



*The*  
**KIPLING JOURNAL**

Published quarterly by the

**KIPLING SOCIETY**



**SEPTEMBER 1964**

VOL. XXXI

No. 151

---

## CONTENTS

NEWS AND NOTES. . . . .	2
' MRS. BATHURST': A SUMMING UP. . . . .	6
REPORT ON DISCUSSION MEETING. . . . .	10
READER'S GUIDE TO 'THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP SEA'. Part I. . . . .	17
MEETING WITH THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY ...	20
LETTER BAG. . . . .	21

## 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, 18th November, 1964.

### DISCUSSION MEETINGS

**September 16th** at the Ulster Room, Overseas House, Park Place, at 5.30 for 6.0 p.m.

The meeting will be addressed by David Goddard, Esq., the Director of the B.B.C.'s television series of Kipling's stories in dramatic form. This will take the place of More Barrack Room Ballads, and a good attendance is much to be desired.

**November 18th.** 'Kipling's sense of mystery' will be considered by Doctor J. M. S. Tompkins, followed by discussion.

### ANNUAL LUNCHEON

The Annual Luncheon of The Kipling Society will **take place** on Friday, October 23rd, 1964, **at the Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, London, W.C.2.**

The Guest of Honour will be Dr. J. I. M. Stewart, **of Christ Church, Oxford**, author of 'Eight Modern Writers' (pubd. 1963), which includes a major essay on Kipling. He is, perhaps, better known to many readers as 'Michael Innes', author of many fine detective novels.

Application forms will go out this month.

# THE KIPLING JOURNAL

published quarterly by

THE KIPLING SOCIETY

---

Vol. XXXI. No. 151

SEPTEMBER 1964

---

## NEWS AND NOTES

### KIPLING'S 'NEW LOOK'

In a delightful 'fourth leader' on 3 April *The Times* took note of the sudden change in the treatment of Kipling in academic and highbrow circles where criticism is a 'science'. 'A chorus of surprised praise coming from all directions is audible. The highbrow critics have just discovered Kipling. Put onto the scent by a well-chosen collection of essays and a Danish professor's study, they have found, in the words of one of them, that "this awkward, unpopular writer" deserves their patronage to "restore the balance of Kipling's reputation." He has, they reflect with just a tinge of a blush, been left out too long in the cold... So we are urged to be grateful to Mr. Edmund Wilson and George Orwell for helping us to see the light that had failed. Now average readers of Kipling in Britain have never heard of Mr. Wilson, stimulating critic though he is, and they know Orwell best for other than his splendid excursions into literary criticism. They have just gone on reading — and buying — Kipling in blind ignorance of the ups and downs of taste in the higher circles of appreciation. Last year 120,000 copies of Kipling's prose works, in stiff covers and paper backs, were sold inside the Commonwealth. Best-sellers among these should, surely, have been shunned... the list is too long, too large in its sales, and too painful for exposure to highbrow eyes. And there is worse to come. Plans are afoot for televising a Kipling Indian story a week. What is behind it all? Does the secret of success lie in the simple fact that Kipling could tell supremely good stories? At any rate, writers who can do that are at the moment in short supply. Ideological up-to-dateness, sound views on social and international affairs, even daring treatment of sex are not always substitutes for the too nearly lost art of story-telling.'

### THE FLAG OF *THEIR* COUNTRY

The old order may be changing, but it changes slowly. *The Times* leader made a playful list of some of Kipling's best known books with reasons why the highbrow critics had disowned them until now: '*Stalky & Co.* (the old school tie, sadism, militarism, addiction to Latin), *The Jungle Books* and *Just So Stories* (ugh! what a nauseating brew of whimsy and anthropomorphic attitude to animals), *Puck of Pook's Hill* (history in the worst top-nation tradition that 1066 and *All That* killed stone dead for all right-minded people)', and spoke of *Kim's* 'ugly imperial setting'. Several critics of the Bodelsen and Rutherford volumes still accepted these views seriously and dished them up anew

in their reviews. Robert Nye in *The Scotsman* (4 April 1964; follows Edmund Wilson's lead in finding in the experiences at Southsea the key 'to much that is commonly loathed in Kipling — the bullying, the fantasies of violence, the worship of the strong man that he was not', but excuses much that used to be termed simple Jingoism on desperately-sought psychological grounds, wondering hopefully whether 'the whole unpleasant stress laid in [*The Light that Failed*] — and nearly everywhere else in Kipling, for that matter — on the clean strong simplicity of man-man relations and his concomitant contempt for women ("The Colonel's Lady an' Judy O'Grady / Are sisters under their skins!") may betoken some never-acknowledged homosexuality.' And he decides that 'Kipling was a lonely, gifted, guilt-ridden, self-tortured man, but he does not invite sympathy or understanding because he made little attempt to face whatever form "the abnormal" took in him. Instead he exorcised it — called it "Nigger", and dramatised his fear of life, of himself, by the old trick of praising men of action, sneering at men of the pen. We are offered too much hateful stuff about Gunga Dinn being "white, clear white inside"; not nearly enough about the black inside Rudyard Kipling.'

This 'blackness' Mr. Nye probes earlier in his article, deciding that 'the inner horror', the 'fierce desolation, the moods which left him — on more than one account of his own — as taut as a string about to snap; the profound fear of chaos, of madness, of "dirt", of cancer — different labels he stuck on the same thing at different stages — and which may be the "explanation" of much that appears mere unthinking silliness in his outlook. One begins to suspect, for instance, that when Kipling wrote "Empire" or "Law" he was engaged in a private fantasy; he saw his consciousness at such moments as a "square" of British soldiers threatened on all sides by screaming "Fuzzy-Wuzzies"...

The flag of psychology is waved more decorously by John Gross in *New Statesman* (12 June 1964). 'The standard modern recipe for restoring a fallen literary idol to favour is well known,' he tells us. 'Lay bare his wounds; show that he never felt more alienated than when most acclaimed, and that in his best passages he rejected the affirmations to which he owed his fame. If he had a gloomy final period when his popularity was on the wane, so much the better. This is a strategy which is in danger of being applied rather mechanically nowadays, but it must be admitted that Kipling fits the part very well.' Mr. Gross also finds that 'the harsh and loveless years with his foster-mother in Southsea, preserved in the grim little story of "Baa, Baa Black Sheep", left him permanently scarred". He doubts whether Kipling's 'imperialism sprang from a dread of ultimate emptiness and chaos', for 'it was a common enough fever to which he succumbed in that feverish *fin de siècle* decade. The Empire was not something which he invented to steady his nerves, but an 11 million-square-mile reality, and one which brought tangible benefits... In the end Kipling's philosophy, if that is the word, has to be reckoned as part and parcel of his impure, tumultuous gift. So does his overpowering sentimentality: the travel posters, the Wardour Street pageantry, the banjo tunes which you may despise but which you can never quite get out of your head'.

Finally Mr. Gross decides that Kipling's 'sophistication was only skin deep. It is in the world of myth or fable, where the moral issues have to be kept simple, that his imagination works most intensely. An adult reading the *Jungle Book*, for instance, knows perfectly well that in Kipling's scheme of things the Bandar-Log are to be equated with jabbering intellectuals, spineless liberals, etcetera. But the analogy is never actually insisted on, and can easily be put out of mind. It certainly doesn't disfigure a magnificent piece of writing like "Kaa's Hunting", where Mowgli is whisked through the tree-tops by the monkeys and rescued in a deadly battle among the moonlit ruins at Gold Lairs. In Kipling's books for children the slogans fade away, and the action itself is everything. Only through Kim and Mowgli could he recover his lost innocence, by prolonging the marvellous Indian childhood which in reality his banishment to Southsea had cut short.'

### LESSER BREEDS WITHOUT THE LAW

Naturally Kipling's most notorious line crops up in several of the reviews. 'It may be a relief to learn that the lesser breeds without the Law were meant to be, not Africans or Asians, but the rulers of Wilhelmine Germany — but why bring in breeds, anyway?' says Mr. Gross. Here he is following George Orwell's 1942 essay in *Kipling's Mind and Art*: 'This line is always good for a snigger in pansy-left circles,' wrote Orwell. 'It is assumed as a matter of course that the "lesser breeds" are "natives", and a mental picture is called up of some *pukka sahib* in a pith helmet kicking a coolie. In its context the sense of the line is almost the exact opposite of this. The phrase "lesser breeds" refers almost certainly to the Germans, and especially the pan-German writers, who are "without the Law" in the sense of being lawless, not in the sense of being powerless.'

Carrington (p.266) interpreted it even more definitely in the biography in 1955: 'the couplet gave much offence, especially among those who were sufficiently instructed in politics to appreciate that the cap fitted them. But the distinction between those who are "within" and "without the Law" is the distinction between the men of any class or creed who are humble because they submit to the Law and those who are arrogant because they over-ride it. By their words and deeds you might know them, not by their accents or the colour of their skins.'

Unfortunately a race that is even offended by its own classics and does not wish *Uncle Remus* to be reprinted does not, it seems, read either Orwell or Carrington — and apparently would not believe them if it did. The American periodical *Time* (8 May 1964) notes that 'Last week delegates approved the first new Methodist hymnal in 29 years. The song book drops some familiar samples of 19th century hymnody, such as Rudyard Kipling's *Recessional*, which Negro Methodists claim has an unmistakable racial slur in its reference to "lesser breeds without the law"...'

**'AUTHOR UNKNOWN'**

Editors in Southern Rhodesia do not seem even to have read Kipling. The *Gwelo Parish Magazine* printed sixteen lines of verse headed 'A Prayer' with the subscription 'Author Unknown' which the editor of *The Link* reprinted in his number for February 1964 just as it stood. In March, however, an article appeared on the front page beginning 'The Editor displayed his "ignorance of minor English literature" in a big way when he stated that the verses in last month's *Link* were by an unknown author. No item in *The Link* has previously produced such a shoal of letters from readers concerned to dispel his mental darkness!'

The first was from the Bishop of Matabeleland who identified the author as Kipling, though was guilty of describing him as a writer of 'minor English literature'. The next and many other identified the poem as 'The children's Song' from *Puck of Pook's Hill* shorn of its first and several other stanzas. But the last of the correspondents to be quoted rather let down the other well-read ladies whose letters preceded her's by referring to it as 'a grand old hymn... written by R. Kipling in 1865, and set to the music of J. Schein (1586-1630). Is there any doubt about this?'... If there were not, Kipling must have been the infant prodigy of all time, since he could not have been more than a day old when he wrote it.

**THE SECOND TRAMP, AND OTHER MATTERS.**

I was surprised, on my return home from the United States at the end of June, to find no letters about 'Mrs. Bathurst' waiting for me. My question: 'Who first suggested that the other tramp was Mrs Bathurst?' remains unanswered; but Admiral Brock's excellent summing up of the case is printed in the present *Journal*. It seems to cover almost all points that have been raised by critics, but in case members have anything to add on the subject, I would be grateful to receive letters or other communications on the subject not later than 3rd October for inclusion in the December *Journal*.

By the time the present *Journal* appears the series of Kipling's Indian Stories on the B.B.C. Television will be nearing its conclusion. It is much to be regretted that no information was received about the series in time for inclusion in the June *Journal*. Doubtless, however, members will have learned full particulars from the public press and have followed the experiences of Messrs. Stevens and Lockwood which got off to a good if slightly muddled start on 5 July with an excellent interpretation of 'A Bank Fraud' to which 'Naboth' was linked in rather too arbitrary a fashion.

R.L.G.

**NEW MEMBERS.** We are delighted to welcome the following new members. *U.K.*: G. W. P. Swenson; *DENMARK*: Prof. C. A. Bodelsen; *S. RHODESIA*: A. Harrison; *U.S.A.*: Mrs. A. L. Janes, Sr.; Dr. S. J. McKinley; Messrs. F. Brown, G. E. Millard, J. R. Stoltze; West Illinois University Library, Macom.

## 'MRS. BATHURST'

### A FINAL SUMMING UP

Doctors and lawyers only, that I know,  
 Do not mistake their views for final fact  
 But 'give opinions.' Give? Well, sometimes so —  
 The noun at least is modest and exact.

D.H.B.

It will be evident that some of the following ideas, though based on study, can be no more than opinions. Even when, for the sake of brevity, they may look like statements of fact, they stand open to correction and reasoned objections will be welcome.

### THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE (SEPTEMBER 1904) VERSION OF MRS. BATHURST

Neglecting a few trivial variations in punctuation, and capital or l.c. letters, there are 126 differences between this and the 'collected' text. Three or four introduce errors that did not appear in the magazine. The others are not very important. As Professor Bodelsen remarked, the *Windsor Magazine* was evidently so careful not to offend its most delicately-minded reader that there is no significance in the fact that in the magazine Mrs. Vickery 'died in 'er bed' but 'died in childbed' in the book.

The illustrations are devoid of merit, either as art or evidence. Mrs. Bathurst is shown as bovine and without a shade of charm. Pycroft and Mr. Vickery as depicted on their 'wet walks' through Gape Town would have been taken up on suspicion by any alert policeman. Mr. Vickery, dressed neither in uniform nor plain clothes, might well have been charged with having robbed a locker in an un-fashionable yacht club.

### CHRONOLOGY OF THE STORY

Though Kipling was, naturally enough, less punctilious about time than Mr. Bradshaw's railway timetables, he must have given the chronology of this story some thought. It was written in Cape Town in January and February 1904. The South African War, referred to in the past tense by both Pycroft and Mr. Hooper, had been ended — as a shooting war — by the treaty signed at Vereeniging on 31 May, 1902. The following sequence of events seems to fit;

Approximate Time	Event	Reference (Traffics and Discoveries)
Just before Christmas week, 1902	H.M.S. <i>Hierophant</i> arrived Simon's Bay from Mozambique.	p.354, 1.1-2.
Two or three nights	The gyroscope imbroglio detained Pycroft on board.	p.354, 1.10-14.
Christmas week	Pycroft's five 'wet walks' with Mr. Vickery in Cape Town.	p.358, 1.5.

- Late December, 1902 Mr. Vickery sent to Bloemfontein to load naval ammunition. p.361, 1.13-16. 'a month ago'
- Late March, 1903 Hooper found the two tramps in the teak forest. p.363, 1.28. 'four months ago'
- Late April, 1903 The meeting in the brake-van at Glengariff. p.346, 1.23.

### INFERENCES FROM THE CHRONOLOGY

The obvious, and vital, gap is the date of the *Hierophant's* leaving England for the Cape. A clue is suggested by Pyecroft's 'just now' (p.p.353, 1.1) but this might mean up to a year before; once a ship's company settled down to a foreign service commission (three years, at that date) time passed almost unremarked.

Pyecroft's reference to 'a troopship goin' to the war' (p.353, 1.29) amongst the films shown at the Circus 'biograph' suggests that they had taken a considerable time to reach Cape Town, but we have no indication whether Mrs. Bathurst's arrival in England occurred before the *Hierophant's* sailing or not.

The film may have reminded Mr. Vickery of a painful meeting before his own departure from England or of unhappy developments after it. Or again, it might have been his first knowledge of Mrs Bathurst's coming to England. In this case, the age of the other films might have indicated to him that she did not intend to follow on to South Africa, but we are given no line on this.

In fact, what is withheld from the reader throughout the story is so important that it is difficult to believe that the author could have done it inadvertently, in the course of pruning under the Higher Editing described in *Something of Myself*. (pp 207-8)

### SYMBOLISM IN THE STORY

From *Something of Myself* (pp. 190-1) we also learn that in *Rewards and Fairies*, published in 1910 :

'I worked the material in three or four overlaid tints and textures, which might or might not reveal themselves according to the shifting light of sex, youth and experience.'

Perhaps Kipling was already experimenting in this way in 'Mrs. Bathurst' and it may well be that, struck by the potentialities of the cinema, he aimed at reproducing some of its early characteristics, as Dr. Tompkins has suggested. Professor Bodelsen too may be right in supposing that the description of Mrs. Bathurst on the screen, walking on and on 'till she melted out of the picture — like — like a shadow jumpin' over a candle' may be meant to convey to us that Mrs. Bathurst had since died, though even the White Queen might have found difficulty in believing — at any rate before breakfast — his theory that the second orphan of the storm in the teak forest was the ghost of Mrs. Bathurst.

There is today a tendency to carry the reach for symbols to extremes and, with great respect to the commentators concerned, the idea that in describing the scene at Glengariff (p.339, 1.16 ff.) Kipling was trying to evoke a Classic Greek atmosphere is considered far-fetched by many

who know Simon's Bay and South Africa. Amongst the features mentioned in this passage which, if not unknown, are hardly characteristic of the coasts of either the Greek mainland or the Archipelago, are a profusion of drifted sand, moulded dunes, a crowd of Malays, a tiny river with running water in it in hot weather, a coastal railway line and a tide leaving a high water mark. One critic's inclusion of the 'Greek shops' purveying refreshments in his evidence of symbols is a *reductio ad absurdum*; a Simon's Town resident remarks derisively that these Greasy Dick-type cayfs could not lend an Attic flavour to the food they sell.

### WHAT DID NOT HAPPEN IN MRS. BATHURST'

While the information we have is limited, it may serve to eliminate some fallacies, or at least to narrow the field.

#### (a) The Character of Mrs. Bathurst.

Pycroft and Pritchard are the only witnesses. The usual tests of a witness's reliability may fairly be applied — and surely both would come out reasonably well, as witnesses go? — but to dismiss their evidence out of hand, as some commentators do, is to come down to the absurdity of the trial in *Alice in Wonderland*, conducted by the King of Hearts under rules made up as he went along. Even the elementary legal training given to simple naval officers stresses the weight that should be given to evidence from a witness whose bearing and manner carries conviction. Pritchard's faith in Mrs. Bathurst impressed the narrator deeply. (p.349, 1.11). Mr. Vickery's denial of responsibility for his wife's death, followed by 'That much at least I am clear of (p.362) is a tacit admission of some considerable guilt. Finally, the theme of the story is the effect of an innocent *femme fatale* upon a man who loves her against the grain of Fate. Why should we not accept Pycroft's: 'Whatever the wrong or deceit was, he did it, I'm sure o' that. I had to look at his face for five consecutive nights.' (p.362, 1.31-3)

Is it at all certain, as some assume, that even if Mrs. Bathurst had been shocked and angered on finding that she had been deceived, she would at once have forgiven and forgotten when Mr. Vickery became legally free to marry her? To have maintained her integrity as she did at Hauraki she must have been a woman of spirit, and we are assured she never scrupled to set her foot upon a scorpion.

#### (b) Mr. Vickery's Feelings at the Circus.

Why should anyone imagine that Mr. Vickery's governing emotion was fear? His remark to Pycroft that the prospect of being killed might actually be a temptation (p.359, 1.7-8), coupled with his counting the minutes to the next performance, like a schoolboy looking forward to the holidays, suggest a man with no interest in life beyond his obsession of the moment. Guilt, remorse, perhaps anguish for star-crossed love would account for his expression, as described by Pycroft.

#### (c) The Identity of the Second Tramp.

The usual arguments for supposing that the second victim of the storm was Mrs. Bathurst seem to be :

- (i) The *Windsor Magazine* illustration shows, or might show, a woman.
- (ii) The story is entitled 'Mrs. Bathurst.'

(iii) If not Mrs. Bathurst, why is the second victim introduced at all?

The value of the magazine illustrations for any purpose has already been questioned. This particular one has been produced in evidence by both sides. Was there not a Sherlock Holmes story in which the gimmick was a human readiness to see what one hopes or expects to see? An impartial view here might admit the possibility of the second figure being a woman — but not a woman of Mrs. Bathurst's charm.

On (ii), we need go no further than the Pycroft stories to find support for Professor Bodelsen's contention that Kipling's titles are not always particularly appropriate or revealing. 'Their Lawful Occasions' has no close connection with the action of the story, and 'Mrs. Bathurst' has more to do with her influence and impact than with the woman herself.

Dr. Tomkins has suggested a possible answer to (iii).

In the June *Journal* R.L.G. put forward some cogent arguments against the second tramp being Mrs. Bathurst. We have already noted the distinct possibility that had Mrs. Bathurst been pursuing, she might have reached South Africa before the story opened. We may also note Inspector Hooper's remark 'The man who was standing up had the false teeth' (p.364, 1.16-7) and go on to ask :—

Would anyone — outside a *True Confessions Magazine* — have referred to Mr. Vickery's companion as his 'mate' if it had been a woman? (p.364, 1.13)

Could a woman of Mrs. Bathurst's personality, on a mission like hers, have escaped notice in a small community like Simon's Town?

Would she not have been obliged to get in touch with the *Hierophant* ?

Would she, short of ready money, set about looking for a man on the run in the middle of Africa?

If they had met, would Mr. Vickery not have made prodigious efforts to get her out of the bush?

If Pycroft had supposed the second victim to be Mrs. Bathurst.. is it conceivable that his closing remark would be his epitaph on Mr. Vickery — 'Thank Gawd 'e's dead.'?

### WHAT MAY HAVE HAPPENED IN MRS. BATHURST.'

Further thought makes it increasingly evident that this cannot be answered in detail or with complete conviction. Pycroft, with more information than we have, made his 'head ache in that direction many a long night' without success.

As a rough working hypothesis, something of this sort might be considered :

With the aid of subterfuge or deceit, concealing his marriage or holding out hope of its dissolution, Mr. Vickery gains Mrs. Bathurst's love and confidence in New Zealand. On his return to England, he makes an effort to resume his family life. Mrs. Bathurst, either in misplaced hope or a last despairing effort, comes to England and discovers the deception. This may have led to her death, as Professor Bodelsen infers, or to an irreparable breach with Vickery who, torn

by remorse and regret, is driven to the "dumb lunatic" condition noted by Pycroft. The film at the Circus stimulates him momentarily but in rekindling his love, it proves the last straw. We need not suppose that his Captain deliberately connived at desertion : the Bloemfontein duty may have been arranged in the hope of allowing him scope to pull himself together. In fact, he had reached the yield point and after his last visit to the cinema headed blindly for oblivion and met death in the teak forest.

### LAST THOUGHTS.

1. Ernest Hemingway's posthumous book, *A Moveable Feast*, reveals that when he was learning to write in Paris in the '20's, he omitted from one of his short stories the real end, which was that 'the old man hanged himself, on the basis, he said, 'of my new theory that you can omit anything if you know that you omitted, and *the omitted would strengthen the story and make people feel more than they understood.*'

Did Kipling anticipate Hemingway by twenty years?

2. An analysis like this has no more to do with the real merits of the story than a doctor's post mortem with the greatness of a man.

P.W.B.

## REPORT OM DISCUSSION MEETING

*March 11th, 1964, in the Ulster Room, Overseas House*

The chairman announced his pleasurable duty of welcoming, on behalf of members, the presence of Mr. K. K. Singh who was introduced by Doctor Tompkins. Mr. Singh, who comes from Bihar, is a post-graduate student of London University, and of his own volition is working on Rudyard Kipling. His opinions on the subject of *Kim* were in consequence looked forward to as being of special interest and carrying unquestioned authority, and so it proved in the discussion.

The promoter of this evening's discussion (who was also the chairman) then delivered the following discourse.

When I rashly undertook to devote this discussion to a comparison of *Captains Courageous* with *Kim*, it was with no intention of indulging in adulation of their author but, having in recent weeks read both books from cover to cover (for the nth time), I find it hard to adhere to my decision to abstain.

For, without a doubt, both books, judged from any standpoint, are masterpieces and I do not feel at all obliged to add the words 'of their kind'.

After the notice of this meeting was published a member said to me 'But why compare *those* two books?' To me the reason was obvious but I see that the question is valid and deserves an answer. Kipling's full-length works of fiction are four in number, *The Naulakha*, of which he was only part-author, *The Light That Failed*, which stands by itself

as 'the book that failed', but withal a glorious failure; and thus we are left with the two very obvious subjects of comparison, for both are about boys, both are to all intent without the love interest deemed necessary in a novel, if we except the mother-love which can be discerned in *Captains Courageous*.

*Captains Courageous* is the senior judged by date of publication (1897); *Kim*, in gestation for some years, was published in 1901, and so I shall begin their consideration on that basis, but first I must join issue with Doctor J. I. M. Stewart, who in connexion with his otherwise well-balanced essay on Kipling in his book *Eight Modern Writers*, indexes *Captains Courageous* under Children's Books, and in the body of his essay tells us that it is a far less interesting book than *Kim* — to which we may give for the moment our qualified concurrence — 'overloaded with efficient second-hand descriptive writing, and dedicated to the mild proposition that judicious adventure and moderate hardship benefit spoilt children'. As neat an example of damning with faint praise as I have met latterly. It is Doctor Stewart, by the way, who says in the same essay: 'Some of the late sea stories are unabashed orgies of oafish humour — for example 'Their Lawful Occasions', a dreadful mixture of music-hall badinage ('You buy an 'am an' see life') and naval knowingness . . .' Dear me, Doctor Stewart, have you ever attended a *real* music hall? And did you read 'The Bonds of Discipline' with senses shut to all the finer implications of that triumphant farce? I find it hard to reconcile this impercipient with Doctor Stewart's acknowledged excellence as a writer of fiction himself.

However, to return, here is what was said, on first publication of *Captain Courageous* by *The Athenæum*, a periodical of no mean repute in those days: 'Never in English prose has the sea in all its myriad aspects, with all its sounds and sights and odours, been reproduced with such subtle skill as in these pages', while, to bring the matter up to date, Professor Bodelsen in his recently published book *Aspects of Kipling's Art* has referred to the impressionistic technique by which, for example, the sounds and movement of the sea are evoked in *Captains Courageous* and *Their Lawful Occasions* by means of a number of carefully selected verbs and adjectives. So much for second-hand descriptive writing, oafish humour and the rest of it.

To leave the professionals for a moment, one of your overseas members, who as a small girl of ten or thereabouts was taken to see the film of *Captains Courageous* and cherishes the memory, and the book, now says as a mother of 40 years: 'On *Kim* and *Captains Courageous*, I don't know whether I can contribute anything useful, but I'll tell you one thing: in both books what fascinated me most was not the central character — more or less a prop to hang the story on — but the surroundings, the atmosphere and the way in which you had the very sound and smell of it all in your nostrils while reading it — the sea and the fish in one case and the dust, stinks and blazing sun of India in the other. They are two of the very few books in which one becomes totally immersed, as in another element. And with a wild desire to have been there, too, doing all those things — fishing from a dory in a fog, having coffee and fried cod's livers for breakfast (which, I may

say, I would refuse with disgust were they offered to me today, which only goes to show how rapt in the story one can get). None of this seems very useful to the discussion, though, except for the intense appeal both books make to the spark of adventure concealed in us all. Also, as a child I identified myself completely with the central character, which explains why I *lived* the story.'

And this leads us to the central characters. Kim occupies the undisputed centre of his stage and can wait his turn. But in *Captains Courageous* the central character, or hero, is certainly not Harvey but, I suggest to you, the sea in its varied moods, coupled with the schooner *We're Here* and her collective ship's company. Harvey, you may well say, starts by being a real 'stinker', as detestable a young sweep as Kipling knew how to create. The story concerns itself with his conversion to a respectable member of, at first the small society of the *We're Here* and later the society of the world at large, or so we are expected to infer. But he never engages our affections as Kim does and his conversion, although accomplished by ropes' ends, seems far too slick, as if it is going to a predictable pattern, as indeed it is. Dan, his mate, with a slight love interest referred to as 'Hattie S.' becomes a far more likeable character, whether from the author's set design I find it difficult to say.

Leaving the characters for the present, I was just about to say (pace Doctor Stewart) that this book, and *Kim*, are adult books without any serious question, and then I lit upon Doctor Tompkins's remark in her unchallenged *chef d'oeuvre*, *The Art of Rudyard Kipling* about 'stepping outside the circle of the children's books, *Kim* and *Captains Courageous*'. Now, anything Doctor Tompkins says is assured in advance of my respect and this made me pause for reflection. Having reflected, I feel bound to say this. I did not read *Captains Courageous* until I was a grown man (though perhaps a late developer — not like Kim) and I read it without any feeling that it was a work for juveniles, or even adolescents, any more than I did, many years later, that other masterpiece *The Sword in the Stone*, and I think I may fairly state, as I did some weeks ago in this room about *Treasure Island*, that it is a book for boys (and girls) of from seven to seventy, my present age. And so is *Kim*, only more so, and I believe that Doctor Tompkins on reconsideration would agree.

(Here Doctor Tompkins intervened to say that, owing to an idiosyncrasy of punctuation, her remark carried a meaning she did not intend.)

I had thought at first to compare these stories a chapter or two at a time but soon found that neither would gracefully yield to this treatment. Any such intimate comparison I must therefore leave to you in discussion. About *Captains Courageous* what strikes me most forcibly, as one whose profession and leisure interests have been intimately connected with the sea, during the whole time I am reading, is this. Kipling was not a sailor, not even I believe an amateur one, certainly not up to that period of his life. I do not think that he went to sea for any length of time, if at all, on the Grand Banks — at any rate not for a whole

season's fishing. He admittedly got most of his information from conversations ashore with Doctor Conland and others on the waterfront, and wrought it, as he himself says, at second hand, into a tale that I defy anyone, seaman or another, to read without the impression that he is getting a first-hand account of day-to-day life on board a fishing schooner. The more I read this story, the more that impression remains with me. To me it is as remarkable a feat as if the author had successfully described an America's Cup Race from this side of the Atlantic.

Here is the schooner in a fog. Harvey has been told to ring the bell at short intervals. (The speaker then read from pages 162 to 165). Do you find it difficult to believe that that was not written by an eyewitness?

Here is another passage. The caplin have schooled (collected in shoals). (The speaker read from pages 176 to 180). Does that sound as though the writer was ashore? Conrad could not have done it better. And, let us confess it, Kipling throughout is using his technical know- ingness to the top of his bent, and chuckling the whole time, I shouldn't wonder. His descriptions of seamanship are not faultless but they are adequate.

Pausing to mention my belief that Kipling's 'still underided slip' (vide *Something of Myself*) is to be found on page 124 of this story, I will try to give you an interim opinion of it vis-a-vis *Kim*. This story of a boy might well have been the forerunner, in the author's mind, of the later, and greater, book—a trial horse, so to say. It is manifestly not as good as *Kim*, a book that has won its place on the high summits of world literature. But, if the latter had never been written, I venture to say that the former would have been reckoned as one of Kipling's most brilliant performances in descriptive prose. As it is, the better was killed by the best. But to return to *Kim* and its place among the heights, Mr. N. C. Chaudhuri, a novelist of Delhi, from whose work I shall quote unashamedly in discussing the book, says that Kipling is the only English writer on India (in imaginative literature) who will live. Compared with him, he says, Mr. E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* is pinchbeck. Having read its dramatised version, by an Indian lady, I feel bound to say that this is not much, if any, better.

So, turning to what has been aptly called 'The Finest Story About India — in English' (see *Kipling Journal* No. 138, June 1961), and, by Doctor Stewart, Kipling's 'nearest approach to a successful novel in a book for young people', the most important point I find about *Kim* in my recent reading is that it is virtually an epitome of all his Indian stories (except the Simla ones) and the first volume of *From Sea to Sea*, and none the worse for that I hasten to add. Indeed, its four hundred pages are a veritable *multum in parvo*, crammed with the richness and colour of the Indian scene. And as for Kim himself, who could fail to be captivated by his guttersnipe exchanges with the denizens of the bazaars, contrasted strongly with the genuine, but never sentimental, affection and respect in his talk with the lama. Stewart says that he is a 'boy's dream boy', but I am not sure whether he had not better have called him a universal dream boy. Doctor Tompkins finds a considerable

likeness between Kim and Huckleberry Finn, and between the broad general plan of the two stories, but finally states the major difference between the boys: Huck, owing to his circumstances, a waif and a fatalist, and Kim, who 'is started right—uniquely right' and 'finds helpers to speed his progress'. Two things are said by Doctor Tompkins which I feel to be essentially true: that 'the beauty of *Kim* lies largely in the figure of the lama, which is drawn with great delicacy' and that 'the special tenderness in the writing of *Kim* has much to do with the opposition of age and youth'. I myself have always placed Kim in my special gallery of boys, all *gamins*, and all engaging, which includes, besides Huck Finn, Booth Tarkington's Penrod, Mo Burdekin from a book by an Australian author, and another Australian urchin in a book called *Saturdee*.

And now Mr. Chaudhuri, who is worth quoting at as much length as time will allow. He says that 'in *Kim* its author wrote not only the finest novel in the English language with an Indian theme, but also one of the greatest of English novels in spite of the theme. This rider is necessary,' he goes on, 'because the association of anything in English literature with India suggests a qualified excellence, an achievement which is to be judged by its special standards, or even a work which in form and content has in it more than a shade of the second-rate. But *Kim* is great by any standards that ever obtained in any age of English literature.' That is well and generously said. Later in his article he says: 'But Kipling's politics, which even now is something of a hurdle in the way of giving him a secure place in English literature, and which certainly brought him under a cloud during the last years of his life, is no essential ingredient of his writings. Kipling the writer is always able to rise above Kipling the political man . . . ' Coming to particulars, *Kim* would never have been a great book if it had to depend for its validity and appeal on the spy story, and we really are not called upon to judge it as an exposition in fiction of the Anglo-Russian rivalry in Asia. Kipling's attitude to war and diplomacy had a streak of naïveté and even claptrap in it, which made Lord Cromer, in whom high politics ran in the blood, once call him, if I remember rightly, a cheeky beggar.' 'No one else,' says Mr. Chaudhuri, 'has brought home more powerfully the grandeur and misery of the dual rôle of the British people in India.' 'His greatness in this field lies rather in the creation of individualized national and historical types than true individuals.'

Having condemned 'Without Benefit of Clergy' as an instance of Western proneness to falsify the theme of Eastern love, and the author's romanticization of the bazaar prostitute, he goes on: 'But it is none of these things which constitutes the greatness of *Kim*, although even these are suggested here and there in the book. It is the product of Kipling's vision of a much bigger India, a vision whose profundity we Indians would be hard put to it to match even in an Indian language, not to speak of English. He had arrived at a true and moving sense of India which is almost timeless, and had come to love it . . . ' But the book is specially important in this, that through it Kipling projects not only his vision of the basic India he knew so well, but his feeling for the core and the most significant part of this basic India.'

'There are in *Kim*', says Mr. Chaudhuri, 'not only entrancing descriptions of the Himalayas, but a picture of the green phase on the great plain that is uncanny in its combination of romance and actuality. We Indians shall never cease to be grateful to Kipling for having shown the many faces of our country in all their beauty, power and truth.' Later he says that Kipling is not that tiresome creature the notebook novelist of India, and deals with Kipling's choice of a Tibetan and a Buddhist as an exponent of India spiritually. 'Last of all', he concludes, 'he saved the book from all suggestion of pedantry and humbug by putting it in the most English of all English forms of fiction, a serio-comic saga . . . He has made the serious irresistible by lightening its burden.'

And now, so that you may savour some of the richness of the descriptive writing in *Kim*, let me read two passages about the Grand Trunk Road. (The speaker read from pages 86 to 89, and 90 and 91).

With *Kim* as a character I have only one fault to find. I always feel that he is a bit too precocious, even allowing for his gutter upbringing. To me, *Kim*'s mental agility at thirteen is about the same as my own at twenty-three, but then, as I said before, I may have been a late developer. But, as the lama said : . . . never was such a *chela*. Temperate, kindly, wise, of ungrudging disposition, a merry heart upon the road, never forgetting, learned, truthful, courteous. Great is his reward !

I should like to have read you most of the ribaldries of that Indian Doll Tearsheet, the almost invisible Sahiba, but it would have entailed traversing almost the whole book. I will content myself with the following passages. (Pages 105 to 107).

Now it is your turn to discuss and compare, and I hope that I have provided sufficient pabulum for you to do it.



To the gratification of the speaker, this discussion, among a larger audience than of late, proved to be from all the signs and by later accounts, the most entertaining we have had for some time, inevitably led by the penetrating observations of Doctor Tompkins, ably supported by the rest of the company, in particular Mr. Singh with regard to the Indian *locale*.

There appeared to be a doubt whether in fact Kipling, at the date of writing *Captains Courageous*, was as innocent of experience in small craft as had been stated, and it was suggested that he sometimes went to sea on the Grand Banks. *Something of Myself* was mentioned, but Kipling makes it quite clear in that book that Conland provided the details and the author recorded them. But Conland — 'may he be forgiven' — sent him to sea in a pollock-fisher, and the remark has every sign of being a reference to a very short and isolated trip.

Because of this circumstance Doctor Tompkins considered *Kim* to be a much more profound work, since large portions of it were drawn from the author's personal experiences. This opened a lengthy discussion from all sides, Mrs. Scott-Giles placing special emphasis on,

for example, his night wanderings in Lahore when he was alone, the family having gone to the Hills. Others put forward the theory that *Kim* was a complete absorption of the whole of his life in India, particularly as a child. Arising out of this, the suggestion was made that in his early period as a newspaper-man he was probably at first odd man out, not being a member of the Indian Civil, Police, Forestry, or P.W.D. services and must for a time at least been thrown on his own resources, which he employed to such good effect.

Miss Punch trenchantly denied the possibility of any real comparison of the two books, but at once encountered opposition from Mr. Walker, in whose opinion although *Kim* is bursting with Kipling's genius, *Captains Courageous* is in fact a supreme example of his *special* genius : that of extracting the utmost professional information from others and then reporting it in the manner of the master he was. Sir William Leggatt made an apt comparison with Nevil Shute's *A Town Like Alice*, written entirely, he informed us, at second-hand. John Masters was again paraded for our inspection as the second Kipling, but without noticeable effect, while *Hindoo Holiday*, by J. R. Ackerley was promptly put in the pinchbeck class.

A pleasant, and it seemed justifiable, comparison was made between the Sahiba and the lorry driver's wife in ' Aunt Ellen ', but with regard to the latter it has always seemed to the writer of these notes that her allocutions suffer through not being transmitted to us as her direct speech. If only the author had done this, it might have stood up to comparison with Master Rabelais in some of his choicer moods.

On the subject of Kim's precocity, Mr. Winmill held that a boy ' brought up native ' might well at the age of thirteen have acquired a mature outlook on many matters closed to his European brother, and this led Doctor Tompkins to mention that the first illustration of Kim on Zam Zammah by J. Lockwood Kipling shews him as misleadingly young. Mr. Singh agreed that the precocity of children in India is most marked, and also confirmed a statement that Indians are invariably kind to both English children and those of their own races. He also referred to the statement on page 87 of *Kim* about the sharing ' with beautiful impartiality ' by Hindu and Mussulman of wayside shrines and said that this impartiality in religious observance was common in the villages but not so much to be found in the cities ; moreover that it is only at times of the great feasts such as Mohurrum that religious intolerance runs rife. The caste system generally speaking, he said, is now confined to the rich, the poorer classes being by no means strict in its observance.

Finally, reverting to *Captains Courageous*, the illustrations were praised by the experts for their remarkable accuracy and felicity, but it was said that Kipling was really guilty of an anachronism in this book, seeing that the conditions he wrote of had largely disappeared when he wrote it, for instance the fishing schooner operated on a family basis had given place to fleets run by large business concerns. And, with the remark that this book was reporting *in excelsis* the meeting closed with expressions of satisfaction on all sides.

P.W.I.

# READERS' GUIDE TO 'THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP SEA'

by P. W. Inwood

This story first appeared in *The Graphic* (London), Christmas Number 1895, and next in *The Pocket Magazine*, January 1896. It was collected in *The Day's Work*, 1898.

Scribner's Edition	Vol. XIII, page 181
Sussex	" VI, " 155
Burwash	" VI

On its first appearance (*The Graphic*) it was illustrated by a full-page (9" x 11½") drawing in colour by (Sir) Frank Brangwyn, who was later a Royal Academician and famous as a mural artist.

It is hoped that the following exposition will help the reader to find his way among the rocks and shoals of the long-standing controversy among the engineers, some of whom say that the story is technically irreproachable, while others claim that it is far from being technically accurate and the repair work described in it utterly impossible in the circumstances.

so that the reader may judge for himself with some confidence, the professional advice has been secured of F. E. Langer, Esq., O.B.E., M.R.I.N.A., M.I.Mar.E., formerly Principal Technical Adviser to the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Service of the Royal Navy, to whom the warmest thanks of the author of these notes are due. He winds up the argument (conclusively it is to be hoped) with the following opinion: "The Story to my mind is technically accurate as to the description of the propelling machinery and equipment which would be fitted in a ship with compound engines of vintage 1850-1870.

"The repairs described in pages 168-175 would be technically impossible with the primitive facilities available. Faced with a similar situation, I would have attempted to transform the engine into a single-cylinder propulsion unit. It would have to be non-condensing if the air-pump was damaged beyond repair, or, alternatively, condensing allowing the condensate (water) to drain to the bilges. I should reduce the boiler pressure to 30 lbs. per square inch and use salt water for boiler-feed."

But, after all, if the fictional repairs had not been performed there would have been no story — to our great loss.

Title. It comes from the well-known phrase "between the Devil and the deep sea" (not, \*as is often said nowadays "the deep blue sea", which arises from a confusion with the students' song ending with the lines "Mar-ri-ed to the mer-ma-ids at the bottom of the deep blue sea", to be found in the *Scottish Students' Song Book* under the title " 'Twas in the broad Atlantic"). The phrase signifies being between two evils, equally hazardous; between Scylla and Charybdis. Cf. The herd of swine in Luke viii, 26 ff.

page 148, Heading. *Sailing Directions*: These are a series of Admiralty publications, known to seamen as the "Pilots" (e.g. "Channel Pilot", etc., according to the area dealt with), covering the whole of the navigable parts of the globe, issued supplementary to the

Admiralty charts, which are published for the purpose of meeting the needs of the seamen in all parts of the world. The information provided in the Sailing Directions is remarkably comprehensive.

page 148 line 3 *nine hundred ton* : 900 tons nett, or register, tonnage, presumably.

*iron* : As steel was not introduced into shipbuilding until 1876, iron would be normal for a ship of this period.

*schooner-rigged* : A schooner is a sailing vessel with two or more masts, all fore-and-aft rigged (as distinct from square-rigged) At the period of this story many ships were equipped for sail propulsion in case of an engine breakdown, and in fact a few such were still at sea as late as 1920.

line 5 *tramp* : Strictly speaking, any ship sailing to a recognized schedule between port and port is a liner, but the term is usually confined to passenger ships. Others, picking up freight, or a charter, where it offers, are known as tramps.

line 7 *sail extremely close to the wind* : For some reason, not easily discoverable, the landsman is prone to refer to questionable tactics, or sharp practice, as sailing close to the wind. The good helmsman, however, sails as close to the wind as is possible whilst getting the utmost speed from his craft. This is called "sailing full-and-by". He may have to "pinch a bit" to fetch a mark but that is not sharp practice.

line 10 *Aglaiä* : Literally "The Bright One". One of the three Charities, or Graces. The others were Euphrosyne and Thalia, her sisters.

line 19 *Admiralty Courts* : In England, the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Division of the High Court of Justice, responsible for dealing with maritime cases.

page 149 line 1 *the mariner cannot tell or act a lie* : Cf. "Poseidon's Law", the prefatory verses to "The Bonds of Discipline" (*Traffics and Discoveries*) : "Behold a law immutable I lay on thee and thine, That never shall ye act or tell a falsehood at my shrine". This pleasant fancy was probably evolved by Kipling himself.

line 6 *Mackinaw salvage case* : Probably a disguised reference to an actual, but now untraceable, case.

page 149 line 11 *entering harbour at full speed* : After colliding with two objects at full speed, it would be rash to go to sea without an inspection for under-water damage. Entering harbour at full speed suggests that the master, or pilot, or both, were drunk or maniac.

page 149 line 17 *Noumea* : The capital of New Caledonia, a Pacific Island to the east of Australia and a dependency of France. A penal colony was maintained at Nou Island in New Caledonia until 1896, and this explains the reference to "certain gentlemen."

line 20 *Shah-in-Shah* : An elaboration of the title of the King or Emperor of Persia, meaning King of Kings.

line 28 *sparrow's-egg blue* : Earliest editions gave it as robin's-egg blue, referring to the colour of the egg of the American robin, which is properly a large red-breasted thrush. The alteration was made to satisfy English readers.

line 29 *Odessa* : Russian port on the Black Sea.

page 150 line 2 *stevedore* : More commonly known nowadays as a dock labourer.

line 8 *name changed as occasion called* : A ship of British register which this was, in order to change its name, must have the intention notified by the owner to the Ministry of Transport (in those days the Board of Trade) and publish a notice to that effect in the principal newspapers, so that objections may be lodged if necessary. The mere obliteration of one name by another is quite a different matter.

line 12 *underwriters* : The insurers. In England, members of Lloyds.

*signal station* : At all the principal ports abroad, signal stations are maintained by Lloyds for reporting the movements of ships, which reports are subsequently published daily in *Lloyd's List*.

line 30 *Haliotis* : The widely distributed genus of molluscs called "ear-shells" or abalone or ormers. The shell yields mother-of-pearl, which might seem to have some bearing on the ship's employment.

page 151 line 3 *trying-out* : The whaling term for the boiling of blubber to produce whale-oil.

line 5 *speed... four-wheeler* : Say eight knots, which was probably her economic speed.

*semi-inland sea* : It will be observed that the locality and nationality of this region is carefully hidden. Pygang-Watai is entirely fictional.

line 9 *puss-in-the-corner* : A child's game.

line 24 *eleven knots* : Presumably her full speed. Twelve knots mentioned later, is most unlikely for a ship of this size.

page 152 line 1 *four flags* : The International Code of Signals. The early system of flag-hoists of the British Navy was soon extended to the merchant marine and copied by other nations. This led eventually to the adoption of an international code of flag signals which is now universally used. It is based upon the use of several flags of different shapes and colours, and messages are sent by varying the relative positions of the flags in the hoist. A code book which gives the meaning of each arrangement of the flags is part of the equipment of every vessel, either merchant or warship.

page 152 line 8 *some five inches in diameter* : Probably a shell of 4.7" or thereabouts.

line 9 *a practice, not a bursting charge* : In naval gunnery it is customary to give a practice shell no explosive charge, the space being filled with salt or sand for ballistic purposes. There was all the less need for an explosive shell since the shot was aimed across the bows. The damage described could have been caused by fragmentation on impact with a heavy object.

line 16 *forward engine* : The propulsion unit of the *Haliotis* was a compound reciprocating steam engine. Barring sail, it could hardly have been otherwise in the year of grace 1895, since although Sir Charles Parsons had introduced his compound steam turbine in 1884, its first application to marine propulsion was in the

"Turbinia", which astonished the world at the Jubilee Review of 1897, while the turbo-electric drive and the diesel internal combustion engine were still a distant dream.

From the details given in the story, the engine was a single unit driving a single shaft and propeller. A ship of this period, size, type and speed would not normally be twin-screw.

It was clearly a compound engine, as is suggested on page 169, the advantage of which is that it uses the expansive properties of steam in two stages or expansions, thereby producing more work from the heat input. The two-cylinder simple engine of the era from Watt to the middle 1850s used steam in one stage, thereby losing much heat or energy into the condenser circulating water. Compound expansion is the most outstanding improvement in engines of the piston and cylinder type since the time of Watt (1736-1819).

All marine reciprocating engines today are stage-expansion engines, that is, steam expands in stages from the highest-pressure cylinder, through the intermediate stages (cylinders) and finally exhausts in the condenser and then returns to the boiler as feed-water. In a compound engine there are two cylinders, the high and low pressure; in a triple-expansion engine there are three stages (cylinders); and in a quadruple-expansion four.

In referring to the forwards engine, Kipling departs from marine engineering practice, in which the whole unit by which a shaft *it* driven would be called an engine, and the individual cylinders described as the "forward (or H.P.) cylinder" etc.

From this and the subsequent narrative it will be seen that the author starts by describing the damage to the forward cylinder of two, situated side by side (not in tandem), and disposed vertically, not flat.

*(To be continued)*

## **OUR JOINT MEETING WITH THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON**

This, the first meeting with another Society for many years, (if, indeed, there has ever been one before) was held on 6th May 1964 in the Great Hall of the Royal Commonwealth Society. It was very well attended by both sides, and we feel that some account of the proceedings might be of interest to members who could not be there, particularly Overseas members.

The meeting was held at the suggestion of the Sherlock Holmes Society. We did not wish to reject the idea, but the difficulty of finding a subject was at once apparent. They are not a "Conan Doyle" Society, but treat their idol as if he had really lived. To have compared Kipling's whole works with only a fraction of Doyle's would have been out of balance, but as Doyle once expressed the belief that he and Kipling both had a strong influence on Youth we concocted the "motion" that *Stalky & Co.* (which even to-day is read by many young folk) exercised a greater influence on Youth than

Holmes. Such a discussion could of course, only be conducted in a light-hearted spirit, as an excuse for a get-together.

For this reason the Opener for us aimed at showing that the meeting was fully justified, since Stalky's and Holmes's adventures had several features in common — and that the influence on Youth of *both* heroes must have been deplorable! He compared Holmes's "Three Students" (a flattering description, incidentally, for Stalky and his pals) with the juggled exam-paper episode in "The Last Term"; the maiming of sheep's hindquarters in "Silver Blaze" was set alongside the bombardment of cow's rumps with catapult bullets in "Stalky"; and finally he showed that "Who-Done-Its" were not the sole preserve of Holmes, since a very definite example was provided by the episode of Rabbits Eggs "rocking" King.

This opening appeared to be well received by the company, but unfortunately its *motif* was not maintained. Instead of quoting from different stories to support their contentions (which would have been delightful) most of the later speakers dealt in vague generalities, and in fact hardly a single Sherlock Holmes story was mentioned by name. Boys at school had been asked how many read or listened to both lots of stories, and the figures (detrimental to us) were solemnly read out to the company. A library attendant was reported as having said there was not now much demand for *Stalky & Co.*, and it was claimed that the existence of the Baker Street Irregulars showed that Holmes's influence was still maintained. For our side Mrs Scott-Giles made, as always, some sympathetic interventions, while Mr. Inwood — in a brave attempt to revive the comic spirit — asserted that as a boy Stalky came to him as a blinding flash of light, in face of which all other school stories shrank to nothing, and which had had the worst possible influence on him — turning him into the cheerful *bon vivant* that he now claims to be. And we must not omit the lovely contribution of a lady of the Opposition: "As a boy my husband worshipped Stalky. He was expelled from school." The most penetrating comment came from Lady Leggatt, who said that Stalky's *good* influence was exercised through parents, to whom the book showed, with pitiless clarity, what young people were apt to think of their stuffed-shirt elders.

The meeting, therefore, can only be said to have earned six marks out of ten. We did, however, learn from it how such things should be handled, and a higher percentage will certainly be won if similar affairs are ever held again.

A.E.B.P.

## LETTER BAG

### KIPLING'S BURMA

Unless writing with personal knowledge as his background, Kipling was liable to slip up over place-names and even geography. He visited Rangoon and Moulmein for a few days in March 1889 (Carrington) and visited the Shwe Dagon and the pagoda at Moulmein where he 'fell deeply and irrevocably in love with a Burmese girl'. This was only four years after the Annexation of Upper Burma, when the Pacification was

nearly complete ; and from this visit sprang ' The taking of Lungtungpen ', ' A Conference of the Powers ', ' The Ballard of Boh Da Thone ', ' Georgie Porgie ', and best known of all, ' Mandalay.'. One has only to look at a map, without having lived there, to realise that ' Looking eastward ' should be ' Westward ', where the sun ' was droppin' slow ' over the Gulf of Martaban. Were one to look eastward it would be to the vast rolling timber-covered hills of the Ataran valley.

Three more points about ' Mandalay '. There are no flying fishes in the Irrawaddy; Burmese women do not play a banjo or anything like it; and for one of them to say to an Englishman ' kala lo lo ' would be positively unthinkable. But doubtless one must excuse poetic licence; after all, it is a poem and not a treatise.

The chief point about ' Lungtungpen ' is that it is not and could not be, a Burmese place-name. Perhaps he was half-remembering Sinbyu-gyun (white elephant island) which is a village on the bank of the Salin river just above where it joins the Irrawaddy below Pakokku. Although stationed there for some years I have never heard a whisper of the ' Lungtungpen ' episode, though the locals reminisced about the events of 1885.

The story told in ' A Conference of the Powers ' rings more true, though the Burmese for ' Dacoit ' is ' Dah-mya '. Da-ku doesn't mean anything.

But ' The Ballard of Boh-Da-Thone ' rings very true. (For ' Kathun ' read ' Katha '), ' Georgie Porgie ' on the other hand, with its flavour of ' Lispeth ', is so idealised that it does not. After all, it was then a long way from Burma to India; and once a ' Burma man ' in those days before the last war but one, always a Burma man. Presumably the same was true of the women.

A.E.N.

## PRIVATE SIGNALS

In the *Journal* for September, 1960, the late Commander R. D. Merriman, D.S.C., R.I.N., referring to a mention of ' day and night private signals ' in ' Their Lawful Occasions ', remarked :

" Private Signals " is the fruit of R.K.'s reading in naval history. It is a further proof that the volumes of the Navy Records Society in his study were not there for nothing. The term was used up to and after the time of the Napoleonic Wars, but by the 1860s the phrase was " secret Signals " or " Secret Code ".

It is, of course, perfectly true that Kipling was a keen member of the Navy Records Society ; he was, in fact, on the Council of the Society for several years at the beginning of the century. It is quite possible that he may have first met the phrase in one of its volumes, but the rest of Commander Merriman's will not stand examination. " Private signals ', as a term for Recognition or Identification Signals, survived colloquially well into the 1900s.

Admiral the Hon. Sir E. R. Fremantle in his memoirs, ' The Navy as I Have Known It 1849-1899 ', wrote that when he was commanding

H.M.S. *Doris* in the Detached Squadron in 1874 :

'The " private signals " were exercised by the Admiral occasionally . . . " Private signals " are signals between one ship and another intended for use in war time, as an enemy could masquerade under false colours and he might even have got hold of our flags and signal book.

These signals are naturally very confidential and secret ; and are given into the captain's hands by the port-admiral or his secretary, before sailing . . . At the time I am speaking of, they consisted of a question and answer according to certain rules '.

Admiral Fremantle gives no further clue to the nature of the question, but just as an hypothetical example, the game of cricket could be used as the basis for questions which none but the Island Race (and some of ' the Old Dominions ') would be likely to answer correctly. The process would, however, take time. The danger of this was illustrated in Hitler's War when H.M.A.S. *Sydney* was trying to establish the identity of a strange merchant ship. The latter, a disguised German raider, feigned stupidity and Dutch nationality until she could disclose her character with a torpedo. The two ships destroyed each other like the Kilkenny cats. The *Sydney*, much the more powerful ship, left no survivors. This should not have been possible.

Amongst the signals that have been used are signal flags in various combinations, coloured lights or rockets at night, and brief signalled groups of letters as Challenge and Reply, like a password and countersign, which can be changed at specified intervals. It is well known that signals of this type were in use at Jutland in 1916. One disadvantage was that they were easily reproduced by the enemy ; a smart signalman in a ship challenged by light could copy the signal, dot by dot and dash by dash, just one or two behind, and have a sporting chance that the trusting challenger might then present him with the Reply as well. Confidence had to be placed in all ships changing over simultaneously at the appointed time. One of the battle cruisers who had had her ' crib ' to the signals for the night blown overboard asked a consort to supply the missing data. This she obligingly did, but with an unshaded light that could be read by an enemy. The information materially assisted the Germans to hit first in the night encounters that occurred thereafter.

The difficulty is to devise a signal that will be swift, unmistakable and foolproof without at the same time being easy for the enemy to pick up and duplicate. There were interesting developments in the last war and naturally the attempt was made to blind the enemy with science. As long as there is any human factor, however, there is always a chance of the wrong people being fooled.

P.W.B.

## BOMBAY —A CENTURY LATER

In December 1954 I spent about two weeks of my vacation in Bombay. In a booklet, issued to the forces, I read of the Art School where Kipling had spent early boyhood but no one to whom I spoke seemed to know anything about it. My companion on this holiday was

not interested in Kipling, so it was really only by chance that one day, going by bus to Crawford Market, I was thrilled to see the notice board "Sir Jamsetjee Jijibhoy Art School." The building, as I remember it, is two storeyed, plain in style and would pass unnoticed in any Western country. It is set back among tall, well-grown trees. The grounds are grassed and park-like though there are few or no flower beds. The street in which it stands is quiet. That is pedestrians walk on the footpaths and do not spill out onto the road, and the traffic is not congested. Cars, cycles, rickshaws, buses, bullock carts, horse carriages, taxis and pony carts move freely along. The reverse is the case at the nearby Crawford Market and to see the marble reliefs, by Kipling's father, which are above the main entrance to the Market one had to launch out into the free-for-all and get across to the opposite side of the road. I suppose of the thousands who every day pass along this way, only a few would notice the reliefs.

The Market is a controlled bazaar with comparatively well constructed stalls, cement flooring and with concessions to cleanliness and health; but stretching out behind it is the real Indian bazaar area. Flimsy shelters, box-like stalls and shops, every inch of space on either side of the footpath used up for the display of wares. Anything you need can be purchased here. Second-hand goods from the thieves market; someone, squatting in a corner with a few bits of leather, awl, tacks etc., to mend your shoes on the spot; the umbrella mender with his equipment — a bundle of old umbrellas and ribs; food of all kinds from that displayed in a prosperous looking shop with mounds of sticky looking Indian sweetmeats to the poorest of the poor with a piece of grubby cloth spread near the gutter, with pathetic little heaps of carefully arranged peanuts set out on it. And the crowds. Kaleidoscopic in colour and movement. There is nothing, I think, of such absorbing interest as these Indian bazaars. Here, probably, Kipling would be taken by Ayah or Bearer — without his parents' knowledge — and later when able to be free of control could have wandered here at will. I seem to remember that he was sent to England when quite young but anyway I imagined that as a boy, he, as any young child living in India does, would quickly absorb Indian ways and thought and have a better knowledge of the colloquial speech than any adult after years of study. So I pictured him almost worshipped by a very varied and wide circle of Indian friends, unconsciously storing away vivid impressions of Indian people, their dress, manner of speech and way of life. A vivid impression too of all the rich and varied sights, sounds and smells (and I don't mean the unpleasant ones) so that later, in a few words, he was able to re-create them in such a way as to turn ones heart over with home-sickness for India. So much for my imaginings.

As I had so little information to pass on to you I wrote to a friend who is on the staff of a school for European children in India. She replied saying that neither she, nor any other members of the staff, had even known that the Art School was there nor that of any connection with Kipling in Bombay. She told me though of several holidays she has had in the Mowgli country.

The mission bungalow where she stayed is only a couple of hundred yards from the Waingunga River, though not in the wildest part. It is tiger country and nearly everyone has a tiger story to tell. One night, travelling by bus, she was very interested when the conductor and a passenger in the midst of a loud and heated argument suddenly subsided. Her friend told her the argument was over the fact that the passenger would not, or could not, pay his fare. It was all over when he said "Well you can't put me down in this tiger infested country." She had the Council Rock pointed out to her though the missionaries said there is the more likely place well away in the jungle. She was impressed with the fact that in some of the tiny villages both people and village would be the same, still, as when Mowgli saw them.

When next in Bombay she plans to visit the Art School, so I hope that some time in the future I shall have something much more informative and interesting to pass on to you.

Miss M. J. REEVE (Sydney).

#### ' MY SUNDAY AT HOME '

Mr. McGivering enquires [*Kipling Journal*, No. 149, p. 18] after the railway background to the tale, *My Sunday at Home*. Rudyard Kipling and his wife, during their New England period, spent the summer of 1894 visiting his parents who then lived at Tisbury, Wilts., on the old South-Western main line. The story, *My Sunday at Home*, was written there as Kipling revealed in a letter to E. L. White, quoted in my 'Life' (p.215). The local colour of this story is clearly based on the neighbourhood of Tisbury and the name 'Framlyngname Admiral' is probably a parody of the many picturesque village-names thereabouts, such as Fonthill Bishop, Sutton Mandeville, Teffont Magna, etc. The reason why Kipling left the train was that he was staying at Tisbury nearby this village to which he gave the fanciful name.

This story has acquired a new dimension since Dr. Tompkins has drawn attention to the imitations of Thomas Hardy's style which it contains.

CHARLES CARRINGTON.

# The Kipling Society

Founded in 1927 by J. H. C. BROOKING, M.I.E.E.

## *President:*

R. E. Harbord, Esq.

## *Vice-Presidents:*

C. L. Aines, U.S.A.

Mrs. George Bambridge.

Countess Bathurst.

Professor C. E. Carrington

E. D. W. Chaplin.

Maj. Sir Brunel Cohen, K.B.E.

Professor Bonamy Dobrée, O.B.E.

J. R. Dunlap, U.S.A.

T. S. Eliot, O.M.

W. G. B. Maitland.

Sir Archie Michaelis, Australia

Carl T. Naumburg, U.S.A.

The Rt. Hon. Lord Woolton.

## *COUNCIL:*

*Chairman:* F. E. Winmill.

*Deputy Chairman:* P. W. Inwood.

Lt.-Col A. E. Bagwell Purefoy.

Roger Lancelyn Green, B.LITT., M.A.

M. R. Lawrance.

Mrs. G. H. Newsom.

Mrs. C. W. Scott-Giles

J. H. McGivering.

Philip Randall.

Mrs. F. Short.

J. R. Turnbull, M.C.

T. L. A. Daintith

*Hon. Treasurer:* M. R. Lawrance.

*Hon. Librarian:* J. H. McGivering.

### *Hon. Editor:*

Roger Lancelyn Green, B.LITT., M.A.

### *Hon. Secretary:*

Lt.-Col. A. E. Bagwell Purefoy

### *Hon. Auditors:*

Milne, Gregg and Turnbull.

### *Asst. Secretary & Librarian:*

Miss A. M. Punch.

*Hon. Solicitor:* Philip Randall.

## *Offices:*

323 High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

Tel. Holborn 7597

## **Melbourne Branch :**

### *President:*

E. J. Batten,  
16 Albert Street, East Malvern,  
S.E.5, Victoria.

### *Hon. Secretary:*

J. V. Carlson,  
33 Mathers Avenue, North Kew,  
Victoria, Australia.

## **Victoria, B.C. Branch (Canada) :**

*President:* Mrs. D. B. Dunbar.

*Vice-President:* M. C. H. Little.

*Hon. Sec.:* Mrs. A. R. Cornwell, 2-1422 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C.

## **Hon. Secretary, U.S.A. :**

Carl T. Naumburg, 210 West 90th Street, New York 24, N.Y.