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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).

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 KIPLING SOCIETY ADDRESS—

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THE KIPLING SOCIETY

Forthcoming Meetings

COUNCIL MEETINGS

At 50 Eaton Place, S.W.I.
Wednesday, 15 September 1976, after the AGM at 2 p.m.
Wednesday, 15 December 1976, at 2 p.m.

DISCUSSION MEETINGS

At 'The Victoria', Room 10, 56 Buckingham Palace Road, SW1 (opposite the Grosvenor Hotel) at 5.30 for 6 p.m.

Wednesday 15th September, 1976, T. H. Whittington, M.D., will open a Discussion on "Kipling as a Poet of the Sea".

Wednesday, 17 th November 1976—Sir Cyril Pickard, KCMG., former British High Commissioner in Pakistan, will open a Discussion on "The Great Road—and some Diversions".

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, 15th September, 1976, at 2 p.m., at 50 Eaton Place, SW1.

Besides routine business, the following members will be proposed for election as vice-presidents of the Society:

Mr. Roger Lancelyn Green, B. Litt, M.A., Editor Kipling Journal.

Mrs. C. Fairhead, Victoria B.C., Canada.

ANNUAL LUNCHEON

The Annual Luncheon of the Kipling Society will be held at the Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, London W2, on Wednesday, November 10th, 1976. The Guests of Honour will be Roger Lancelyn Green, B.Litt., M.A., Editor of the Kipling Journal, and Mrs Green.

Application forms will be sent out in early Autumn.

Please support this Luncheon. It heralds the arrival of Kipling Journal No. 200!

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NEWS AND NOTES

GOODBYE TO UNA

With the death on 24 May of Elsie Bambridge we lose our last close link with Rudyard Kipling. She will be remembered by most of us from her frequent appearances at the Annual Luncheons, and by a few of us for personal kindnesses. As editor of this *Journal,* I always submitted galley proofs of each number, and until a couple of years ago when her memory began to fail, she always returned them with a note passing them for publication. She never forbade any item in the last seventy-five numbers, since I took on the editorship. Once she wrote about an item, "You may print this if you like—but it is completely untrue". As the item was a very tall story culled by someone for *Reader's Digest,* I scrapped it at once. Occasionally she would write some helpful comment, which she usually suggested that I quoted in the *Journal;* and when I submitted to her the typescript of my *Kipling and the Children* (1965) she read it all carefully, made several useful suggestions for its improvement, and allowed all quotations, published or unpublished, except one about his unhappiness during his first term at Westward Ho!, written by Alice Kipling to Cormell Price.

Elsie and John Kipling appear, of course, as Una and Dan in the Puck stories, and she wrote a delightful description of their inception in her Epilogue to Professor Carrington's biography. Kipling's reason for choosing these names may not be generally known. When the Kiplings were staying at 'The Woolsack' near Cape Town in 1901, they adopted a new-born lion cub which the Keepers at the local zoo were sure would die. But, as described in *Something of Myself* (pp. 171-3) he lived and throve—only to die later of food-poisoning after the Kiplings had left, and he had been returned to the zoo.

But long before the account in *Something of Myself,* Kipling had written an article in *Just So Story* manner, about this experience : "Now this is a really, truly tale, Best Beloved. It is indeed. I know it is because it all truthfully happened; and I saw it and heard it." After accepting the lion cub, "I went home very quickly, and I found Both Babies (Daniel and Una, they were called) playing on the stoep.. ." The names here were obviously chosen on account of the Prophet Daniel's experiences in the lion's den, and Una in *The Faerie Queene* who had a friendly lion to guard her. The whole account occupies several pages with many delightful touches. For example, when Sullivan "was several months old, "he would go into my room and lie under

a couch. If I wished to get rid of him I had to call Una, for at her voice he would solemnly trundle out with his head lifted and help her chase butterflies among the hydrangeas : he never took any notice of me."

The article is not easy to find, as it does not appear in the Sussex and Burwash editions. It was first published in the January 1902 number of the American *Ladies Home Journal,* illustrated with eight photographs "taken by the author", under the title 'My Personal Experience with a Lion'; it was reprinted in *The Kipling Reader For Elementary Grades,* published by Appleton of New York and Chicago in 1912, with the title 'How to Bring up a Lion'. So far as I know it has only once been reprinted since then when, at my suggestion, Miss Sally Patrick Johnson included it in an anthology of true animal stories, *Everyman's Ark* (Harper, New York) in 1962.

"SEEK NOT TO QUESTION . . ."

Perhaps predictably, Mrs. Bambridge's death has brought forth articles and correspondence about the Kipling Papers in her possession and the supposed secrets about him which she was said to be hiding. Daughter of Kipling kept MSS secret', was the title of Philip Howard's article in *The Times* of 2 June, and he wove a story round the archives at Wimpole Hall : "Nobody was allowed into the room where she kept the papers. She would enter it and emerge with unpublished manuscripts to show to specially favoured visitors . ." and so on.

Phillip Knightley in *The Sunday Times* (13 June) went even further, in a long article headed: 'What did Kipling's Daughter want to hide?', making much of her refusal to allow the publication of Lord Birkenhead's biography, and quoting the novelist Enid Bagnold (widow of Sir Roderick Jones) as saying : There was a lot of material about Kipling's early life in India, a lot about his social difficulties. I remember in particular the introverted self-confessions of a young man who was forcing himself to adapt to a code of conduct he felt below his own. I believe that Mrs. Bambridge had never seen the material on which this was based and was absolutely horrified when she saw what Lord Birkenhead had written about it." And Mr. Knightley continues : "This ties in with what other Kipling critics believe. Some of them say that Kipling's importance will turn out to be that, far from being a jingoistic member of the Establishment, he "rumbled" the British ruling class as early as his reporter-in-India period and that he grew increasingly despairing of Britain's role in the world."

More specifically Mr. Knightley asks: "Did Kipling despise himself for compromises he made with his conscience in his youth in India? In later life was he careful what he wrote because his views —politically, socially, and personally—were filled with despair? Was Kipling's hasty marriage to Caroline Balestier inspired by the guilt he felt over her brother, Wolcott, for whom Kipling cherished deep feelings? Kipling had quarrelled with Wolcott and was abroad when he died."

A quarrel with Wolcott does not seem to be mentioned in any book on Kipling. Is Mr. Knightley by any chance confusing Wolcott with his brother Beatty?

To all this Professor Carrington replied with an excellent full-page article in *The Times Literary Supplement* on 25 June entitled 'The Lives of Kipling', which elaborated considerably the talk he gave to the Kipling Society on 19 Nov. 1975, of which a synopsis appeared in *Journal* No. 198. In this he wrote that he hoped Lord Birkenhead's biography (which he has never read) may now be published. And the Dowager Lady Birkenhead added a few points about her husband's book in a letter to the TLS a fortnight later. From these we are led to hope that Lord Birkenhead's book may indeed appear at last. (It is interesting to know from Lady Birkenhead's letter that her husband revised and polished it towards the end of his life—probably hoping that it might indeed appear one day).

It is interesting to note that, in spite of Mrs. Bambridge's embargo, Lord Birkenhead gave two detailed lectures on Kipling, presumably based closely on his biography, to the Royal Society of Literature, which were published in their Proceedings: 'The Young Rudyard Kipling' in Vol. 27 (1955), dealing with the Southsea and Westward Ho! period, and 'Rudyard Kipling and the Vermont Feud' in Vol. 30 (1961). The first was read in 1952, well before the publication of Professor Carrington's book; the second not until 1960.

Lord Birkenhead may have modified his views on the effect the Southsea and Westward Ho! experiences had on Kipling in later life, for (speaking of these two) he concludes:

'The truth is that Kipling's character was always too buoyant to be affected for long by even the most depressing adversity, and the buoyancy remained to the end of his life, when he would suddenly emerge in tearing spirits from long bouts of agonizing physical pain and spiritual apprehension.'

R.L.G.

THE THEOLOGY OF RUDYARD KIPLING

By Fr. Martin Jarrett-Kerr, CR.

Surely Kipling had no Theology? Or if he did, surely it was pagan, not Christian? Look at the Headpiece to 'Lispeth' (*Plain Tales from the Hills)* :

> Look, you have cast out Love ! What Gods are these
> You bid me please?
> The Three in One, the One in Three? Not so!
> To my own gods I go.
> It may be they shall give me greater ease
> Than your cold Christ and tangled Trinities.
> *(The Convert)*

True, he does occasionally use Christian language and symbols; but usually in a superficial and sentimental way. Think of the end of

'William the Conqueror' *(The Day's Work).* 'William', the heroine, is a tough Tom-boy. But she works with Scott—silent, buttoned-up batchelor—through a cholera epidemic, and they fall in love. When they return it is Christmas. They hear 'Good King Wenceslas' and 'While Shepherds . . .'—and 'this time it was William that wiped her eyes.'

The stereotype most people have of Kipling is this: The Stoic morality of the Public School and army *(Stalky & Co.,* the *Soldiers Three, etc.).* The flag-wagging imperialist: think of 'Ave Imperatrix!' written when Queen Victoria was nearly assassinated, 1882, a poem which

> Sends greeting humble and sincere—
> Through verse be rude and poor and mean—
> To you, the greatest as most dear—
> Victoria, by God's grace Our Queen !

And what about all those poems and stories on the Boer War, and Kipling's adulation for Rhodes? And, thirdly, the stereotype of 'racial superiority': not only sarcastic remarks about Eurasians, but 'Oh, East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet', or

> 'You'll never plumb the Oriental mind,
> And if you did, it isn't worth the toil'.
> Think of a sleek French priest in Canada;
> Divide by twenty half-breeds. Multiply
> By twice the Sphinx's silence. There's your East.

Well, some of this is true enough (though the song 'Ballad of East and West' is exactly the opposite of 'racial superiority'. Read it again). But the stereotype needs challenging at almost every point. And what better way of challenging it than by studying a new book, *Kipling, The Glass, The Shadow and The Fire,* by Philip Mason? Actually the rescue of Kipling has been going on for some years; but Mr. Mason's contribution is particularly significant because of his unusual qualifications. He worked for many years in the Indian Civil Service, and wrote the classic book *The Men Who Ruled India* (under the pseudonym, Philip Woodruff). Then he wrote two books on Rhodesia and Nyasaland. After work on Race Relations at Chatham House, he became Director of the Institute of Race Relations, and supervised publications about Race in every continent—his own big book on it was *Patterns of Dominance.* His last work was a study of the Indian Army *(A Matter of Honour);* and in the autumn of 1975 he is giving the Scott Holland Lectures in Oxford, on 'Commitment and Compromise' in Christian history. This book on Kipling was a result of turning back to his first love-hate relationship to R.K.'s works and seeing it in perspective. It is sensitive criticism, but just; and it manages to bring out some of the extraordinary power in R.K.'s uneven writings.

On the Indian period Mr. Mason's expertise is useful. He is able to show, for instance, that R.K., though he tried to show-off his knowledge of the language, in fact knew no Bengali, and 'was less fluent than he pretends . . . what he spoke was neither Urdu nor Hindi, the liter-

ary language, but kitchen-Hindustani.' And this is characteristic of the early period: the brash, clever young journalist, rather know-all and determined to show it. (Mr. Mason mentions the influence of Browning on his poetry. There is another similarity: Browning, like Kipling, was a non-Graduate. Browning had to show-off to his University friends, by choosing themes and characters of great obscurity). Kipling, on the staff of a newspaper, living in a society where the Civil List assigned everybody—except journalists—his place, had to find some niche for himself. In his second period, travelling and living in America, he had immense fame (immoderate for one so young) but no acceptance and no roots. Finally, when he settled in Sussex he found a home and a background, though it took a long time, and to the end he was a lonely man.

It is against this background that R.K. had to develop. And Mr. Mason brings out finely the way in which suffering (first the loss of his daughter; then, worst, his son—'missing, believed killed' in 1915) both hardened and mellowed him. The angry, brash, almost cruel strains remained to the last, and flashed out from time to time. But along with the Stoic, stiff-upper-lip reaction there developed a sympathy and understanding which is modest and shy (almost afraid of itself) but genuine. And this affected his 'theology'. Mr. Mason's book is unusual in many ways, but especially in the space it devotes to R.K.'s religious outlook.

Certainly R.K. was no orthodox Christian. He grudgingly stated his 'Credo' to his first prospective father-in-law—and it is a bare Theism, with a vague reference to 'One filled with His spirit who did voluntarily die. . .' etc. But we know also that he had sympathies with Hindu polytheism; with the strict Buddhism of the Lama (in *Kim);* with Islam; and even with the Mithras-worship of the Romans in Britain. The deepest belief that was with him from the first was a dedication to 'craft'. His fine poem 'My New-Cut Ashlar' expresses this well:

My new-cut ashlar takes the light
Where crimson-blank the windows flare.
By my own work before the night,
Great Overseer, I make my prayer.

If there be good in that I wrought
Thy Hand compelled it, Master, Thine—
Where I have failed to meet Thy Thought
I Know, through Thee, the blame was mine.

('L'envoi' to *Life's Handicap)*

Man owes to his Maker honesty in the skills he's been given—and R.K.'s poetic skills, and his wonderful dexterity and inventiveness with language, are his best tribute. The story, 'The Eye of Allah' *(Debits & Credits)* tells of the first discovery of a crude microscope and of what it reveals of beauty (and terror) in creation. The official Church, in the person of the Abbot, had to destroy it—too dangerous! And one of the positive gifts of man's in his capacity for laughter, R.K. over-

does this sometimes; but he tells the charming story of St. Jubanus, whose only miracle was

> He called a dying man back to life by whispering in his ear, and the man sat up and laughed. (I wish I knew that joke.) That is why we have a proverb in our valley: 'It would take Saint Jubans himself to make you smile.' *(Limits & Renewals)*

Man's gift of paradox is allied to his gift of laughter: R.K. brings this out in his ingenious tale of 'The Conversion of St. Wilfred' *(Rewards and Fairies).* St. Wilfred is longing to convert the Wotan-worshipping Meon, who is an honest, thoughtful pagan. They go fishing together and are caught in a storm; threatened with death—from starvation and cold—on an island, Meon scorns to do what so many Christians tend to do—'curry favour' with their God at the last minute; on the other hand, 'to desert one's fathers' Gods—even if one doesn't believe in them—in the middle of a gale'—that's not right. 'What would you do yourself?' Meon asks Wilfred. Wilfred was lying in Meon's arms : it was no time for subtle argument : so he said, 'No I certainly should not desert my God.' They are rescued: and Meon asks to be baptised—for, 'a faith which takes care that every man shall keep faith, even though he may save his soul by breaking faith, is the faith for a man to believe in.' There is also a less well-known fable, The Enemies to Each Other' *(Debits & Credits)* which gives a new version (based on Islamic mysticism?) of the Creation of Adam and Eve. First Gabriel is sent to gather clay, loam, coloured sands from Earth, with which to make man: but Earth objected, lest what is created from her may corrupt. She has no power to resist, but takes refuge in Allah. Gabriel gives way, and returns empty-handed. The same happens to Michael. But when Azrael is sent he ignores the pleas of Earth, because obedience to Allah is more important than pity: and so he makes man, but botchingly, for he tears substances from Earth not meant for the purpose, and mixes his own tears with them. And later it is revealed that the Almighty's compassion exceeds His wrath. The rest of the legend is about man and woman's fall, and their worship of each other instead of God.

It is a story of wit and wisdom, and shows a profound understanding of the foibles of man but the over-arching mercy of God. As Mr. Mason says (though he does not discuss this story) R.K. 'never shared that generalised optimism about scientific progress and a materialist millennium that was so prevalent at the time and which for want of a better name I call Pelagianism.'

What above all he was insistent on was integrity of belief. Mr. Mason limits himself to the tales, but one of the extraordinary poems shows this best: 'Tomlinson'—the sad creature rejected by Hell as well as Heaven, because he had only second-hand beliefs. It ends with Satan referring him back to Heaven—'And . . . the God that you took from a printed book/be with you, Tomlinson!' Towards the end of his life R.K. said that 'he would not be surprised if in a few years the monastic life was revived—men were seeking relief from

the burdens of a hard world and turning more and more to spiritual matters.' And there are moments—perhaps less rare as time went on—when he uses specifically Christian beliefs in a way that makes them integral to the theme he is treating. In the early 'Hymn Before Action' (1896) there is a stanza which is not unmoving—

> Ah, Mary pierced with sorrow,
> Remember, reach and save
> The soul that comes to-morrow
> Before the God that gave !
> Since each was born of woman,
> For each at utter need—
> True comrade and true foeman—
> Madonna, intercede!

—but one cannot believe it more than a borrowed convention. On the other hand, the fine poem 'Cold Iron' *(Rewards and Fairies)* owes precisely its power and unexpected culmination to the Cross of Christ: Iron, Cold Iron has been shown the 'master of men all' (it's power that counts)—yet the final power is the power of sacrifice, and 'Iron out of Calvary is master of men all.' Earlier a character of his says 'All Ritual is fortifying. Ritual's a natural necessity for mankind.' ('Interests of the Brethren', *Debits & Credits)* But that is about Freemasonry.

In 'Cold Iron' and some of the late tales the Christian implications are much more specific. Mr. Mason is excellent on these late tales—especially 'On the Gate', 'A Madonna of the Trenches', 'The Wish House' and 'The Gardener' (all from *Debits and Credits):* read him on these. And, for conclusion, what could be better than R.K.'s own:

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

[Reprinted by permission from "C.R.": the Quarterly Review of the Community of the Resurrection, No. 290, *Michaelmas* 1975]

NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome the following: *UK:* Misses M. Jeffrey, V. F. Short; Brig. A. T. Cornwall-Jones; Messrs C. M. Ardley, R. J. Bird, L. T. Gay, D. Hartshorne, D. J. Peters, J. Waring, C. G. Webb. *ITALY:* R. J. Jacques. *MALAYSIA :* M. C. ff Sheppard. *MELBOURNE* : Mrs R. Kennedy. *USA :* F. N. Currier, F. A. Gehres, Mrs J. P. Miller, Dr. & Mrs. E. G. Rawling (Ont. Can), J. Stedje; Illinois UL, Urbana; Base L, Kelly AFB, Tex; Toledo UL, Oh.

DISCUSSION MEETINGS

'THE RETURN OF IMRAY'

Walter Greenwood

Mr. Greenwood related how he picked up his red pocket *Life's Handicap* during an illness and glanced at the list of contents. As a friend of his named Imray had recently returned from India, he naturally began with the story, which was, in any event, an old favourite of his.

On this reading, a number of queries came to his mind, and he began to wonder about the possible reactions of other members of the Society and was later, as he says, 'emboldened to offer my services to our meetings secretary. He clearly has a charitable and optimistic nature (sic) because he engaged me, though of course he does not warrant the quality of what is to follow ! '

The Speaker indicated that it was his object to seek enlightenment, to provide a stimulant—or an irritant—and to get his audience talking.

Dr. Tompkins put this story in the category of the supernatural. *(The Art of Rudyard Kipling,* p 166 etc) and the Speaker accepted her expert view, but tentatively suggested that it might be characterised as a tale of revenge—or, at a pinch, a dog story! He was attracted to it because it contains one of his favourite characters—Strickland. In addition to the supernatural, there is also a strong element of mystery and a solution. He accepted that in some ways it may be better for a mystery story not to have a solution, a ploy which few can use with greater effect than Kipling. The dramatic quality of the dénouement makes up for any disappointment caused by the solution.

Mr Greenwood then proposed to treat this as a police story—Kipling as a crime writer ! He quoted the verse

> The doors were wide, the story saith,
> Out of the night came the patient wraith, . . .

that heads the story and also supported his other suggestion that it is a story of revenge even though barons, ermine and castles are far removed from its setting. This did not bother the speaker at first, as he was under the impression that the verse was a quotation, as it had a familiar ring. It is, however, in the *Collected Verse* (p. 553) with the substitution of 'Find' for 'seek' in line 6, and so must be by Kipling after all, which raises a further query—what inspired the verse? Mr. Greenwood confessed that he did not know, but felt that the verse did not inspire the story, which must reflect some actual disappearance and murder that Kipling heard or knew of.

It is, moreover, a matter for further speculation how much of the detail is the product of Kipling's imagination and how much is based on fact. Dr. Tompkins does not deal with this story in detail and only quotes one passage about the lightning that 'spattered the sky as a thrown egg spatters a barn door' (p. 265) and says . . . 'one sees the lightning, but pauses to wonder when Kipling was present

at such an occurrence ' By the same token, it is a matter of wonder how much of the detail—for example, the reason for the killing, the hiding-place of the corpse and the suicide of the murderer, is based on fact. Before turning to the story proper, Mr. Greenwood quoted from the Preface to the volume (P. ix).

> . . . the English do not think as natives do. They brood over matters that a native would dismiss till a fitting occasion; and what they would not think twice about a native will brood over till a fitting occasion : then native and English stare at each other hopelessly across great gulfs of miscomprehension.

and indicated how it illuminates the crime, and ties in with Strickland's comment (on p. 276) as to its cause.

> Simply and solely through not knowing the nature of the Oriental, and the coincidence of a little seasonal fever. Bahadur Khan had been with him for four years.

Now to the story, and the initial question 'What sort of a man was Imray?' At first blush he is young and inexperienced—'in his youth, at the threshold of his career . . .' unlike Strickland who 'knows as much of natives of India as is good for any man . . .' *(The Mark of the Beast,* p. 240). As against this, Imray was not completely raw because his murderer had been in his employment for four years (p. 276). Surely that was long enough to get to know something of the customs and beliefs of the local people, particularly since (p. 273) 'he was a good master and cherished his dependants'. This may have been only polite humbug, or evasion, but it was that cherishing which led to his murder.

The point is made several times in several stories in this same volume. Perhaps, as well as being 'guileless and inoffensive', Imray was a little dense! His occupation is not given, but he is obviously a Civilian, and his social life revolved around office and club, so that his contacts, apart from his household, were all with Europeans. Proficiency in billiards is well-known to be a sign of a mis-spent youth and he had no wife to teach him sense!

One is led to suppose that there was no handbook on India, its beliefs and customs, to guide newcomers, possibly because so many were the sons of serving officials of one sort and another. Old hands would, any way, pass on a lot of useful information, but it sounds as if Authority took a poor view of its servants (especially police officers) trying to get to know too much about the native community.

The first part of the story deals with Imray's disappearance, and poses another question—'why was the search called off so quickly?' One would think that the disappearance of an European would have been the subject of a strict investigation and not the perfunctory motions that took place. And yet, Morrowbie Jukes nearly achieved the unwanted distinction of disappearing without trace, and his predecessor in the sand-pit, 'B.K.' did. One can suppose that Lieutenant Golightly went a fair way, in that he lost his identity for a while. Mr. Greenwood could not believe that Strickland was there by accident—he obviously would have pursued the case to the end, as he ultimately did—the local police must have had dust thrown in their eyes, and when evidence like that in *The Incarnation of Krishna Mul-*

vaney is presented one can sympathise with the police officer who is supposed to act upon it !

It seems unlikely that Imray was a man who aroused much loyalty and affection in his colleagues, he was obviously a bachelor with no relatives in India and not a policeman.

There was, unfortunately, no doctor in the house to deal with Mr. Greenwood's next question—'What was happening to Imray's body during the months of hot weather between the murder and the arrival of Strickland?' It would doubtless have made its presence felt in a very short while, like the corpse in *Thrown Away.* Likewise, a throat cut from ear to ear would surely have bled over everything in sight? The police cannot have made much of a search of the bungalow—in fact one theory put forward during the Discussion was that while such a search might have been made, the officer concerned found himself in agreement with the murderer and reported that he had found nothing !

As to premeditation, the speaker felt that Bahadur Khan made no decision until the child died, and then turned to the knife as his natural weapon : the body probably mummified, and was not too badly attacked by the creatures that the roof harboured, as Strickland was able to identify it, although he might have been assisted by his intuition.

Next follows a thumbnail sketch of Strickland and his dog, and the story moves to the supernatural, the dog being used in the evocation of atmosphere—superb ! The spirit of Imray was a strong one, which appeared to the narrator's servant, but not so strongly to the narrator himself, or to Strickland, as they are Europeans. The dog, however, saw it clearly, and the description of her reactions concluding with 'Dogs are cheerful companions' epitomises the whole of Kipling's art.

Strickland obviously deals with all this as a police enquiry, and Mr. Greenwood was of opinion that he rented the bungalow so that it could act as a starting-point : it looks as if he also took Bahadur Khan into his service for the same reason. Murder is usually a family crime in Britain, so that if a married person is killed, one looks to see if the surviving spouse is responsible, perhaps, then, if a bachelor in India met sudden death, one looked at his servants.

Mr. Greenwood elaborated his theory, showing how Strickland had obviously enlisted the narrator as a witness after eliminating all possible hiding-places except the roof of the bungalow, and using the snakes as an excuse to examine it, playing skilfully on the feelings of the narrator to ensure that he stayed to the end of the drama. This was a superb example of a police officer doing his job and backing his hunches regardless of personal risk, so that when he has found what he is looking for he can say, almost without looking at the body, 'It strikes me our friend Imray has come back' and break the back of the snake. The supernatural part of the story is now virtually over : with the physical return of Imray the spirit departs, as the behaviour of the dog shows, and that apart from 'who done it,' is that. Strickland now applies himself to this problem . . . I took over most of Imray's servants' . . . sounds as if he has already come to the right conclusion. He knows that he will get no sense out of questioning them, and may even have heard of the death of Bahadur Khan's child: his knowledge of natives might have suggested that the

guileless Imray had done or said the wrong thing: anyway, unlike an Agatha Christie hero, he does not need to send for the butler, as his valet enters and makes polite small-talk about the weather and responds easily to Strickland's remarks about his former employer, keeping his wits about him for the trap concealed in the remarks about Imray going secretly to Europe. Bahadur Khan is obviously a man of cool nerve who might have seen the discovery of the body, and come in to see how the land lay. Strickland, however, is not deceived, and appreciates he is dealing with a dangerous antagonist, forces him to view the body, and in the presence of a witness, obtains a confession. The murderer takes the very reasonable view that, in his belief, the killing is justified, in that Imray put the Evil Eye on his child: he cannot face the disgrace of hanging, so steps on the snake and becomes, from that instant, a dead man, remembering in his last moments, his duty to his present master.

Powerful, almost Biblical writing that almost makes one sorry for such a noble fellow !

Mr. Greenwood concluded with another question—karaits are rock-snakes—do they get into roofs?

So, we come full circle: Imray made a mistake, but his spirit has obtained satisfaction and is quiet at last, Tietjens, who had endured conditions which would have been all right for a mere wife, but not a dog, was at last content to sleep under Imray's roof.

The members present expressed their delight in this able examination of what at first may appear to be a very slight story: various suggestions were put forward as to the origin of the verse used as a heading—one found it reminiscent of 'The Ancient Mariner', and another wondered why, when business took the narrator to the station in question, he then had nothing to do but stay in the bungalow with Tietjens.

Mr. Wade wondered why Strickland did not just look in the roof without more ado and Mr. Daintith pointed out that this was one of the few detective stories in which the butler really was the murderer.

Most of the questions that arose were answered in one way or another, and the meeting concluded with expressions of thanks to Mr. Greenwood

14 April 1976

RANDOM THOUGHTS ON KINGSLEY AND KIPLING

Brenda Colloms

Mrs. Colloms is the author of *Charles Kingsley, the Lion of Eversley* (Constable, 1975) and brought her great knowledge of Kingsley to consider the links between the two writers : both were associated in the public mind with patriotism, both lived in and loved the country and both became household words.

Kingsley was 47 when Kipling was born in 1865, and Mrs. Colloms mentioned the technical achievements between those two dates—the steamship *Savannah* crossing the Atlantic in twenty-six days, Jane

Austen producing *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey*—a world away from the Underground railway, Lister's antiseptics and Clark Maxwell's *Treatise on Electricity and Magnetism.*

Kingsley took an interest in soldiers, and wrote a tract for the men at the front during the Crimean War—*Brave Words for Brave Soldiers and Sailors,* explaining what they were fighting for, which seems to have given comfort to many, and led to an increase in his postbag.

Westward Ho! written in Bideford in seven months, was a great success and assured him a publisher for anything he wrote. His views tended to be impulsive, Imperialist and Tory, his writing for adults and children continued, and he was appointed to be a Royal Chaplain, the free-lance rebel becoming a pillar of the Establishment. He shared, with Kipling a facility for humorous verse and for turns of phrase which have become part of the language.

Many of his works are still in print, including *The Water Babies* and *Hereward the Wake.*

Unfortunately, space does not permit other than this brief note of a very interesting discourse—Mrs. Colloms dealt with several points from the meeting afterwards and received the thanks of those present at the conclusion of an instructive and entertaining session.

19 February 1976 J. H. McG.

LETTER BAG

THE MILL AT BATEMAN'S

Members of the Society who made the visit to Bateman's in 1975 may like to know that the restored mill has proved to be a great attraction.

Over 14,000 people have paid for admission, and this does not include National Trust members.

We have ground three tons of corn, and bagged and sold about 3,000 bags of flour, making a valuable contribution towards the cost of finishing the restoration.

Kipling's turbine-generator has been operative since 11th July, and, if we can find an outlet for the power, we may one day demonstrate its value in producing current at no cost.

The total number of visitors to the house during 1975 is over 36,000, and this compares with about 7,000 in 1962.

The Sussex Education Authority have decided to make Bateman's the subject for Class Projects during 1976, and propose to cover three sections, the house, the mill, and Rudyard Kiplings's work. The Voluntary Helpers are assisting in the preparation of the framework for these exercises.

While the steady increase in the number of visitors may be due to a variety of reasons, there can be little doubt that the School authorities are moved by a growing interest in Rudyard Kipling's work and the standards by which he lived. Every effort is being made during the close season to see that the voluntary workers who staff Bateman's are prepared to satisfy, and foster, this interest.

R. W. KING

KIPLING AND CATS

Apropos "Kipling and Cats" (June 1976). Perhaps the following letter from Bateman's, dated May 7/31 and addressed to two of my aunts (sisters of Florence Macdonald, mentioned by Prof. Carrington elsewhere in the *Journal)* might suggest to fellow ailurophils that R. K. was, latterly anyway, something of a cat-fancier himself. This would not be in the least surprising. Many of the Macdonalds were—and still are.

"Dear Cousins, I am just back from Egypt and I send you the promised charm for your Cat.

It represents Pasht, the Cat Goddess, and was guaranteed to me with many oaths as genuine. I really think that that may be true on account of its very worthlessness. It was found, as hundreds of such things are, in the dust of some excavating, and the type is not worth forging. I think the date may be about Three Thousand or so B.C.

The hieroglyphics at the back mean Protection and Truth. As a cat has nine lives, she needs less protection than any other beast, and no cat ever knew anything about Truth.

But try it on your Pussy, hung on the collar, and let us see if it brings good luck or not. If it doesn't, *get rid of it at once* . . .

Your affectionate Cousin Ruddy."

The emphasis on the last sentence is interesting and, I think, affirms his profound respect for the powers of the supernatural for good and evil. Unfortunately I have no certain knowledge of the success or otherwise of this tiny charm, but as I have it in my possession today, we must assume that nothing drastic happened to my aunts' Pussy.

MERYL MACDONALD BENDLE

AN ALMANAC OF TWELVE SPORTS

Kipling's *Verses on Games* are not, I think, among his best poetry; but they are probably worth the explanations requested by Mr Bryan C. Diamond in the *Kipling Journal* of March 1976.

The reference to candles in the opening and closing stanzas is not the origin of the phrase "The game is not worth the candle." Eric Partridge, *Dictionary of Historical Slang,* put the origin of this phrase at about 1550; and there is a French phrase, "Le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle", of about the same date, perhaps coined by Montaigne. The "game" referred to is cards, and the phrase originally applied to a game so dull that it was not worth the price of a candle to prolong it into the night. (Candles were cheap : *candle-ends* was a synonym for valueless rubbish). Kipling implies in the first verse that one need not make a heavy investment in games to get a great deal out of them; the last verse is more of a puzzle, but the "horrible tallowy socket" perhaps warns the reader not to overdo the interest in games, an idea which Kipling pursued two years later in *The Islanders,* with its unpopular sideswipe at "the flannelled fools at the wicket or the muddied oafs at the goals.'

Mr. Diamond's question about the *Rowing* verse is probably best answered by quoting from R. J. White, *Cambridge Life,* p.87 :

Kipling means that rowing coaches, notorious as martinets and greatly given to encouragement by means of profanity ("the curses of the Pit") exact from their subjects a disciplined response which the Pope and the Jesuits fail to achieve. The curses, by the way, are all the worse for being hurled not at names but at numbers—"Too much bloody digging at five ! "

R. H. LOCKSTONE (New Zealand)

RAIL ROAD MAGNATE

In the September issue, Mr. W. S. Tower, at the end of his article, "Who was Slatin Beeman?" appeals for help in finding out how Kipling came to know two railroad magnates, Mr. F. N. Finney and Mr. F. D. Underwood. In the December 1973 issue of *The Kipling Journal* I quoted a letter from Kipling to Underwood, dated 23 November 1895, telling how much he appreciated his naming two towns in Michigan after him. The letter shows that it was Mr. E. Kay Robinson, the famous editor of *The Pioneer,* who put the two men in touch with each other. The first sentence in the letter reads, "My friend and one time chief, Mr. E. Kay Robinson tells me that you would like to see a specimen of my handwriting."

It was through Underwood that he came to know Finney, who wrote him saying how much he enjoyed his works. Kipling replied with unusual warmth, and the two exchanged letters now owned by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. When Kipling needed information for the transcontinental dash in *"Captains Courageous"* he obtained it from Finney and used the exact figures he supplied, and even a name or two of different individuals he mentioned. When Finney went out and broke the record time described in the book, it was perhaps no great accomplishment; he was, after all, improving on a time that he himself had set up !

After Kipling returned to England in 1896, the Finneys visited him there; so far as I know, this is the only time the two men actually met.

, THOMAS N. CROSS

'MINESWEEPERS'

As reported in the *Journal* of March 1976, Charles Carrington's speech at the Society's last Annual Luncheon included a spirited recitation of *Minesweepers,* written in 1915, in which each verse concludes with the names of the vessels concerned:

"Unity, Claribel, Assyrian, Stormcock and *Golden Gain."*

We were then asked: "Where did Kipling find this gorgeous list of names, this 'jewel five words long', if I may borrow a phrase from Tennyson? Did he see these little ships in a row in the proper order, or did he spend hours of his night re-arranging them?"

At the suggestion of our Chairman an answer has been sought in Navy Lists and other records of the period. These show only *Stormcock* and *Golden Gain* as possible minesweepers. H. M.S. *Unity* was a destroyer in the Grand Fleet. The name *Assyrian* does not appear, though there was an *Alsatian* as an armed merchant cruiser and an *Azrael* and an *Asteria* amongst smaller craft. *Claribel* is also missing, but there was a *Clara and Alice* and a *Clarion.*

It is thus clear that Kipling could not have seen the five ships listed. Just as he did elsewhere, not least in his naval stories, he seems to have started from a factual or legendary basis and then greatly embellished it.

P.W.B.

HON. SECRETARY'S NOTES

Mrs. Bambridge. We have received the following message from Mr. J. M. Huntington-Whiteley, a member of the Society.

> "Would you please convey to the President, the Council and Members of the Kipling Society, my family's deep appreciation for the beautiful floral tribute sent on the occasion of Mrs. Bambridge's funeral."

Ead Baldwin. The Society has also lost a good friend through the death, on July 5th, of the 3rd Earl Baldwin of Bewdley, whose father, Stanley, was R.K.'s first cousin. Any members who did not hear his unforgettable "family" speeches at our luncheons in 1967 and 1971 should, for their own delight, read them in K. J.'s 165 and 180, though mere print cannot recapture their magnificent delivery.

No details as to the funeral having been published, we sent Countess Baldwin a small gift of flowers from the Society, "with very much love."

Lady Baldwin replied in a charming letter:

'It is with difficulty but also with pleasure that I write my thanks to the Kipling Society for that most beautiful bouquet I have seen or indeed ever received. When I saw those flowers I could only wish my husband could have shared them, so much would he have appreciated such a comforting gift.

'I can think of no Society that my husband would have regretted severing his connections with more than his beloved Kipling Society. It, and all its members held an unique position in his heart, and his admiration of the Society increased in years. I do not think a week went by without his referring to the well-being, or otherwise of the Society's work.

'His love and appreciation of that great man played an enormous part in his way of thinking about life.

'What can I say to you all for this thoughtful gesture of sending that bouquet to our home?

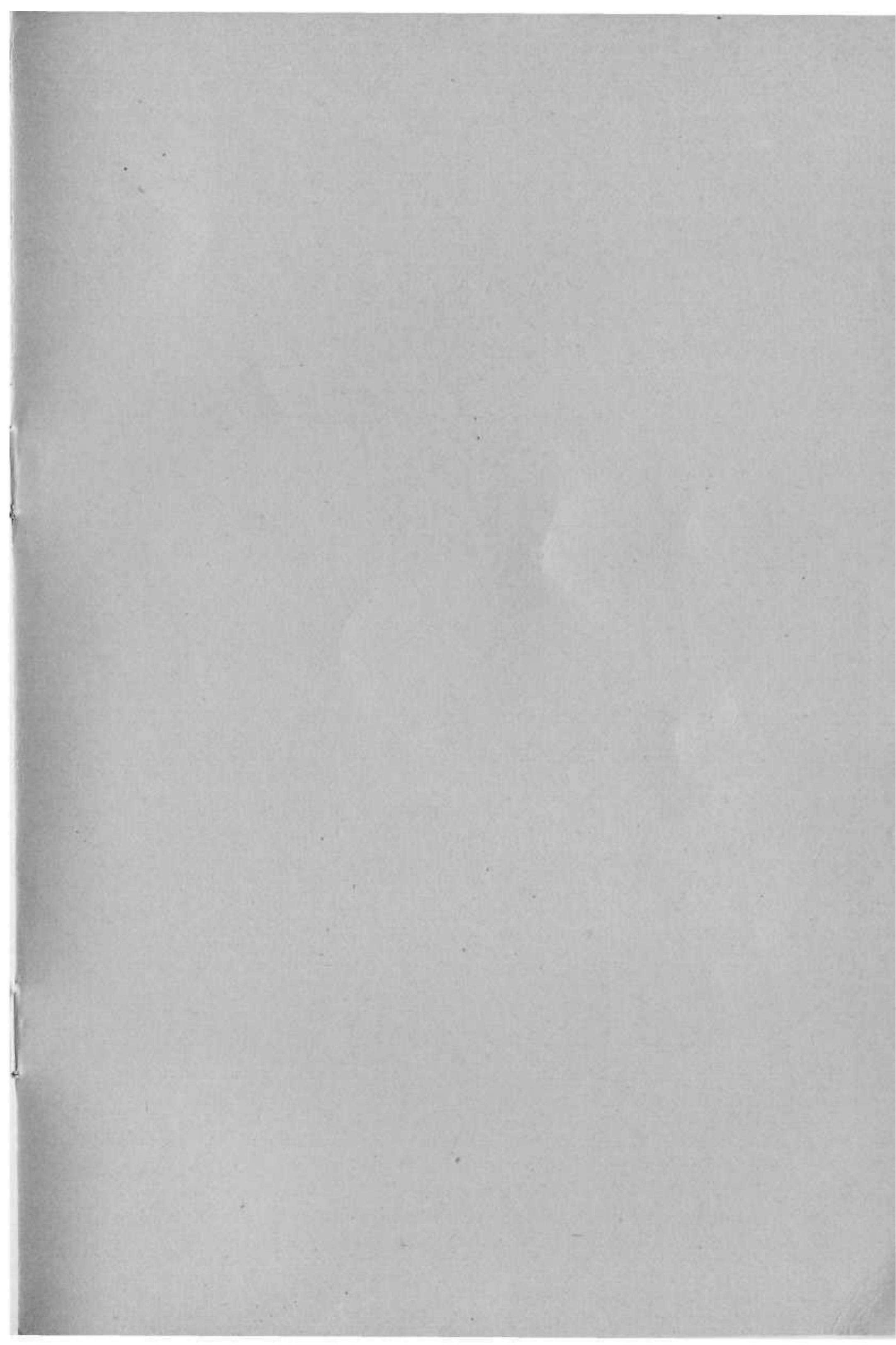
'Though no relation myself, I have long learnt of the love and reverence paid to Kipling by my husband, and his father before him.

'Please let all know of my gratitude . . . The heart attacks and a slight stroke came to him peacefully at the end. By his side there was, of course, a copy of Kipling's poems.

'My husband was, above all, a lover of men. We have all of us lost a great and wise man . . . I can only repeat my gratitude and tell you of the comfort those flowers brought to our home . . .'

Our Bateman's Visit, May 7th. As usual, publication dates have delayed this report on what is always our happiest gathering. At least two dozen of us came, the weather was grand, and Mrs Sutherland and her staff charming and helpful. The House and gardens were perfect, and we were allowed to climb all over the Mill. The shop was again a big lure and is well worth bearing in mind. Should you desire, say, a mounted copy of a single striking poem (e.g. "The Thousandth Man") try a post-card to the shop—their range is remarkable.

A.E.B.P.



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