The KIPLING JOURNAL

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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 —
18, Northumberland Avenue, London, W.C.2. (Tel. 01-930 6733).
Be sure to telephone before calling, as the office is not always open.

THE KIPLING SOCIETY

Forthcoming Meetings

COUNCIL MEETINGS

At 50 Eaton Place, S.W.I, at 2.30 p.m.

Wednesday, 21st June, 1972. Wednesday, 13th September, 1972.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At 50 Eaton Place at 2.30 on Wednesday, 13th September, 1972, to be followed by Council Meeting, as above.

DISCUSSION MEETINGS

At St. George's **Club,** 4 Wilton Mews, S.W.I, at 5.30 for 6 p.m.

Wednesday, July 19th, 1972: Lt.-Col. A. E. Bagwell Purefoy will open a discussion on 'Marklake Witches', 'A Doctor of Medicine' and 'The Eye of Allah'.

Wednesday, September 13th, 1972: Mr. T. L. A. Daintith will speak on "Kipling thou shouldst be living at this hour, England has need of thee—!" True or false? Has Kipling any relevance today?'

Wednesday, November 15th, 1972: At The Lansdowne Club, Fitzmaurice Place, Berkeley Square. Mr. Roger Lancelyn Green will give a talk, with slides: 'In Quest of Kipling's India'.

ANNUAL LUNCHEON

The Annual Luncheon of the Kipling Society will be held at the Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, London W.C.2, on Wednesday, 15th November. The Guest of Honour will be Brigadier Sir Bernard Fergusson, GCMG, GCVO, DSO, OBE: a great Kipling lover, who served under F-M Lord Wavell (our second President) almost continuously for 15 years, and was on his staff five times.

Application forms will be sent out in September or early October. **Note that this date is a month later** than **usual.**

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NEWS AND NOTES

"NEVER THE TWAIN"

During the first week in February at the Greenwich Theatre, and during the last fortnight of the same month at the Mermaid Theatre, Puddle Dock, this 'the original Brecht-Kipling Show' was staged with considerable success. The Kipling Society was represented at Greenwich on the first night by the Chairman of Council, Mr. S. W. Alexander, Mr. Harbord and Miss Punch.

'Fascinating parallels between the Leftist protests of Brecht and the right-wing patriotism of Rudyard Kipling are the basis of *Never the Twain,* a capital little show now at the Mermaid', wrote John Barber in *The Daily Telegraph.* 'Devised by John Willett and performed with relish by a company of six, this anthology discovers an iron hardness and hard irony in both poets, besides a common liking for the Indian Army as the vehicle for their bitter verse.' And Irving Wardle in *The Times* concluded an even more complimentary review by asserting that it was 'Altogether a rich idea, splendidly realized.'

The most interesting items were the song from 'My Great and Only' with Brecht's companion piece "The Ballad of the Girl and the Soldier" from *Mother Courage;* "The Young British Soldier" paralleled by "The Song of the Cannon" from *The Threepenny Opera;* a dramatic performance of 'The Garden of Eden', from *The Story of the Gadsbys;* and Brecht's "Surabaya Johnny" to set against "Mary, Pity Women!", with the versions of "Mandalay" by each writer.

BRECHT AND KIPLING

'Most people think of Kipling as a true-blue Tory writer and Brecht as a true-red Communist, so it may seem odd to link them as we have done,' wrote Mr. Willett in his programme note. 'But anyone who has read at all deeply in Brecht is aware that he was much influenced by Kipling, particularly during the 1920s. He read Kipling in translation, borrowed lines and themes from him, and in due course translated various poems himself.

'Once we started to build the programme, all sorts of cross-connections came to light. Brecht's "Ballad of the Girl and the Soldier" which he included in his first book of poems and later took into *Mother Courage,* is derived from Kipling's song which the latter claimed to have written for an unidentified music hall artist at Gatti's-under-the-Arches, probably at the end of the 1880s. Kipling's attitude to the music hall matches Brecht's, so does his liking for popular music and the banjo, and even his indifference to questions of 'originality'. "An' what he thought 'e might require, 'E went an' took—the same as me ! " Either of them could have said this of the other.

'The "Song of the Cannon" from *The Threepenny Opera* is pseudo-Kipling. Brecht also wrote a long 'children's poem' called "Soldiers Three". *Mann ist Mann* is again a free variation on this idea: three soldiers press-gang an unfortunate civilian to complete their four-man unit . . . He saw the *Gunga Din* film—again featuring a trio of soldiers, now risen to commissioned rank—in Sweden around 1940, and clearly enjoyed it against his better judgement . . .

'In all this we hope that a slightly different picture of the earlier writer will emerge, reminding listeners that a man who made such an impression on his fellow-poets (T. S. Eliot and Auden, as well as Brecht) cannot be quite such a die-hard idiot as is sometimes imagined. Kipling in this context seems to belong in two traditions that are very remote from the imperial Establishment with which he so often gets associated. Brecht saw him more as an heir to Rimbaud's 'Le Bateau Ivre' and, further back, the ballads of Villon which he himself likewise copied and adapted. But Kipling was also a unique spokesman for the private soldiers whose language he tried to use, and this puts him midway between Bücjner *(Woyzeck)* and Hasek *(Schweik):* two other authors whose work had a powerful influence on Brecht. It is this plebeian strain in Kipling that Brecht too shared, both in his concern with the lower orders and in his love of popular art, and that makes Kipling seem a startlingly modern writer today. Even so well-known a work as "Recessional" is an astonishing anticipation of our imperial decline—if decline is indeed the right word . . .'

KIPLING IN THE THEATRE

"Recessional" certainly seems to be very familiar today. A line from it, 'Pomp of Yesterday' gave a name for an exceedingly bad television play with a splendid cast headed by Robert Flemyng and Rachel Kempson that was wasted on such a clumsy and overwritten treatment of a subject that could have made a most moving drama : the unworldly and long-retired Indian Army Officer faced suddenly with the "higher cannibalism" of the ignorant anti-Imperialist as exemplified only too well in the B.B.C. 'British Empire' series. The first two stanzas of "Recessional" were sung with good effect in John Mortimer's *A Voyage Round My Father* at the Haymarket—a fascinating and amusing "case-history", though hardly a play, in which Michael Redgrave gave a notable performance.

Even Kipling's only original play, *The Harbour Watch,* is not being overlooked. Mr. G. Stevens-Cox of "Birling", Mount Durand, St. Peter Port, Guernsey, the well-known antiquarian bookseller, manager of The Toucan Press, and a leading authority on Thomas Hardy, writes :

'We have recently been entrusted by the Executors to catalogue and sell the papers of the late Virginia Vernon. Included in the collection are many unique items associated with early Twentieth Century theatrical productions, for Mrs. Vernon's husband (Major Frank Vernon) was a stage manager, author, producer and impresario. He was a friend of Galsworthy, Bennett and Edmund Dulac; and he helped to produce Rudyard Kipling's play *The Harbour Watch.* Amongst the papers catalogued for sale is the producer's own typescript of that play which was used for the original performance at the Royalty Theatre in 1913. The interest of this unique item is enhanced by the fact that it is interleaved with copious manuscript notes relating to stage directions. There are

also elaborate details of the intonations and inflections to be adopted by each actor. Several of the speeches show signs of revision, some sentences having been excised because they contained too much esoteric service slang.'

Any Kipling collectors interested should write to Mr. Stevens-Cox at once. *The Harbour Watch* has never been published, although in the past copies seem to have been made and circulated—presumably from the original deposited for licensing in the Lord Chamberlain's Office at St. James's Palace. But the present typescript is, of course, made unique by the manuscript notes and alterations.

The play, it will be remembered, was first produced at the Royalty Theatre, London, on 22 April 1913, as a curtain raiser to St. John Hankin's *Thompson.* 'In plot it is the merest trifle,' wrote the reviewer in *The Stage* of 24 April 1913, 'but it has in it at least one character who may give the piece a good deal of success. This is the bibulous Royal Marine, Edward Glass, who is made a most diverting personage as represented by Mr. G. F. Tully.'

The other characters were represented by A. B. Murray as Pyecroft, Lawford Davidson as Albert Blashford, H. Lane Bayliff as William Agg, W. Lemmon Warde as Corporal Walters, and Marjorie Day as Jenny Blashford. It was revived (once again produced by Frank Vernon) on 15 September with much the same cast, except for Luke Forster and Campbell Cullen who took over the parts of Pyecroft and Agg.

Frank Vernon was born on 6 March 1875 in Bombay and spent his earlier years in India before going on the stage in 1894. He was probably too young to have known Kipling in India, but none the less their common birthplace may have formed some link between them. After a successful but not outstanding career as an actor, Vernon became Stage Director at the Royalty Theatre in 1911 under the Vedrenne and Eadie management. He volunteered for the Army Ordnance Dept. in 1915, was promoted Major in 1917 and twice mentioned in dispatches. After the War he re-opened the Little Theatre in conjunction with Vedrenne and continued to direct a series of outstanding West End productions. He also adapted several plays for the stage and wrote books on theatre production and the contemporary theatre. He died on 17 March 1940.

BRITISH IN INDIA MUSEUM

This splendid venture at Sun Street, Colne, Lancashire, opened at the beginning of April. 'This museum,' says its prospectus, 'is to be devoted to all aspects of the British in India. Two years ago a building was purchased in Colne and steadily since that time we have carried out the necessary structural alterations. On view will be paintings, photographs, coins, medals, stamps, uniforms and other interesting items. There will also be a large working model railway of the line from Kalka to Simla.'

Opening times between 1 April and 30 September are Wednesdays 2 to 8; Saturdays 10 to 6 and Sundays 2 to 6. For the rest of the year Saturdays 10 to 5 and Sundays 2 to 5.

There is an interesting booklet, *The British in India; a Miscellany of Articles and Photographs,* issued for the opening, containing an article by Professor Carrington on 'Kipling in India', and others by various writers including an account of Cooper's Hill by A. R. Astbury, Lord Curzon by David N. Dilks and 'The British in India : Some Mis-

conceptions' by Lady Vera Inglis, who lived in India from 1912 to 1945 and has some interesting comments on the truth of Kipling's picture of British India and the falseness of E. M. Forster's "his jest has pilloried us for all time".

KIPLING IN THE ASCENDANT

Mrs. Leigh Ferris sends us a copy of the February number of *Overseas,* published by the Overseas 'League, with a pleasant article on Kipling in India called 'Portrait of the Artist as a Young Sahib' by Zafar Mansoor. It contains nothing new, but shows the growing esteem felt for Kipling in India. 'I was very moved at it at reading it', writes Mrs. Leigh Ferris, 'because the word Sahib indicated, before the British invasion, despite caste, creed or worldly possessions, that it was a title of respect and honour, which they used to describe all the British when they first came, and subsequently all Europeans. It is a name which they now refuse to use generally, only in special cases. 'So this article will have been written by an Indian who was respecting what Rudyard Kipling said himself: "you're a better man than I am". He never uses Kipling's name—and I think he himself would have been moved too.'

Another article, 'Living with Kipling', by Dim Pares, from the April *Books and Bookmen* has been sent by Mr. P. S. Falla. This article is important as it is the testimony of a lady who grew up to loathe Kipling and all that she thought he stood for, and only later in life, by a chance reading of "Chant Pagan" did she begin to realize how she had misjudged him and how misunderstood or misinterpreted he was by those who were only too ready to believe what they were told, without reading his works to find out for themselves what he had really said and what he really believed.

'When Empire-building became a dirty word', she begins, 'Kipling, considered as one of its originators was run down, torn to pieces and thrown into limbo. He won't stay there. Up and down and up again in his lifetime, in limbo it's the same. The truth is the great live stream of his work—hymns, prose and verse, is imperishable and will eventually carry him through to a permanent home in English literature. Kipling's genius stretched beyond his own times, even while writing the Swan Songs of Empire he was beckoning in the age of the machine and common man with a directness of vision and a breath of reality that speaks for all time.'

And later on she points out that 'Not since Shakespeare had anyone taken and shaken the language so hard, fetching out of it so much more than any of his contemporaries. Not since Shakespeare had anyone written of soldiers or craftsmen using their own jargon so pungently or so pithily, pouncing home with a thought clothed in idiom—"the shiny top scum stuff that people call civilisation ! " What better proof than the everyday use still made of his phrases and catchwords, twenty-two columns of them in *The Oxford Book of Quotations . . .'*

'When he first became famous he disrupted the creeping paralysis of decadence. Fin-de-siècle writers and artists, Oscar Wilde and Max Beerbohm among them, hated the fresh morning breeze of his work and what they termed his vulgarity. He has done one thing they could never have achieved. He has created a literature that could satisfy every age group and every class.'

THINGS AND THE MAN

Mr. Carter of Uckfield sends an interesting cutting from *The Sussex Express and County Herald* of 10 March about Kipling's 1928 Rolls Royce. This has been purchased by Dr. Gerald Moore of Heathfield Park, near Lewes, who discovered that it was being sold to a Dutch purchaser: 'The Dutchman intended to strip the car down and completely re-style the body-work. He was going to make it look like an American tourer, which would certainly not have met with Kipling's approval.' The car will now remain unaltered, and still on a Sussex estate not far from 'Bateman's.'

From cars to turbines : Miss Cicely Nicholson, Kipling's secretary for many years, sends a page from a recent number of *The Sapper* describing how the turbine from 'Bateman's', once turned by the water-wheel 'Below the Mill Dam', has been taken out and repaired, to be put back when the restoration of the Mill is complete. When Kipling first bought 'Bateman's', he 'ordered from Messrs. Gilkes and Gordon Ltd., of Kendal, a water turbine to drive a generator of 105/120 volts, 15 amps,1,000 r.p.m., and their own switchgear. The installation at 'Bateman's' was completed in 1904 and we can assume that Rudyard Kipling enjoyed the benefit of electric lighting provided by the machinery for years. Rudyard Kipling died in 1936 and in 1939 his widow presented 'Bateman's' to the National Trust. Thereafter the turbine remained forgotten until Lt. Col. R. S. Hawkins (Retd.), a member of the Sussex Archaeological Society, approached the R.S.M.E. [in 1969] on behalf of the National Trust, with the request that they help renovate the turbine and the site

Later in this number of the *Journal* appears a review by Professor Carrington of Elliot L. Gilbert's *The Good Kipling*—a collection of essays on various of the stories. Mr. W. S. Tower, Jr., of Essex, Connecticut, writes of this volume: 'It is interesting to note that Professor Cornell has dismissed "The Arrest of Lieut. Golightly" as "in most respects a trivial story", and that neither Dr. Tompkins nor Professor Dobrée even mentions "In the House of Suddhoo". Nevertheless Professor Gilbert uses these two apparently superficial tales to demonstrate Kipling's genius as convincingly as he does the other, more highly acclaimed stories.' And of the book as a whole he says : 'While literary criticism of this sort is written primarily for academic consumption (and to further the academic careers of the authors), this is substantially better than most of the work generated by the publish-or-perish maxim of American academic life. It may not serve to convert many non-believers, but it should be in the libraries of all Kipling enthusiasts. Count Professor Gilbert among their number.'

It should be added that the book, published last year in U.S.A., was published in this country on 24 March by the Manchester University Press at £2.40. It is certainly a book without which no Kipling collection is complete—and is by no means as "academic" as Mr. Tower would lead us to believe. Its most outstanding contribution to Kipling studies is the fullest, most lucid—and most convincing—interpretation of 'Mrs. Bathurst' yet to appear.

R.L.G.

'BAA, BAA, BLACK SHEEP'—FACT OR FICTION?

By C. E. Carrington

When I was nine or ten years old, enjoying a happy childhood in a large old-fashioned family—and this takes us far back into the reign of Edward the Seventh—I asked my mother what next I should read by Rudyard Kipling now that I knew the *Just So Stories* and the *Jungle Books* by heart. She said, 'Take my library ticket and get out a grown-up book called *Wee Willie Winkie.* It has some children's stories that you will like'. I did. They were in the style of the period, like those of Mrs. Ewing or George MacDonald and, if *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep* was very sad, so were the *Story of a Short Life* and the *Back of the North Wind.* They were just stories, and it never occurred to me that they were true, nor did it to my mother. But I was growing into a big rough boy, and the one I liked best was the *Drums of the Fore and Aft;* I almost envied those drummer-boys.

On this trifling episode I can build some literary history. My mother, like so many of her contemporaries, knew the early Kipling well, but seemed not to have followed his career. Either she had not read *Stalky* and *Kim,* or she thought little of them; and if the *Puck* stories had yet been published, she had not come across them. A year or two later, I discovered these treasures for myself, which brings me to the familiar gap in Kipling appreciation. In the eighteen-nineties, he had been the most highly-publicised of writers. After his death there was again a flood of criticism but, between Le Gallienne in 1899 and Bonamy Dobrée in 1929, he was strangely neglected by the men of letters, though this did not prevent him from being the world's best-selling author. Mr. R. L. Green's new book, *The Critical Heritage,* supports me to this extent.

Before I leave the recollections of my mother, who was about the same age as Rudyard Kipling, I recall too what she used to tell us about her own childhood. Her mother (my grandmother) was modern and kind, and believed in sympathising with her children, like Alice Kipling; but her grandmother (my great-grandmother) was a formidable old dowager, whose visits the children hated and feared. Like Mrs. Holloway of Lorne Lodge, Southsea, she was an evangelical and a strict disciplinarian, who made no concession to children's weakness. My mother used to say that when she was young she made up her mind; if she grew up and had children of her own, she would never treat them as granny treated her. I now observe that my stern, early-victorian great-grandmother lived at Southsea, in the eighteen-seventies, and may have been on calling terms with 'Antirosa' Holloway. The subject we are studying, then, is the change in the attitude of parents towards children, between the early-Victorian and the late-Victorian age, between our great-grandmothers and our mothers, between the dutiful but old-fashioned foster-mother, Mrs. Holloway, as portrayed in *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep,* and the enlightened loving mother, Mrs. Kipling, who was perhaps ten or even twenty years younger. It is not necessary to inflate the older generation into tyrants and monsters; they did their duty according to their lights. The last page of *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep* makes

it plain that the 'Black Sheep's' mother appreciated the point I am now making.

Next, let us consider how the story of Rudyard's unhappy childhood came to light, for unhappy it was. What child of six years old, separated from a loving mother, is not unhappy? In the year 1,888, at twenty-two years old, he was relishing his first taste of success, a heady draught, at Allahabad. His patron and admirer, Mrs. 'Ted' Hill, ten years older than he and happily married, entertained her young genius, encouraging him to write at large, a welcome change from his father and his editor at Lahore, who had rigidly pruned his exuberance. He reached out to new themes and developed his talent for child-stories which had been foreshadowed in the earlier Lahore period. The sixth of the now celebrated Railway Booklets, containing the four childhood stories, was published in India in December 1888, but not in London until two years later.

In the tide of publicity that floated Kipling into fame and fortune in 1890, little attention was paid to such tales as these, except by the anonymous reviewer in the *World* (December 1890) who said that he liked all these stories but *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep,* which was too 'grim and unlovely to be associated with the playfulness of childhood.' It was Edmund Gosse, in his thoughtful article in the *Century Magazine* for May 1891, warning his young friend against over-writing, who first, so far as I have observed, suggested that *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep* contained an element of autobiography; and it should be noticed that Gosse was a family friend who knew more of Kipling's background than other reviewers. Further than that, Gosse, too, had an unhappy childhood about which he would later write an account even more celebrated than Kipling's. He could 'identify' to use the fashionable jargon, with the 'Black Sheep'.

There the matter rested for a great many years. Gosse's hint was picked up and repeated by Le Gallienne and by two lesser critics, who did not give it more than a passing glance. None of the early biographers, Monkshood, Thurston Hopkins, and the others, has anything more to say about young Rudyard's childhood than Gosse had hinted; and none of them regarded the Southsea incident, if they had heard of it, as important. We are to remember that all these writers lived in a pre-Freudian world. I have not found a single reference that probes deeper until Bonamy Dobrée initiated the modern school of Kipling criticism in 1929. Had the true story got out? Did even he know what was the factual basis of *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep*?

When Kipling died, in January 1936, I and a friend named Archie Lyall who is now dead, attempted to write the first complete biography, but we were so firmly discouraged by the literary executors that we abandoned the project for some years. All that remains of it is a large file of early reviews (collected by a young research assistant who is now my wife) and a draft chapter on Kipling's childhood, which includes the following sentence, written by Lyall.

> 'At the age of six he was sent home according to Anglo-Indian custom, to relatives at Southsea, where he remained until he was eleven. No details are available on this period but it is impossible to doubt that he was lonely, unhappy, and misunderstood, and that *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep* (even to the failure of eye-sight), and the early part

of *The Light that Failed* are largely autobiographical.'

Lyall then draws a parallel with 'Saki' (H. H. Munro), who had a similar childhood experience, with an adverse effect upon his character. This was all we knew, all that anyone knew, I suppose, outside the family.

About the same date, before the appearance of *Something of Myself,* Mrs. Hill released her reminiscences of the young Kipling in the *Atlantic Monthly,* a document of great significance, but written forty-seven years after the events described. She said that *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep* was a true story of his early life 'when he was sent with his little sister to England to be educated . . . it was pitiful to see Kipling living over the experience, pouring out his soul in the story.' We have no reason to doubt her sincerity but what did she know beyond what he chose to present, in fictional form, in 1888? She had not then met Kipling's family, and never had more than a slight acquaintance with them.

The members of the Kipling Society enjoy tracing the factual foundation of his stories, noticing how some event in his life, some observation, some book he had been reading, sparked off his imagination, which then burst into flame with a brilliant conflagration about what may have been a dull little incident. Among other things he was a journalist of genius. When did he ever write a story in which he did not, to use his own jocular word, 'transmogrify' something he had recorded? Two books, *Stalky* and *Light that Failed,* contain long passages of reminiscence, treated in different styles. In *Stalky* the landscape and setting are strictly factual, displayed with pre-Raphaelite attention to detail. Most of the characters are drawn from life and many have been identified; but the incidents of the tales are imaginary, a convincing fantasy of what those schoolboys would have liked to do, not what they did. In *Light that Failed* we can distinguish the scenes from his own life, at Southsea or London, from the scenes in the Soudan which he had read about in books. Many of the minor episodes are 'transmogrified' versions of events in London, while others, the whole blindness episode for example, are taken from literary sources. Some of the characters are drawn from the life; others have emerged from we know not where.

Apply these criteria to *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep* and begin by establishing the chronology of his childhood, a difficult thing to do. There will be gaps as in all such records. Some scenes we recall vividly, while others are lost, buried in the sub-conscious. But the sub-conscious had scarcely been discovered in 1888.

Rudyard Kipling's Childhood

1865 December. R.K. born at Bombay.
1868 Family visit to England. 'Trix' born in June.
1870 A third child born and died in India.
1871 15 April. The family left India by the Suez Canal.
1st October. The parents left the two children at Southsea. R.K. aged six, 'Trix' aged three and a half.
1872 September. Visit of Mrs. Macdonald and three daughters. All well. R.K. visited the Baldwins.
1873 December. R.K.'s first visit to North End House (?). Aged eight.
1874 20th September. Death of 'Uncle Harry'. R.K. aged eight 9/12.
December. Second visit to North End House,
1875 July. Death of Sir Thomas Holloway.

December. Third visit to North End House. (The Kiplings moved to Lahore.)

1876 December. Fourth visit. 'Aunt Georgie's' letter to Alice. R.K. aged 11 years ('a sort of breakdown').

1877 March. Mrs. Kipling arrived, and took the children away. R.K. 11 3/12, 'Trix' 8 9/12.

December. Mr. Kipling returned to India alone.

1878 January. R.K. to school at Westward Ho, aged 12.

August. Visit to Paris with Mr. Kipling. (Mr. and Mrs. Kipling returned to India?)

1879

1880 'Stalky & Co' in Number Five Study.

August. R.K. visited 'Trix' at Southsea, and met Flo Garrard. (Mrs. Kipling in England?) R.K. aged 14 8/12. 'Trix' 12 2/12.

1882 July. R.K. left the U.S. College, and sailed for India, 20 September aged 16 9/12.

We must not suppose that a bewildered child of six years old was a very close observer of social niceties, or that his little sister, aged three-and-a-half, could record much for posterity. What one remembers of early childhood consists of vivid scenes, snapshots one might say, and equally vivid sensations rather than continuous sequences. This I liked and this I disliked; here I was happy and there unhappy. But, five years later, a big boy of eleven who has been through a hard school may be a critical commentator on the world he lives in, especially if he is as precocious and inquisitive as Rudyard Kipling, though this does not imply that his comments at that age are judicious. I suggest that he became the 'Black Sheep' at ten or eleven years old, not at six or seven.

'Trix' (Mrs. Fleming) pointed out that *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep* was not literally true. 'If I had seen the manuscript', she said, 'I would have pointed out that the details of kind old Captain Holloway's death are all wrong. Also Rudyard was never left alone while we went on a holiday.' She says, which is hard to believe, that she never spent a night away from Southsea during the whole period. But we need not trust 'Trix' unreservedly since she was just six years old when the Captain died and was not favoured, we suppose, with all the details of the family misfortune. My guess is that in addition to losing a good husband Mrs. Holloway lost his pension and was financially embarrassed. With straitened means she struggled on, more and more dependent upon her little lodgers, of whom she liked one and disliked the other.

Baa, Baa, Black Sheep from beginning to end is a tale of gloom, shadows with no light relief. It makes no allusion to English relatives or to intervals in the little boy's purgatory. Misfortune builds up until the appearance of a *deus ex machinâ* named 'Inverarity Sahib', a family doctor from India, who brings about a miracle. But, when we return to the rehabilitation in *Something of Myself,* written forty years later, we find a different process. The two children are, of course, dismayed by the sudden absence of their mother, but the foster-parents made friendly advances, which the baby-girl accepts while the growing boy regards them with suspicion. He is a spoiled boy, thinks Mrs. Holloway, and needs discipline which it is her duty to provide. 'Spare the rod and spoil the child'. Such sentiments begin to look horrifying but Mrs. Holloway did not invent them, they come from the *Proverbs of Solomon.* If she had been a sensitive woman, she would have leaned-over-backwards—

as the saying goes—to make the strange child feel at home, but this she was incapable of doing. It was natural for her to prefer her own son and to take his part; reasonable too to observe that, of the two boys, he was the better-behaved in company. Yet to say that she lacked generosity is not to say that she was cruel, and the qualities that she lacked, the old sea-captain lavished. He saw the jealousy his own Harry felt for the interloper, the clever talkative little Rudyard; and suspected that Harry took it out of him by bullying, behind the scenes. No cruelty like that of big boys to little boys. That Harry was the villain, not 'Aunty Rosa', is my thesis.

We notice two curious features in what had been, so far, a straightforward story. All the scarce and fragmentary authorities agree that this bright boy Rudyard, was backward in learning to read. It seems that Mrs. Holloway taught him herself, and that when, at last, he acquired the art, at seven years old (1873), he worried her to distraction with demands for reading-matter and with questions about what he read. Yet she did not pack him off to school with Harry until he was eight or even nine, perhaps not until after her husband's death, in September 1874. Her widow-hood seems to cut our story in two. For three years, 1871-4, things had not gone so badly at Lorne Lodge; no open war between Rudyard and the Holloways, even though, towards the end, peaceful relations were wearing thin with Harry. Back in his first Southsea summer, 1872, a bevy of Macdonalds, Grandma and three aunts, had descended upon the children and had reported favourably to Alice both about them and about the Holloways, before carrying Rudyard off to a round of visits, at Oxford and to the Baldwins in Worcestershire. The aunts were not insensitive and would have seen quickly enough if something was seriously wrong. Having done their duty, it appears, they allotted the task of keeping an eye on the young Kiplings to 'Aunt Georgie' Burne-Jones whom Rudyard thereafter, he says, visited 'every Christmas for a month'. Four Christmases seems the likely number, 1873-4-5-6, though we have sure evidence only of the last. 'Trix' says plaintively that the invitations didn't include her. Perhaps she was thought too young, but can it be believed that Aunt Georgie would have left the little girl unobserved and uninvited if the big boy were showing signs of strain or neglect; that, year after year, a campaign of systematic ill-treatment left no visible mark on Rudyard that a shrewd woman like Georgiana Burne-Jones must have noticed? I must assume that bickering and annoyance passed into hostility only in the last years.

'Aunt Georgie's' house was not Rudyard's only refuge in the early days. In *Something of Myself* he hints at Mrs. Holloway's jealousy arising over visits to a grand relative of hers who lived at Havant. I see Mrs. Holloway as a poor relation with expectations from this country gentleman. Mr. Green, with his usual ingenuity, has identified him as General Sir Thomas Holloway, who died in July 1875, nine months after his brother, the sea-captain. This, I surmise, led to a stage in the 'Black Sheep's' downfall. Nothing had come of those expectations, nothing for Harry Holloway. Is this the moment when Harry was withdrawn from school and set to earn his living as a bank-clerk? Somewhat to the relief of Rudyard, since he became an adolescent with other ways of spending his spare hours more amusing than persecuting a little boy. But by this time, the Black Sheep had got a bad name that he did not easily outgrow. Living up to his reputation, perhaps, growing defiant, showing

his contempt for Aunty Rosa, as 'Kim' showed his 'disgust' for his Eurasian foster-mother by ignoring her. 'She was a nothing'.

How old was Harry Holloway? The books don't say. Perhaps 16 in 1875 when Rudyard was nine. What became of him? What had he to say for himself, twenty years afterwards, when his foster-brother was one of the most famous men in the world?

We must now face the difficult problem of Rudyard's schooldays. He attended two schools, a day-school at Southsea and a boarding-school at Westward Ho and left accounts of both in fictional form and in his autobiography. Yet we know almost everything about the latter and almost nothing about the former. *Stalky & Co.* was no sooner published than Kipling's school-fellows began to rush into print, demanding recognition for their parts in the scenario.

' 'is cot was right-'and cot to mine', said Files—on-Parade.'

I think he must have been a pupil at the shabby little school which Mr. Green has identified as Hope House, for two years, 1875 and 1876, from his ninth to his eleventh birthday, and he has nothing to say of this long period, except his snobbish objection to associating with a Jew and a coloured boy, prejudices that he later outgrew. He must have made some friends, at least in the second year when the incubus of Harry's tutelage was removed. Southsea has remained silent. No one remembered little Rudyard at Hope House, whereas everyone remembered him at Westward Ho, a fact that I find strange. If he was ill-treated, did no other boy pity him? If he was rebellious, did no boy secretly admire him? Here we must leave the subject, facing a blank wall of ignorance, a predicament with which all biographers are familiar.

All that has come down is the tale of the placard on his back proclaiming him a liar. Elsewhere I have expressed doubts about the truth of this story. *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep* contains many echoes from *David Copperfield,* and I was prepared to believe that the placard was a literary borrowing, which he afterwards persuaded himself to be an actual memory. Mr. Green's studies of 'Trix's' reminiscences have persuaded me to withdraw from so extreme a position—not that I regard 'Trix' as a good witness. All her published statements were made after the appearance of *Something of Myself* and most are comments on it. The sentence I have quoted is her only extant version of the 'Black Sheep' story, not affected by Kipling's own account. According to Mr. Green, she remembered having seen Rudyard, when she was eight years old, 'going down the garden with the placard on, walking like an old man'. In *Black Sheep* he refused to wear it in the street and broke into open rebellion; in *Something of Myself* he submitted and walked to school with it. Which is true? Was this a regular form of punishment for very naughty children in those harsh days?

Any open mutiny must have been at the end of 1876. When Rudyard went to North End House for his Christmas visit, Aunt Georgie noted the change, and wrote to Alice in India a letter which was so alarming that Alice instantly returned to England. It took six weeks to get an answer to a letter sent to Lahore, if the maildays were convenient, and another three weeks for a voyage from India; yet Georgiana wrote in December and Alice arrived in March. In *The Five Macdonald Sisters,* Lord Baldwin has established the facts of this correspondence, which were unknown to Kipling when he wrote his memoir. He says that he had 'some sort of nervous breakdown', and describes his symp-

toms with the precision we should expect, but says nothing of how, when, or why he left school, or who sent for the doctor. He thought it was 'Aunt Georgie'.

I suggest again that the three months, January to March 1877, were the time of the Black Sheep's darkest misery. In disgrace at school and at home, idle because the doctor—not Mrs. Holloway—forbade him to read, scared at the failure of his eyesight, dismayed at the figure he must cut when his idolised but half-forgotten mother should confront him. Three months of growing wretchedness seem longer than three years in the life of an old man. But spare a thought for Mrs. Holloway. What figure would she present when the mother saw the low state to which her son had been reduced? What report did she make to Mrs. Kipling? If it had been at all like the bad report described in *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep,* what consequence could there have been but an open breach between the two families? No such breach was opened. The Kipling Family Square was re-united for a few happy months in Epping Forest and in London, until, in January 1878, Rudyard was committed to the care of Cormell Price at Westward Ho. Apart from that, the movements of the other Kiplings are uncertain. All we can say is that, two years later in the summer of 1880, 'Trix' was back at Southsea with Mrs. Holloway, and that Rudyard visited them without embarrassment, 'Trix' being still no more than twelve years old. Is it conceivable that the kind mother would have sent the little girl back alone to a 'house of desolation' where the big boy had been brutally ill-used?

When Rudyard went back, he had somewhat outgrown the company of his little sister, and the sophisticated Flo Garrard had become the attraction. These two were mature enough to scoff at Mrs. Holloway of whom they were not afraid. Thus, it was not necessary to mention little 'Trixie' in the Southsea epsiode of the *Light that Failed,* which I find more convincing than the last pages of *Black Sheep.*

I must now turn to that exasperating book, *Something of Myself,* which was published without a word of editorial comment a year after the author's death. To it we can trace the whole mass of professional 'Lit.Crit.' and amateur psycho-analysis about Kipling's childhood. What is this *Something*? A fragment or a large part or a finished work? It consists of seven detached essays on selected phases of his life, with remarkably few names or dates, and these often inaccurate. We know that, after his death, his widow permitted the publication only of MSS which he had left complete, and destroyed his unfinished drafts. We must conclude that *Something of Myself,* with all its imperfections, was treated as ready for publication at Rudyard's death. Who saw it through the press, and what liberties did he take with the text? It is not a full account of Kipling's life, as the title proves, and the omissions are significant. All the emotional crises of his life are blacked-out except the Southsea episode which is related with a fervour that contrasts with the cool objective tone of the other narratives. Why make this abject revelation of childhood while concealing the tragedies and failures of adult life? As if the *Black Sheep* story were not pathetic enough, he feels obliged in old age to darken the shadows, to heighten the contrasts.

Kipling's early life falls into four distinct phases, each of five or six years : first his angel-infancy at Bombay in the light and warmth and love of India, which he was to contrast with the gloom and cold and rigidity of the second phase at Southsea. This alternation of light and

dark, East and West of Suez, haunted him. In the third phase, at Westward Ho, he formed his character, growing a protective shell of armour, his stoic cult of self-reliance. By accepting the free-masonry of an in-group, he learned to be the Master of that Jungle, though still at odds between the two sides of his nature. In the fourth phase, East of Suez again, he was happy in the warmth and sufficiency of the Family Square. At twenty-one years old, when he published his first successful book and left Lahore, he was mature and ready for anything. He could dispose of his unhappy childhood, write it out of his system, bury it deep, long long ago and far away. A forward-looking man, he rarely went back on his tracks until, in old age, his strong manly voice piped again in childish treble.

BOOK REVIEW

THE GOOD KIPLING, Studies in the Short Story, by Elliot L. Gilbert. (xii + 216 pp. Index. Ohio University Press, 1971)

The long-awaited book by Elliot Gilbert makes a landmark in Kipling studies. I need say no more than that it will stand on the shelf beside Bonamy Dobrée and Joyce Tompkins, which is not to say that I agree with all his interpretations; nor do I think that my friend, Dr. Gilbert would expect me to do so. Kipling is nothing if not controversial. This is not a book for beginners, nor for those ornaments of the *coteries* who dismiss Kipling without reading his works. When selecting the title, Dr. Gilbert referred to a list made by Hemingway of the authors who had influenced him: Flaubert, Tolstoi, Chekhov, Donne, etc., even to Mark Twain and 'the good Kipling', the only one in the list who seemed to need a 'modifier'. Why single out Kipling, he asks, when we consider what rubbish Mark Twain (and, dare I say it, even Tolstoi?) could write, on occasion? Though we all know that Kipling often damaged a story or a ballad by an unhappy phrase, so did greater masters; and it will be a happy day when we can discuss Kipling just like any other writer without feeling obliged to make excuses.

Here we have a close analysis of seven stories, written at successive stages of Kipling's life. The title of the book precludes the verse, a severe limitation as Kipling always wrote prose and verse in harmony. Dr. Gilbert's exception is *Recessional* to which he allows some space while discussing the author's so-called 'Imperialism'. Acknowledging that the notorious phrase, 'lesser breeds' is often misconstrued, he still damns it on aesthetic grounds. Even if it is not reprehensible politics, it is yet a flaw in the poem, a false note that jars on the reader. Not a matter of Who are the lesser breeds, but why bring in breeds at all?

It is interesting that he should begin by selecting a mere anecdote, *Lieutenant Golightly* for critical analysis. 'Young as he [Kipling] was, writes Dr. Gilbert, 'and pressured by a newspaper deadline, he was nevertheless able to handle this slight material like an artist, to give even these stock elements of farce a single center and a serious theme'. *The House of Suddhoo* permits the critic more scope, and here Kipling has been blamed for intrusions of his own brash opinions about British law into the revelation of Indian life. Dr. Gilbert has little difficulty in demonstrating that Kipling the newspaperman is not identified with the narrator, who is himself a character in the story. But here we should

distinguish between the early and the late Kipling. He was only twenty years old when he dashed off these two tales, and neither his style nor his philosophy was much matured. Dr. Gilbert does not, perhaps make enough of his boyish sense of humour. In several of the *Plain Tales,* for example, *Aurelian McGoggin* and *Strength of a Likeness,* he makes the hero, or the narrator, a sort of caricature of himself, and punishes him for the unforgiveable sin of impertinence. Similarly, the 'ragging' stories, such as *A Friend's Friend,* need not be taken too seriously; they are just fun, unkind fun maybe but still fun, not tragedy or satire. Much in the early stories is mere plagiarism and Kipling's debt to French fiction merits examination. These are the pieces that reminded well-read critics of the early, superficial, tales of Maupassant. Pierre Loti, too, is somewhere in the background, and *Golightly,* I fancy, owes something to the fifth chapter of the *Chartreuse de Parme.*

When he comes to the mature works, Dr Gilbert's profound knowledge of the texts, and his insight, are revealed; his study of Kipling's only true love-story, *Without Benefit of Clergy,* is a masterpiece. He sees Kipling as stoic and sceptic, always aware that the Gods have loaded the dice against men, that a man can be judged only by his effort to make order out of his corner of a chaotic world, that most men (and women) live by submission to rituals that never bring about the desired result. 'Holden' and 'Ameera' are sustained by love that learns, through suffering, to reject all rituals alike, his Anglo-Indian conventions no less than her debased magic-mongering form of Islam. 'Ameera seems to be the shrewdest person in *Without Benefit of Clergy'* he writes, 'Each blow that life inflicts on her makes her not more a prisoner of the superstitions she started with, but more free of them . . . free to live without fear.'

By comparison, I do not find the treatment of *The Bridge-Builders* as satisfactory, perhaps because the tale itself got out of control. Kipling could not quite manage the Dialogue of the Gods (Could anyone?). But Dr. Gilbert's habitual detachment is here vitiated by a false note (like the 'lesser breeds' in *Recessional).* He clutters up his essay with the ritual incantations that even the nicest Americans feel obliged to utter when they discuss British India. Even if he were well-informed on the subject, they would still be irrelevant to *The Bridge-Builders.* Skimming over all that, the reader will find the human part of the story most sensitively probed.

We now come to the inevitable *Mrs. Bathurst,* on whom all Kipling commentators must cut their teeth. Dr. Gilbert will not allow the story to be a failure, nor that it suffers from over-compression. As against those early pieces that displayed the Art of the Simple we are now in Kipling's middle period when he was mastering the Art of the Complex. All the discrete parts are seen as components of a single pattern. Even the 'Boy Niven' episode, with its 'mistaken identity, misinformation, random wandering, and errors in judgment . . . is, like the cinema, a metaphor for the story's general theme.' The epigraph, too, from an imagined Jacobean tragedy, tells the same tale in other words. *Mrs. Bathurst* is 'a story about a group of story-tellers who are trying to put together a story' and 'the great sadness lies in failure of communication'. By contrast, *The Gardener* is an explicit tale. In the one story 'a technique of deliberate concealment', in the other, the sense of shock at the climax is 'mingled with a corresponding sense of inevitability', from the

'incidents and images which prepare the reader subliminally for the revelation that is to come'.

It is not from tales as delicate as *The Gardener* that Dr. Gilbert makes his final point, that he 'clawed his way to compassion'; but from that strange extravaganza, *The Bull that Thought,* which at one moment seems to be a Beast-fable, at another almost a tragedy, and at another a farce. (One thinks of *Androcles and the Lion.)* 'His total commitment to art can hardly be questioned in *The Bull,* and his sense of high purpose is perhaps most evident in the movement of the story'.

But there had always been a tender side to his nature. In the recent performance of *Kipling and Brecht* at the Mermaid Theatre, actors dressed as Kipling's soldiers brought the house down by reciting *Mandalay* and *Gunga Din* with their undertones of human sympathy, quite straight, while Brecht's commentary and expansion of the themes sounded shrill and harsh. It was Kipling rather than Brecht who said: 'Make Love not War'.

C. E. CARRINGTON

LETTER BAG

KIPLING'S BAD EYESIGHT

I hope you will allow me, although I am merely one of the rank and file of the Kipling Society, to reply to Dr. T. N. Cross's assertion that it was due to the fact that Kipling was "very poorly coordinated" and not because of poor eyesight that he was "ineffectual at football and cricket where eyesight is involved but he was equally inept at dancing, riding and swimming where, in general, it is not."

Kipling himself says, in *Something of Myself* (p.25) ". . . swimming in the big open sea baths, or off the Pebble Ridge, was the one accomplishment that brought me any credit. I played footer (Rugby Union), *but here again my sight hampered me.* [My italics.] I was not even in the Second Fifteen."

He makes a further reference to his swimming (pp.34-35) "... I read Atalanta in Calydon, and one verse of verses which exactly set the time for my side-stroke when I bathed in the big rollers off the Ridge. As thus: —

Who shall *seek* thee and *bring*
And *restore* thee thy *day,* (Half roll)
When the *dove* dipt her *wing*
And the *oars* won their *way*
Where the narrowing Symplegades whitened the straits of Propontis with spray?
(Carry on with the impetus)

If you can time the last line of it to end with a long roller crashing on your head, the cadence is complete."

Myself, I have done various household tasks in time to poetry and have ever afterwards found myself performing them unconsciously to that rhythm. I cannot but feel that this was so in Kipling's case when swimming, which would explain why "He went forward in a rather jerky manner by fits and starts."

MRS. P. R. SCOTT

DID KIPLING READ ISAAC WALTON?

In the course of my piscatorial pursuits I have had, for the first time, to read Isaac Walton from cover to cover. Writing in the last quarter of the 17th Century he interlarded his discourses on the art of angling with some somewhat ponderous moral dissertations.

Inter alia, in Chapter XXI part 1.

"I have heard of a man who was angry with himself because he was no taller, and of a woman that broke her Looking-glass because it would not show her face to be as young and handsom as her next neighbour's was."

I need hardly remind you of "The Looking-glass", 'Gloriana', *Rewards and Fairies.*

Did R.K. read Isaac Walton (I can recollect no clue) or did he pick up a clue through some intermediate link?

I have always regretted (and I am joined in my regrets, I feel sure, by my fellow Piscatorial Society member Bob Bagwell Purefoy) that R.K. never wrote on dry-fly fishing. How he would have relished the minutiae of the subject! *And* the characters of its devotees!

I wonder if any of our members can find any links between R.K. and I.W.

E. J. CARDEW WOOD

[Kipling did, of course, write one angling story, 'On Dry Cow Fishing as a Fine Art' in *The Fishing Gazette,* 14 Dec. 1890; but it is too little known, being only collected in the Sussex Edition. R.L.G.]

HON. SECRETARY'S NOTES

"Crystal Wedding" (continued). Perhaps our Hon. Editor will allow a few lines more space to add to the entry in *Journal* 181, so as to allow the Hon. Sec. to thank our *Branches* (particularly Presidents, Secretaries and Treasurers) for regularly keeping in touch, with accounts of activities that show undiminished keenness.

Melbourne: Soldiering on splendidly, after 34 years.

Auckland (NZ): NOT to be left out, although now, alas, just a happy memory. Early *Journals* show their enthusiasm and the high quality of their meetings.

Victoria (B.C.): Our belovéd child—partly because we'd love to live there! 38 years old, and as hard-working as ever.

U.S.A. : The Big Boy of the Family. Date of birth hard to discover, but certainly not later than 1933. More and more American Universities are voracious for R.K.

Many thanks and best wishes to you all—and please keep right on going!

A.E.B.P,

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