can use the experience in his work. The intensity of his experience raises him to an exceptional energy level ; his inspiration ('daemon') goes to work and produces the art object. This is the process through which pain becomes transmuted into art.

A lively discussion followed. An overflowing audience included Professors Russell Goldford (Western Michigan University), John M. Munro (University of Toronto), Stanton Millet (University of Illinois), Lionel Stevenson (Duke University), Ann M. Weygandt (University of Delaware), and Helmut E. Gerber and W. Eugene Davis (Purdue University). Professor Edward S. Lauterbach (Purdue University) was in the chair.

'THE UNFADING GENIUS OF RUDYARD KIPLING'

Toast proposed at Annual Luncheon, 23rd October, 1964

by J. I. M. Stewart

YESTERDAY morning I sat down and addressed myself — or thought to address myself — to the onerous, if pleasant, task to be laid upon me today. I had hardly begun to chew my pen when I was interrupted (vexatiously, as is sometimes his habit) by Mr. Bunn.

Mr. Bunn was erecting a prefabricated shed for me, and I had found him, as I thought, a suitable site for it: a level patch, near the stream, a little screened by the grey poplar saplings which it seems impossible to control.

It was my idea that Mr. Bunn should place this shed simply on hardwood bearers; and, a day or two before, I had prepared and creosoted these bearers myself. In this way it would be fairly easy to move the shed elsewhere, if my first idea about it proved to have been wrong.

But now I found that Mr. Bunn was aggrieved about this. It was no way to use good timber, he said; and there would be no lastingness in it at all. I saw that Mr. Bunn had other plans for these particular pieces of wood: perhaps on my ground, perhaps on his own — for he and I are next-door neighbours.

I tried to argue with Mr. Bunn. This, as you may imagine, is never wise. Mr. Bunn will take an order (with a satisfied gloom, if he is sure it is a hapless one); but he will never 'take' an argument.

At one corner or another, he said, those bearers would be sure to sink; the shed would therefore tilt, at least a little; *if* the shed so tilted, the door wouldn't shut. And then the fair-ground people would come.

It was true that, twenty miles away in Oxford, St. Giles's Fair was over, as were the smaller fairs that follow it in Wantage and even in our own Uffington. But it would be a poor sort of short-term view to base myself on that. Next year — or in five years time or in ten — the fair-ground people would come.

And there were the gypsies to consider — and, nowadays, the crooks who range the countryside in lorries, offering to clean your drains or make up your drive. One fine morning, Mr. Bunn said, the shed would be found stripped bare. And then, Mr. Bunn said, 'Oh my, Mrs. Stewart will be annoyed!' This is always Mr. Bunn's supreme throw, and he makes it with inexpressible glee: Oh, won't Mrs. Stewart be annoyed with me! he says. He always says this, for example, when he starts one of his bonfires just as the wind is about change, or seconds before Mrs. Bunn starts to hang out our washing on a line.

'And you might want to open up that road again,' Mr. Bunn said — suddenly taking up an entirely new position. 'No sense in putting up a shed where you might want to do that. No sense' — he went on — 'in putting down all that concrete where you may be wanting hardcore and gravel within a twelvemonth.'

'Concrete?' I say. 'What concrete, Mr. Bunn?' 'What we're to have in place of them bearers,' Mr. Bunn says. I am about to say, 'There isn't going to be any concrete'. This, I know, is what I *ought* to say. But, instead, I say weakly, 'I don't know what you mean by opening up a road again'.

And then I remember :

They shut the road through the woods
 Seventy years ago.
 Weather and rain have undone it again,
 And now you would never know
 There was once a road through the woods
 Before they planted the trees.
 It is underneath the coppice and heath,
 And the thin anemones.
 Only the keeper sees
 That, where the ring-dove broods,
 And the badgers roll at ease,
 There was once a road through the woods

But here, on these few acres, which have the name of Fawler Copse, it can't, I think, be a matter of seventy years. The road Mr. Bunn sees can't have been made by some Lord Craven, not long dead, the better to get at his pheasants.

And I doubt whether it can have led to the church. If it did, it ceased to be used sometime in the fourteenth century, when the Abbot of Abingdon (rather a conservative and even, one suspects, lethargic person) tardily agreed to see good reason for removing our church elsewhere.

This seems to leave the possibility that Mr. Bunn's road was a *herepath* — a military road or track trodden by Dane and Saxon as they manoeuvred, perhaps, before the battle of Ashdown.

But there is another possibility about what Mr. Bunn has an eye for. Wherever you have a place called Fawler or Fawley you are likely to have something Roman, since the word signifies 'variegated or tessellated pavement'. (*Fageflor*, says an Abingdon document of the time of Henry II, preserving the Anglo-Saxon form of the word.) So, perhaps, Mr. Bunn's road led to villa or temple once : it is impossible to say.

But that may still be unwarrantably to make a youngster of it ! I take a short turn to the edge of the stream (I am reorganising my forces in this battle with Bunn), and now I am looking straight up at Uffington Castle : a legion's camping place once — but assuredly a camping place, or dwelling place, long before Roman legions were.

To the left, breaking the line of the Ridgeway, is Parsonage Barn — but whether barn or long barrow a naked eye could not from here determine. Beyond that is the White Horse. I can't see it. But it (or a wayfarer standing in its eye) can see me.

The question is : What does Mr. Bunn see ? Prosaically, perhaps, not very much. But we are poor students of Kipling, you and I, if we

do not credit Mr. Bunn — obstinate about his vanished road — with a certain representative significance.

Why, by the way, *is* he Mr. Bunn? Where does his name come from? It is a not uncommon one in my part of the world. And, of course, what it suggests is Happy Families : Mr. Bunn the Baker. But go back to the White Horse.

An ancient folk on this Berkshire-Wiltshire border, arrived there long before the Romans, enjoyed the dubious blessing of a coinage. On their coins was stamped the image of a horse — and it is a horse descended, the numismatists tell us, from a similar horse found on coins minted by Philip of Macedon. (On an English down — it is something curious to reflect on—you may dig up horses whose ancestry goes back beyond Bucephalus).

Well, it seems likely that this ancient people made something of a symbol of the horse, and that this is why they dug out of the chalk the nobly calligraphic lines of the White Horse of Uffington.

And these people were called the Dobuni . . . This, perhaps, is why Mr. Bunn is called Bunn. If he can see roads where I can't, is this altogether surprising?

You will not think that I have been setting up my Mr. Bunn in rivalry with certain other rural characters familiar to you or thinking to oppose a new magic of Uffington Castle or Wayland's Smithy — or even Hetty Pegler's Tump — to a certain strong magic known to our childhood.

It has been my desire merely to suggest that, whenever our own historical imagination begins to work, we are likely to be conscious of what it owes to Rudyard Kipling's. For Kipling's vision of the procession of the generations, centuries, epochs that have set their millennial gravure upon the face of England is surely the deepest, the strongest ever to have been achieved in terms of literary art.

But it is not merely a literary vision ; not merely something to which we retreat when we take up the book by our fireside. It is a vision that to this day enriches England for us as we move about England. And that enriches and renders vivid for us, too (' illustrates ', as the old rhetoricians used to say) the people of England. It isn't in the least that, because I have read, say, ' Friendly Brook ', I start *fancying* things about Mr. Bunn. It is simply that I *know* things about him that I mightn't otherwise have known.

If I were to continue addressing you until round about five o'clock (but don't be alarmed) I might begin to compass the theme of Kipling's *range* as a writer. Of the *permanence* of his writing there could not possibly be need to speak.

Cities and Thrones and Powers
 Stand in Time's eye,
 Almost as long as flowers,
 Which daily die :
 But, as new buds put forth
 To glad new men,
 Out of the spent and unconsidered Earth
 The Cities rise again.

This season's Daffodil,
 She never hears,
 What change, what chance, what chill,
 Cut down last year's :
 But with bold countenance,
 And knowledge small,
 Esteems her seven days' continuance
 To be perpetual.
 So Time that is o'er-kind
 To all that be,
 Ordains us e'en as blind,
 As bold as she :
 That in our very death,
 And burial sure,
 Shadow to shadow, well-persuaded, saith,
 ' See how our works endure ! '

Tempus ferox, tempus edax rerum. But it is the paradox, of course, that such an evocation of evanescence, that so perfect an evocation of the tears of things as this, shall itself, by any human reckoning, endure.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen : I ask you to rise to the toast : *The Unfading Genius of Rudyard Kipling*

MEETINGS REVISITED, III by the Hon. Secretary

HERE are the introductory remarks made at our discussion, early in 1956, of 'An Habitation Enforced', 'My Son's Wife', and 'Friendly Brook'. A report of the discussion itself appears in Journal No. 118, for July 1956.

We've called today's stories the 'English' ones, because we think they deserve that title more than most. Two of them tell how people who had no knowledge of the English countryside — still less any love for it — came to be won over by it so completely that they made their permanent homes there, while the third is so utterly of the country that it never moves beyond a few sopping fields. There are no others so completely of England than these; the rest — tales like 'They', 'Steam Tactics', the 'Pucks' and others — are all getting at something else: the English country isn't the sole *reason* for them. I think that, should you want to introduce Kipling to someone who's read none of him, you couldn't do better than start him off on these three.

Let's take first 'An Habitation Enforced', to my mind the top Kipling story of all — guaranteed to make you exceedingly homesick if read when far from England! The theme: a rich young American couple, compelled to travel for the husband's health, drift aimlessly to England in June, and rather apathetically find themselves lodging at a farmhouse in the deep country. The Girl falls an easy victim to its charms; the Man resists, but buys a derelict mansion to keep himself amused till he can get back to business — only to find (as Kipling never wearies of stressing) that in England you don't own land, the Land

owns you. It's not till nearly two years after they arrive that he finally capitulates with: 'We can't get out of it.'

But there's so much more to it than that. First and foremost the heroine is, I maintain, far and away the most attractive girl Kipling ever put into a story. I've read more than one dissertation on his Women, but I've never found Sophie Chapin so much as mentioned. And yet she was no ineffective little mouse. She never pushed herself forward, true, but it was due to her that they stayed put. And she had Guts — she sat down beside the old dead shepherd and meant to stay till someone came, and no one might well have come all day. And she had personality: '*She's* the one that knows her own mind', says Pinky the carter. And we get the loveliest picture of her: chestnut hair, short tweedy country clothes, a pretty face lighting up at each exciting new discovery — she absolutely *is* the story.

If you look at how it's all done you'll see that, for all its 48 pages, the story's beautifully compact. Every incident's designed to lead up to the inevitable end — the conquest of the *husband*. And each event leads so naturally and unchancily into the next one: George's illness, their convalescent wanderings which lead inevitably to London; naturally he goes to a quiet place to rest; exploring, it's not a bit surprising that they should come on the old house, nor that the old shepherd should die — and that is what starts off their acquaintance with the Locals. There is just one bit of coincidence — young Iggulden's uncle and Sophie's relations both coming from Veering Hollow. But that comes late enough in the story for it not to matter: events are going to roll on, anyway, by that time. And roll on they do, most perfectly, to the end; his Daemon *must* have been whispering in his ear right through that story!

It contains, of course, some delightful little bits. Sophie invents *the second Mrs. Chapin', a designing and evil female, and 'conceived she was alone among wives in so doing' (a typical Kipling insertion; the sort of knowingness that infuriates some people, though not me). The besotted woman outside the church, told she shouldn't have brought her mumpy child: 'I can't leave 'er be'ind, my lady. She'd set the 'ouse afire in a minute, she's that forward with the matches — ain't you, Maudie dear?' Sophie and George again and again looking helplessly at each other, saying: 'You're expected to know it all beforehand' — but she does get her own back handsomely over that one, by never giving away her own ancestral history.

What pictures does it leave with us? The young couple coming suddenly on that great, derelict house of dark blue brick, and the dainty curtsy dropped by the girl; the front-door slowly opening, and the old, old man emerging, with the dog's face white with stolen milk. The girl sitting on the steps keeping watch in the sunny yard, unhappy and bewildered, hugging the sheep-dog's neck. The wretched pair being swept up the centre aisle of the church to the monster pew, under scores of staring eyes. Finally, the end — the party at the stream in the wood: baby and mother (pretending not to listen but intensely interested), obstinate old Cloke with his oak beams for the bridge that'll last for ever (old Hobden to the life: 'hev it jest as you've a mind to, *but*. . .'),

and George Chapin shrugging his shoulders in defeat — 'Make it oak then; we can't get out of it.'

I mustn't spend longer on that one, but it's impossible to consider 'My Son's Wife' (surely a bad title) without comparing the two. The theme of the Country winning a new slave is the same, but the method of winning is quite different; another difference is that whereas Chapin was merely bewildered by his new surroundings Midmore is definitely hostile. Perhaps this made him, to Kipling, a harder nut to crack — at any rate I find that the story, delightful though it is, doesn't go with the wonderful smoothness of the other. It starts off naturally enough: Midmore, a town-dweller, inherits a country house, and says 'No, thank you' without even going inside it. Though we dislike him for it, that's acceptable enough. But here the smooth beginning suffers a jolt: at that very moment, much too conveniently, he gets a letter from his soul-mate throwing him over, and flees to his new refuge largely to escape the mockery of acquaintances. Once there, Kipling's got him where he wants him, but he didn't get him there half so naturally as the Chapins, and the start of 'My Son's Wife' is clumsy compared to the other one.

From there on, of course, it's sheer delight. The two great characters are Rhoda the Housekeeper and Sidney the Farmer (to say nothing of the Pig). The scenes with Rhoda and Sidney make you snort with laughter, but they do strike me rather as a collection of incidents strung together, not an inevitable progress like there was at Friar's Pardon. You don't see the fingers of the Land creeping so inexorably round Midmore; he's conquered for more selfish reasons than the Chapins. He's not really conquered by a feeling of growing responsibility; he gave Sidney his pig-pound and lock gates, but they were stepping-stones to being friendly with the Hunt. He's really conquered partly by pride in his new possessions (what a lovely catalogue of these Kipling gives!), and, much more, he's conquered by the Girl.

I would like to dally here a minute with Connie, the green-eyed Daughter. She's a most interesting person, and I hope you'll have something to say about her too. I myself find her very attractive, yet until the flood episode, which completes the romance, she's only mentioned four times, each in a few lines. How does the Author contrive to give her attraction? I suggest it's by keeping her a Mystery. Beyond saying she's got green eyes and hums he tells us nothing, yet you feel her influence all the time: you know quite well that's why Midmore's so desperately anxious to show up well in the neighbourhood, especially on a horse. And I, at least, have a perfectly clear picture of her: slight figure, grey-green eyes, corn-coloured hair, and a wide mouth that's always smiling at some private joke.

There's one typical Kipling 'knowing' remark to make you sit up — this time a singularly brutal one. 'No man — unless he has loved her — will casually dismiss a woman on whose lap he has laid his head.'

It leaves us with some nice pictures: the Lawyer's Office — a skinny, throaty lawyer, I think — with Charlie the long-nosed clerk breathing through it hard with curiosity about Rhoda's £30 a year. The cock pheasant bursting up in front of Midmore in the garden — though I'm sure he really missed it. All the Sidney episodes, especially Midmore's

public discomfiture over the pig-pound, while 'the Pig, at least eighteen inches long, stood on its hind legs and smiled at the company'. The wonderful picture of the rising water: a wide sheet hurrying up to the terrace, pushing round corners, stretching, yawning beneath the moonlight—and it's so clever making all this happen *after* the rain has stopped, so that there are no other sights or sounds to spoil the display. And lastly, the proposal scene which makes you laugh and cry together, and the shy, halting conversation that brings the story to an end.

In 'Friendly Brook' we have a nice contrast to the others, because instead of plain narrative from start to finish it's a 'frame' story. Two chaps are elaborately pictured at hedge-clipping, and then one of them tells a story of events that happened two years earlier. It's the story of how the father of a child who's been adopted by the local farmer tries to get her back—to the farmer's dismay—and is defeated by the farmer's old mother (who's shown as more or less half-witted) in a way that's extremely cleverly described, entirely by implication. And the Author leaves us guessing whether what really happened did in fact ever penetrate the moderately thick skulls of the two yokels.

The frame, of course, makes nothing like the contrast with the picture that it does in, say, 'Love o' Women' or 'On Greenhow Hill'; Jabez and Jesse aren't peering down into an Indian watercourse—they're within a few hundred yards of the scene of the story. More, the frame keeps intruding on the picture: Jabez keeps interrupting, they wander from the point to discuss another adopted child, to consider what the girl Mary's going to do for a living, to argue about Jim Wickenden being a poor hand at felling timber—all nothing to do with the story. Yet we don't mind it—it doesn't for an instant detract from our interest. And that shows how beautifully it's all done—the most skilful bit of work of all three, I suggest, because the method is so very difficult.

For all that, I don't see why Kipling had to make Mary an unattractive ne'er-do-well; why not a charming girl with (now) a happy future ahead of her?

There are several telling expressions. Jabez moves away from the hedge before speaking, because 'all hedges are nests of treachery and eavesdropping'. Makes you shudder a bit, that one. Describing the man from London who comes after the girl: 'He said he was a printer. I reckon, though, he lived on the rates like the rest of 'em up there in Lunnon.' And the sharpest pictures I get are the open cattle-shed with that great wild hedge looming against the mist, while from the bottom of the hill comes the surge of the Brook rushing past; the arm swinging up stiffly as the body turns over in the water; and the old Grandma who can't speak, when she's asked if she's seen the man, whipping out her slate and writing NO.

Well, it's your turn to talk now, and please don't leave out **the** Verses. 'The Recall' and 'The Land' must be, surely, two of the most perfect things Kipling ever did.

Have you recruited YOUR Centenary New Member yet?

FROM THE YOUNGER GENERATION

We are always on the look-out for Kipling enthusiasts on the right side of thirty, and our latest find is Mr. J. H. Mitchell of Auckland University, whose age is 19. His father, Mr. J. G. Mitchell of Cambridge, N.Z., joined the Society in 1962, and he has sent us a neatly-expressed, 1,300-word essay by his son, entitled 'Kipling and his Critics', written 'not for publication but for his own satisfaction.' Mr. Mitchell Junior concentrates his fire on the Anti-Imperialist type of critic, and shows a refreshing knowledge of Kipling's more patriotic work in the process.

It is encouraging to find a young man who not only shows such interest in our Author, but is prepared to get down to the solid work of putting his thoughts on paper. Presumably — lucky fellow — he has much of Kipling's later work still to discover, and we shall look forward with interest to his future demolition of critics of the 'Cruel' and 'Unintelligible' schools.

A.E.B.P.

THE bare mention of the name Kipling today provokes, almost inevitably, one of two reactions. The first, which merely shows ignorance, and is the lesser of the two, is 'I read the *Jungle Books* when I was a kid : he wrote some quite good books for children, didn't he ? ', and so Kipling is dismissed as a writer. The second is that prevalent among those with some pretensions to a knowledge of literature, and runs on these lines : ' No, I never bother with Kipling, he was one of those Imperialists, the type that exploited natives.' The word ' Imperialists ' is spoken with much the same tone that people use when referring to the Devil. It has such connotations that to label a man an Imperialist is to condemn him to the grave and beyond. But as Kipling would have said, that is quite another story.

For those who would have replied with the first comment, it is useless to read on, but for those whose answer would have been the second it may be of some interest, and it might even be instructive. During his life and to the present day Kipling has been reviled by the professional critics, with few exceptions. The reasons for this dislike are not hard to find. He was firstly never a member of a literary stream, secondly he had a great contempt for the critics, and let them know it, and lastly, possibly the greatest crime was that he was a popular writer with, to the critics at least, the wrong people. At no time did Kipling belong to any school of literary thought, or to any clique of literary reformers. In his earlier days ' literature ' meant the turgid outpourings of the aesthetes, men like Oscar Wilde and Lionel Johnson ; in his old age it meant the despair and the hopelessness of the Georgian poets and those of the 1920's. As he stayed outside any of the recognised literary streams, Kipling was never a party to the mutual back-scratchings of the critics who decide, at least to their own satisfaction, what is literature and what is not. His contempt for these critics and intellectuals is shown in a line from *The Islanders*, a poem in which he tries to prepare England for the pitfalls in wait for her. To him the critics are

Arid, aloof, incurious, unthinking, unthanking, gelt, and it is no wonder that they reacted so savagely. The critics of those days were not unlike those of the present, who are content to sit around and hamper constructive efforts in any direction. Kipling's most damning criticism lies in the words 'incurious, unthinking', for nothing outside the rather self-conscious world of these people was of importance to them. Not for them to be concerned with the low facts of reality, for facts were dangerous, and might puncture the bubble of their self-esteem. The most wounding point to the critics was that Kipling was popular. There is not much difference between the aesthetes who claimed that 'Art stopped short/In the cultivated court/of the Empress Josephine', and those who today eagerly seize upon any sufficiently incomprehensible piece of work by some obscure writer who lives in the slums of life and whose mind seems attuned to slums. To be popular damns any writer with this sort of critic, and to make matters worse, Kipling was popular with entirely the wrong sort of public. The people who appreciated his work were those who contributed something to life, and it is significant of this that when Kipling was buried in Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey, among his pall-bearers were the Prime Minister, an Admiral, a General, and the Masters of the two Colleges at Oxford and Cambridge which had awarded him degrees.

It must have been very annoying that none of the long-haired Bloomsbury-type intellectuals' exhortations were read with great interest by the public, while one who defied the authority of the critics became so popular. Although he remained outside the mainstream of literature, as defined by these critics, he retained the interest of a wide public, composed of the ordinary people who were of some use, and who had some ability, not on the 'arty' side, but on the more practical side. His attention was on the people who did things, and made things, and this is why* so many of his stories and poems deal with engineers, craftsmen, soldiers, administrators, and the like. They returned his interest, and so he became the accepted writer of the more active classes of men and women. The intellectuals retaliated with loud talk of 'philistinism', for their hero, to whom they could say 'Though the Philistines may jostle, You will rank as an apostle', was above being popular.

Another thing that did not endear Kipling to his critics was that in all his writing he seems to have some sort of fundamental moral principle. One of the most important doctrines of the writers and poets to whom Kipling was and is anathema, is that the writer should produce his subject untrammelled by any restraining fetters of morality, in fact, any type of external influence such as the higher motives should be resolutely ignored. This idea is completely foreign to Kipling's work, for he always wrote with an aim in view. To him it was not wrong that a poet should express his patriotism through his verse, or his belief in some ultimate goodness in a story. Sometimes he wrote of what he called the Law, which to him was the whole host of ideals and feelings that men like him tried to promulgate throughout what is now the British Commonwealth. In *England's Answer* he tries to show that all the English-Speaking members of the Commonwealth have similar values.

And the Law that ye make shall be law after the rule of your lands
 This for the waxen Heath, and that for the Wattle-bloom,
 This for the Maple-leaf, and that for the southern Broom.

The most reviled line written by Kipling concerns the Law that he felt guided people; it occurs in *Recessional*, and is referring to those who did not accept the values implicit in that Law. Kipling was fearful that the English might become as those 'lesser breeds without the Law'. The opponents of Kipling, and indeed many who appreciate his work, have been badly misled by this line, and in particular by the phrase 'lesser breeds'. To many it seems to smack of racial discrimination, the theory of a super-race, similar to the policies of Hitler. This is definitely not the intention of Kipling, for had he not written his last work in 1932, he would surely have condemned those who behaved as did the Nazis, with their lack of any human decency, as 'without the law', and therefore lesser breeds.

Perhaps feeling about Kipling is beginning to moderate, for in the last few years a number of books have been written by discerning critics who do not merely dismiss him in a few lines as a jingoistic versifier. Kipling believed that in the distant future people would regard the British colonising experiment as something, despite its many faults, worthwhile and of value to the world. There are those who believe that Rudyard Kipling may be seen in the future as of far more importance than those who reviled him, and as having a message of much greater worth than any of the mean and sordid vapourings of his critics.

REPORT ON DISCUSSION MEETING

November 18th, 1964, in the Ulster Room, Overseas House

This evening the Society had the all too infrequent pleasure of listening to a discourse by Doctor J. M. S. Tompkins, the author of *The Art of Rudyard Kipling*, who had chosen as her subject 'Kipling and the sense of mystery'.

My title, began Doctor Tompkins, is loose and large, and for that reason provocative. Mystery is 'a hidden or secret thing; a matter unexplained or unexplainable; something beyond human knowledge or comprehension; a riddle or enigma' (N.E.D., sense 5). Leaving aside 'beyond human comprehension' for the time being, hidden or secret things are open to human investigation, and when this succeeds there is no mystery left, though it may still be a wonder: the source and behaviour of the Nile were once, but are no longer, a mystery.

There are two typical reactions to mystery: the active — to find out, as with Bruce and the Nile, and the imaginative response by contemplation. Kipling sympathises with both reactions, but, as a writer, not a man of action, he exhibits the second and seeks out mysteries with which to exercise his fancy. He can, however, thoroughly understand and express the urge to find out, as in, for instance 'The Explorer' (1898).

'There's no sense in going further — it's the edge of cultivation',

So they said, and I believed it — broke my land, sowed my crop —
Built my barns and strung my fences in the little border station

Tucked away below the foothills where the trails run out and stop.

Till a voice, as loud as Conscience, rang interminable changes

On one everlasting Whisper day and night repeated — so :

Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the Ranges.

Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go.'

Here are two mysteries, first the geographical, leading to practical results ; the ' unharnessed rapids ' are harnessed and the pass where the explorer nearly died becomes ' the Railway Gap today ' ; and the second is the mystery of his passion, the human mystery of the whispering voice.

The mysteries of geography, of the movements of men and beasts, of the dwellings and the ways of remote men, exercise Kipling's interest, as in ' Quiquern ' — ' The people of the Elder Ice, beyond the white man's ken, Their spears are made of narwhal horn and they are the last of men ' — or in *Kim*, ' plodding through the sand on a camel to the mysterious city of Bikaner, where the wells are 400 feet deep and lined throughout with camel-bone '. Yet again, in ' Kaa's Hunting ' we find the regular roads, crossroads and traffic routes in the tree-tops, fifty, seventy or a hundred feet up, by which Mowgli was swung along to Cold Lairs by the *Bandar-log*. All these things are open to his, and our, investigation : meanwhile he places the stress on wonder and mystery.

One may regard Kipling's as a double attitude, derived possibly from his Yorkshire ancestry on the one side and his Highland/Welsh descent on the other. But what is certain — and often forgotten — is that his art in the early stages was rooted in the romanticism of the Pre-Raphaelite poets and artists, through his mother and Cornell Price and the Burne-Jones household, their poems and pictures and the books they liked. In consequence romantic mystery unmistakably inspired much of his work. This influence is traceable, for instance, in several examples of mysterious ballad-dialogue, inspired by Border balladry and perhaps by D. G. Rossetti's ' Sister Helen ' such as ' Heriot's Ford ' :

What's that that hirlples by my side ?

The foe that you must fight, my lord

That rides as fast as I can ride?

The shadow of your might, my lord.

This invites comparison with other lines of the Border ballads : ' Why does your brand sae drip wi' bluid ? ' or Rossetti's ' Why did you melt your waxen man ? '

The speaker remarked on the felicitous use of the expressively appropriate Scotticism ' hirlples ', meaning to walk or run with a limping gait.

The strength of this attraction was recorded by the author in ' The Propagation of Knowledge ' (1926), Beetle was in the Head's study, browsing in Isaac D'Israeli's *Curiosities of Literature*, and found a

description of mad Elizabethan beggars — Tom-a-Bedlams. ' Then, at the foot of a left-hand page, leapt out on him a verse — of incommunicable splendour, opening doors into inexplicable worlds — from a song which Tom-a-Bedlams were supposed to sing. It ran :

With a heart of furious fancies,
Whereof I am commander :
With a burning spear, and a horse of air,
To the wilderness I wander ;
With a knight of ghosts and shadows,
I summoned am to Tourney :
Ten leagues beyond the wide world's end :
Methinks it is no journey !

He sat, mouthing and staring before him, till the prep.-bell rang.'

Kipling seems to remember those days in ' Cold Iron ' (*Rewards and Fairies*). The human boy, adopted by the King and Queen of the fairies, fills the woods with the phantoms of his youthful sorcery : ' . . . flash on flash against the clouds, rush on rush of shadows down the valley . . . ' Puck remarks : ' I never knew he had such magic at his command, but it's often the way with boys,' — a metaphorical picture, perhaps, of his youth and the restless stirring of his genius.

With this strong streak of romantic mystery and wildness working on a powerful imagination, it is easy to understand his selection in ' Wireless ' (*Traffics and Discoveries*) : ' Remember that in all the millions permitted there are no more than five — five little lines — of which we can say. ' These are the pure magic. These are the clear vision. The rest is only poetry '.

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

A savage spot, as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon lover.

To these activities of the waking mind we must add the activities of his dream-life — phantasmagoria contrived by the brain out of the torn fragments of thought and reading, out of recent events and from buried memory — clearly a very lively influence on his work (see his fever-induced dreams in *Something of Myself*, and compare ' The Brushwood Boy ').

The young man who returned to India, then, had a very strong natural and cultivated delight in mystery of various kinds; a journalist's eager nose for copy; also an active inquisitiveness at various levels, a desire to find out, to ascertain; a natural youthful, ebullient (if not very gracious) pleasure in being ' in the know '; and above all the craftsman's drive to do his best with any subject, high or low, on its own terms.

India brought all these qualities into action, at all levels, from the sensational to the spiritual. The spiritual (e.g. ' The Bridge Builders ', ' The Miracle of Purun Bhagat ') matured out of his memories when

he had left India, although the material was gathered while he was there. He expected to find India full of mysteries, not, it is suggested, just as a survival of childhood. For children under six, of affectionate parents, with devoted ayahs and bearers, find their world *natural*, not mysterious, since they have nothing to contrast it with. Even the child's hand, looted from the burning-ghat by a vulture, and dropped in the garden, was accepted by young Rudyard as commonplace, though it upset his horrified mother. To him, much more mystery is attached to the great winds off the sea, toppling down nuts from the palms, and to the tropical eventides. He brought back from England, however, a dimension of mystery—not all literary—based on reported fact and oral narrative; not all factitious. But he did expect an India with vast hidden treasures, primitive tribes with strange beliefs, priesthoods cultivating mysterious powers, forgotten languages, secret societies, almost obliterated inscriptions, layers of history and ancient mysterious attitudes of mind.

His own Punjab was ringed by places of which he had heard or read strange tales: *Kim* is full of these notes, dropped in with deft ease, each a brush-stroke indicating unexplored distances—Tibetan ghost-daggers on Lurgan's table—the Lama's wanderings 'south of Tuticorin, where the wonderful fire-boats go to Ceylon, where are priests who know Pali'—the Hindu Kush, where are fair tribes descended from Alexander's soldiery, and marks on the rocks which might be (could they be?) masonic symbols ('Man Who Would be King', inspired by Lockhart's report on the Hindu Kush). And not only far away, but under one's feet. A patch of jungle grass can hide a bubbling well and a murderous priest. A quiet seal-cutter can give a hair-raising exhibition of the black art in a house in Kipling's own city, where he has entry and can observe it, not wholly unaffected. There are tales of poltergeists from the English officers quartered in the ancient palace-stronghold of Fort Lahore. All this the writer wished both to experience and investigate. It never filled the landscape, however. Of chief importance to Kipling, and what he finds everywhere, are the primal human relationships—parent and child, master and servant, and lover and beloved, teacher and disciple (in all settings—craft, warfare, wisdom) and comrades in work. But at times even these primal relationships, that unite all peoples, are latticed round with strangeness and mystery. He knows well enough that what is paradoxical to the West may be cool reason in the East, but meanwhile he makes his imaginative capital of the strangeness. Trejago goes 'Beyond the Pale' for his beloved, and the end is Bisesa's handless arms thrust through the grating of her room, the walling-up of the grating and her disappearance 'in a city where each man's house is as guarded and as unknowable as the grave.' Imray, who is new to the country, pats his servant's child on the head and calls him a handsome child; the boy dies of fever and his father kills Imray, believing him to have used the evil eye. Kipling himself does not make this mistake with his servant's little son: Muhammad Din dies too, but his father does not put it down to the evil eye.

Hilton Brown (author of the well-known work on Kipling) who spent an official life in hard and necessary work, has little patience with

this aspect of Kipling's imagination and refers to 'the spooks and the spoof. I think, said Doctor Tompkins, that he is wrong — and unfair — when he puts it all down to the desire to be 'in the know'. That is there, of course, and certainly in the Native States he finds the enigmas he expected to find — sometimes on slender evidence. He mocks his own fear in Chitor. 'In this part of the world the soberest mind will believe anything.' Doctor Tompkins then quoted from the verses 'A Pilgrim's Way' (*The Years Between*, 1914-18) beginning 'I do not look for holy saints to guide me on my way', and laid emphasis on the lines :

And when they labour to impress, I will not doubt or scoff,
Since I myself have done no less and—sometimes pulled it off.

Besides this desire to be thought 'in the know', there is doubtless the desire to make his tough Anglo-Indian audience sit up, but also an ethnographical interest — all this, in the last resort, is human stuff — human imaginations, human structures of belief, human practices — and malpractices. It is a mark of his sympathy for his vast Bengali babu, Hurree Chunder Mookerjee, that he gives him his own ethnographical interest. There is a kinship between Kipling in 'The House of Suddhoo' and Hurree trembling on Huneefa's balcony as he makes notes on the proceedings of the blind 'ventriloquial necromancer'. Even the children who read 'The Knife and the Naked Chalk' learn something, in a very carefully modulated way, of primitive mysteries.

And also, reaching out, now tentatively, now boldly, through this ethnographical material is the poet to whom man's life is always a profound mystery, never to be fully explained by science or sociology; the poet who thinks it not impossible that there may be other forms of existence, interpenetrating human life, as well as un-understood faculties in human nature itself; the poet who, when he writes of the Power, or the Powers, means something positive though undefined.

Turning to 'spooks' and psychical research the speaker went on to say that there are a number of ghost stories in the earlier layer of the author's work as well as references, then and later, to ghost-lore. With one exception ('A Madonna of the Trenches') these stories were all written by 1892, when he was aged 27. There are more than appears at first sight. There are at least four uncanny tales in *Abaft the Funnel*, and they cannot all be put down to the needs of the market and experimental craftsmanship. The subject had clearly an attraction for him. Some of those which he later rejected are irrational and unexplained ('For one Night Only' and 'Sleipner, late Thurinda'). They are certainly not just good, orthodox Christmas ghost stories. Some are based on old tales, such as 'The Phantom Rickshaw' which enables him to give his own version of the Cathie/Heathcliff haunting in *Wuthering Heights*. (In writing this he first felt the urge of his Daemon.) In these stories, too, some very good writing is sometimes to be found. The quiet sobriety of 'By Word of Mouth' is noteworthy. His work in this medium generally relates the ghostly datum with a much larger area of life. For instance, 'The Lost Legion' is concerned with the history of the Mutiny and the business of policing the Frontier, and this puts the

ghostly manifestation into proper proportion, as one of the inexplicable things you may come across while doing your daily work. Already Kipling likes to handle the strange events in the story so that they could be reduced — or almost reduced — to normal human causation, and then to drop in a pointer in the other direction. Imray's corpse could have been discovered by Strickland in the course of a thorough investigation, but Strickland and the narrator both believe that Imray returned in two senses, and the behaviour of the dog Tietjens supports them. I don't think, said Doctor Tompkins, that these tales trouble his modern admirers. They belong to an obvious category and can be enjoyed, if you wish, in a quite irresponsible way. Two tales of mysterious horror belong to this early period, 'At the End of the Passage' and 'The Mark of the Beast' which, on the surface at any rate, are tales of sorcery and demonism. The narrator says 'It was beyond any human or rational experience.' Nothing so horrible or violent occurs in later work, which may be due to age or subtilisation of technique, but I think that he deliberately put a check on his dark imaginings — as he did about the theme of the haunted manoeuvres that came to him in 1914.

But he continued to handle themes that depend on some paranormal datum — some inlet of mystery into human life from within or without. They are to be found in nearly all collections: 'The Finest Story in the World' (*Many Inventions*), 'The Bridge Builders' and 'The Brushwood Boy' (*The Day's Work*), 'Wireless' and 'They' (*Traffics and Discoveries*), 'The House Surgeon' (*Actions and Reactions*), 'In the Same Boat' and 'The Dog Hervey' (*A Diversity of Creatures*), 'The Wish House', 'A Madonna of the Trenches' and 'On the Gate' (*Debits and Credits*), 'Unprofessional' and 'Uncovenanted Mercies' (*Limits and Renewals*). Some of these are fantasies embodying poetic truth.

Four adjectives applied to this work by critics indicate various attitudes of acceptance, doubt or rejection. They are 'enigmatic', 'strange', 'queer' and 'rum'. It is a case where one's presuppositions count heavily, and it may not be possible to be quite dispassionate about these tales. It ought, however, to be possible for me, Doctor Tompkins continued, to say something of them from a professional point of view. The reader should find enough built-in direction in them.

(a) Persistence. You have somehow to come to terms with these repeated, widely-varied intimations of a mysterious element in man and his surroundings. (b) There is a growing richness of interest in the background and minor characters. They are not mere hieroglyphics, but set against a valid background of recognisable life. (c) The ambiguity of the central situation, or of the critical turn in the action. This I think to be deliberate, an extension of the technique of *Puck*; the tale shows different colours according to the circumstances and prepossessions of the reader. For instance, in 'The Gardener', Helen's moment of consolation for her hidden agony comes in the war cemetery. The gardener, with 'infinite compassion', says 'your son'. There are close parallels here with the last chapter of St. John's Gospel, and if you are a Christian you can say that this figure is a manifestation of Christ. But you can also say that it was the gardener, clairvoyant for a moment with the

quality of infinite compassion which we call Christ-like. You must not say, however, as Edmund Wilson did, that the tale is spoiled by the intrusion of a fairy-tale figure on the last page. Kipling's intensity does not admit of the jeer.

We may say that a total work of genius consists of a nucleus of fire and vision, which does not age, and a wide outwork of opinion and circumstance, which does. Masterpieces have their own lives, and generations adjust themselves differently to the outworks, while the heart beats strongly. It is difficult for many readers to accept a supernatural ingredient. There are two ways round this, (a) by morbid pathology (Hamlet's father's ghost is a hallucination projected by Hamlet's own half-conscious knowledge of his mother's and uncle's guilt) and (b) by metaphorical and symbolical interpretation (Macbeth's witches are symbols of a tendency to evil in the world, resulting—say—from the strain of evolution).

There is no point in objecting to these contortions; this is what masterpieces pay for staying alive. The assumption that so great a man cannot possibly have believed what we cannot believe may be valid, or may not. The business of a scholar, now and then, is to put a masterpiece back into its historical setting and to look, as dispassionately as possible, at its original shape. Kipling knew about advances in morbid pathology as he knew about advances in radiology and aeronautics. He did not think they had cleared up the whole mystery of man and his life, but they had thrown light on part of it; they had provided equivalents and interpretations of such ancient terrifying belief as demoniacal possession, witchcraft, sendings, effective curses, and made them accessible to his maturer art. He also knew about, and used, metaphors and symbols, but I do not think there is much in these stories reducible wholly to those terms. In most of them — at least the later ones — there is a small built-in obstruction to complete rationalisation. You can go a long way, sometimes perhaps to the end, often to near the end, but then your interpretation trips over a difficulty. To resolve an early ambiguity, you can postulate that the leper in 'The Mark of the Beast' exercised a skilled and evil hypnotic power to which the drunken Fleete is vulnerable. You can also say that Finlayson's opium trance in 'The Bridge Builders' liberates his vision from his subconscious — but then, why does the lascar Peroo share it? In 'The Dog Hervey' you have to accept a sort of chain-reaction of sensitives; Moira Sichcliffe instils her love and craving into the sickly little dog she cherishes, who transmits the image of Shend from her mind, blurred by his doggy brain to a shadow by the door, to the narrator, who transmits the image of the dog to Shend when he is drunk and vulnerable. This is a transmission not quite beyond conception, perhaps; the progressive blurring has a sort of conditional probability about it. You can rationalise 'The Wish House' smoothly, until you come to the letters Grace Ashcroft sends to her sister with five shillings, which bring the news from her sister that her former lover does indeed sicken when she recovers, and recovers when she sickens. To say that 'A Madonna of the Trenches' is the account of a soldier's nervous collapse and his hallucinations ignores the facts that he was perfectly well when he saw the shade of Bella Armine, that he

had no idea either of the love between her and Godsoe, or of her illness. (He has no source of knowledge except Godsoe and the vision.) The tale, however, like the very much earlier and cruder 'Phantom Rickshaw', is continually crossed by contradictory suggestions of scepticism and acceptance. When Keede says 'That's the real thing at last' he means that he has got to the bottom of Strangwick's obsession, but he is also echoing Strangwick's violent confused words about love: 'The reel thing's life an' death. It *begins* at death, d'ye see.'

I cannot therefore evade the conclusion, said Doctor Tompkins, that at the heart of all his enigmas are speculations about the life of the human spirit in and out of the body, and its vehicles and modes of operation and communication, which go beyond rational interpretation. They are hypotheses, if you will. He also hypothesises a circumambient mystery that has its own faintly-suggested vehicles — influxes from the abyss for which he uses the metaphors, at first, of evil spirits and later of wireless waves or planetary influence. The peculiarity of these stories after his twenty-seventh year, is the relinquishment of exotic adjuncts and ghostly preparations. The setting is solid and contemporary — a document of social history in fact. The terror, when it is part of the story, is inward (vide 'The House Surgeon'). But, just as there is a dialectic of belief and unbelief in the more highly-developed stories, so there is, very faintly intimated, but not, I think, to be dismissed, an interplay of the mystery within and the mystery without. He had come a long way from the yarns told *Abaft the Funnel*, but his had never been wholly a man-made world. Nor did he think that man was meant to live in a state of plenary illumination. Rider Haggard records that Kipling said to him in 1918 'that God does not mean that we should get too near lest we should become unfitted for our work in the world'. He could not, however, stop speculating, and he uses all the spoils of his acquisitive mind to give form to his speculations.

At the conclusion of her discourse Doctor Tompkins discovered, somewhat to her dismay, that she had been speaking for an hour, but there could be no doubt of the delighted satisfaction of her auditors, who would have welcomed more. The thus curtailed allowance of time for discussion was filled by animated comment from all sides and in particular from Mrs. Bambridge, whose welcome attendance gave us the opportunity to hear views derived straight from her own experience and recollections of her father's on these aspects of his work. It should be recorded that she said that Kipling did mean the figure at the end of 'The Gardener' to be Christ.

The enthusiastic thanks of the meeting were conveyed to Doctor Tompkins by the chairman, accompanied by cordial good wishes for a long, happy and fully-occupied retirement from the Royal Holloway College of the University of London which is shortly to occur.

P.W.I.

OBITUARY

Mr. T. S. Eliot, O.M.

The death of Mr. T. S. Eliot on Monday, 4 January 1965 at the age of 76 takes from us the most outstanding poet of the last half century, a playwright of considerable ability who brought back verse drama to the popular stage, and a most persuasive and influential literary critic.

So much has been written about this great man of letters since his death that it would be out of place here to dwell on such achievements as *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Four Quartets* or the brilliantly imaginative light verse of *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*.

But it is appropriate to remind readers of *A Choice of Kipling's Verse* which Mr. Eliot edited in 1941 and preceded by an Introduction which must always rank as one of the most important contributions to Kipling studies—not only for its deep and penetrating understanding of a fellow poet, but for its fearless declaration that Kipling was indeed a poet, and one worthy of serious consideration, made at a time when no highbrow or academic critic was yet ready to admit that Kipling ranked anywhere near the great writers of either verse or prose.

Further, Mr. Eliot was our Guest of Honour at the Annual Luncheon of The Kipling Society on 21 October 1958, and his speech on this occasion, championing 'The Unfading Genius of Rudyard Kipling', was published in *Kipling Journal* No. 129 (March 1959), and reiterates his conviction that Kipling 'seems to me the greatest English man of letters of his generation.'

Early in 1961 Mr. Eliot became a Vice-President of the Society, and would have become our President had not growing ill health made it necessary for him to refuse all further commitments.

The National Memorial Service to his memory was held in Westminster Abbey on Thursday, 4 February. The Kipling Society was represented by the President and the Hon. Secretary. Professor Bonamy Dobrée, O.B.E., a Vice-President, also attended.

HON. SECRETARY'S NOTES

On the Birthday. Despite the somewhat awkward date, there is a strong body of opinion in the Society that, besides celebrating Centenary Year, we should do something to commemorate the actual 100th anniversary of Kipling's birth, December 30th. Plans for this are still in embryo, but what we hope to achieve includes :

- (a) In Memoriam notices in *The Times* and *Daily Telegraph*, with a quotation.
- (b) Laying a wreath on the tomb in Westminster Abbey, with a short ceremony including, perhaps, a brief reading from the Works.

Should these plans prosper, a firm notice will be published, at latest in the September *Journal*.

A.E.B.P.

NEW MEMBERS : We are delighted to welcome the following :
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Misses E. Cocke, J. M. Oldfield, P. W. Thomas. Col. R. G. Matte
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T. E. Cresswell, P. S. Falla, K. R. Filce, N. H. Martell, S. G. Maurice,
E. G. Rosenthal, P. Tosoni. University of London Library. *AUS-
TRALIA* : Mrs. G. S. Keesing, M. Quinn. *CANADA* : W. H. Metcalf,
St. Michael's College, Toronto. *INDIA* : R. Pettigrew. *U.S.A.* : Mmes.
E. S. C. Camp, H. Lefferts; California State Coll. Library, Fullerton.
VICTORIA B.C. : Mr. and Mrs. B. Sekreve, Mrs. A. J. Neal.

HON. MEMBER (U.S.A.)

Mr. Maurice Dolbier (Herald Tribune)

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