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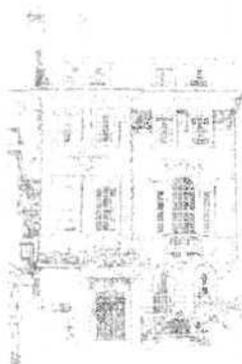
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SECRETARY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

SOME FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 18 January 2006, 5.30 for 6 p.m., in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League, **Vyvyen Brendon** on *Children of the Raj*.

Thursday 26 January 2006, 2 p.m., in St Bartholomew's Church, Burwash, a Service to commemorate the Life and Works of Rudyard Kipling with an Address by **The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams**. Members who plan to attend are requested to inform the Secretary.

Wednesday 19 April 2006, 5.30 for 6 p.m. in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League, **David Alan Richards** on "Kipling and his School Magazine, the Problems of a Bibliographer".

Wednesday 3 May 2006, 12.30 for 1 p.m., in the Hall of India and Pakistan, at the Royal Over-Seas League, the Society's Annual Luncheon. For details and advance booking for tickets: see enclosed flyer.

Wednesday 12 July 2006, 4.30 p.m., in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League, the Society's **A.G.M.** A cash bar will serve drinks from 5.30 p.m., Tea will be available before the meeting, at 4.00 p.m. for those who book in advance. Details to follow.

December 2005

JANE KESKAR & JEFFERY LEWINS

PUBLIC SPEAKERS

We are looking for a few Members in all parts of the country to volunteer their services as speakers, to talk to Rotary, Probus, and other clubs, also to Scouts & Guides and to Masonic Lodges about Kipling. It is good fun! You will normally get expenses paid, and we can help with scripting if needed. If you are interested, phone Roy Slade on 01202 825736 or contact by e-mail: roy.slade@ukonline.co.uk for more information.

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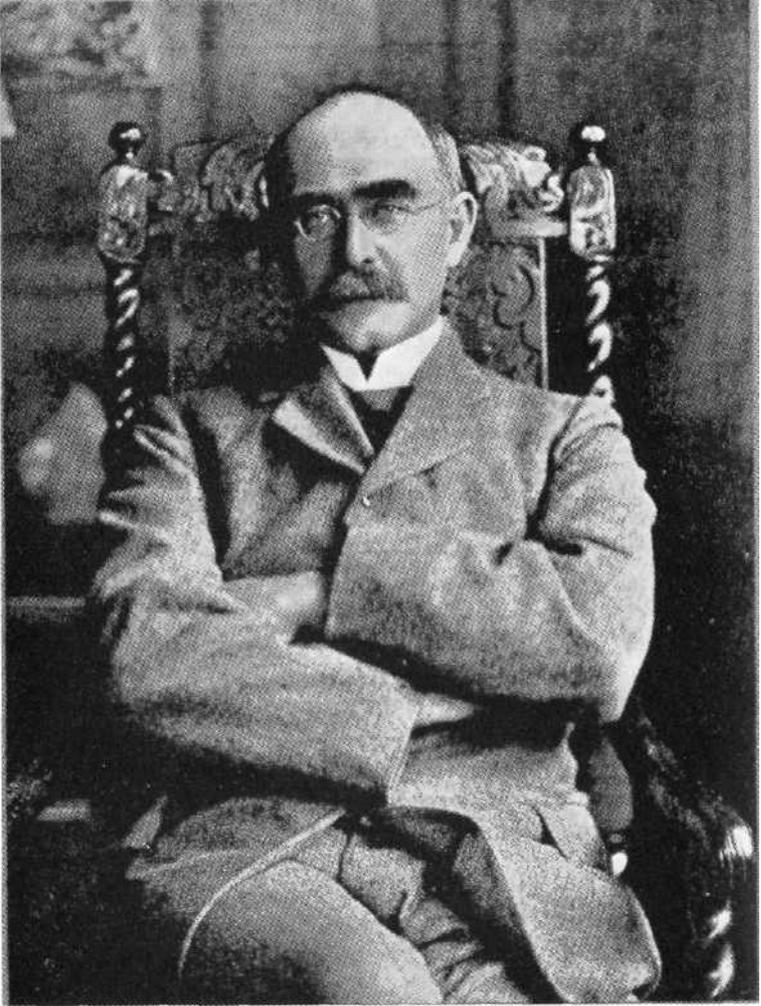
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KIPLING IN 1913

This photograph of Kipling was taken at Bateman's for the *London Sphere*.

7 July 1913

Having found this unattributed cutting, the identification was made by referring to *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling*, ed. T. Pinney. Vol.4, plate 3. – *Ed.*

EDITORIAL

18 JANUARY 1936, 00.10 a.m.

On this date, and at this time, Rudyard Kipling passed away in the Middlesex Hospital, London. As announced in the *Journal* for September, on 26 January 2006 at 2 p.m. the Society will be commemorating his Life and Work at a service in St Bartholomew's Church, Burwash. But this should be not only a commemoration – even more, it should be a thanksgiving. For members of our Society, Kipling's Works and the knowledge of his Life are inextricably intermingled with our own lives, whether professional, personal, or both. Whatever one's mood, one can always find a story or verse that is in tune with it, and usually leads one on to the next, and the next, until the time available for reading runs out.

Elliot Gilbert in *The Good Kipling* remarked '... in a writing career which covered more than fifty years, [Kipling] had a remarkably widespread influence and produced some of the most unavoidable quotations in the English language.' He wrote this in 1971, and the number of quotations from Kipling in the general press seem to be increasing in this 21st Century. I have not been keeping count but in the London and U.K. National papers there have been instances in the *Evening Standard*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Guardian*, *The Times* and a poster in *The Times Educational Supplement*. There have also been broadly favourable articles in the *Times of India* and the *Melbourne Age* this year – and I doubt that crossword compilers could meet the needs of their readers with Kipling's aid.

RETIREMENTS OF TWO HONORARY OFFICERS

The A.G.M. in July saw the retirements of Rudi Bissolotti who has been our Hon. Treasurer for the last nine years, and David Fellows who has been our first Hon. Publicity Officer since 2002.

Rudi was in effect "shanghaied" by Michael Smith (Hon. Secretary at the time) into the Society and has served us with great skill, keeping us on the "straight and narrow" path of financial rectitude and keeping Council abreast of all the requirements of the Charity Commission. To date, a replacement has not been found.

David, despite failing health, showed great enthusiasm in his efforts to publicise the Society. This included the setting up of ties with the Rudyard Lake Trust in Staffordshire whereby their website is linked to ours, with the National Trust and with the University of Sussex. His role has now been taken on by Roy Slade.

POETRY AND POWER:
RUDYARD KIPLING AND THE WAR
IN SOUTH AFRICA 1899-1902

By Dr HELEN GOETHALS

[Helen Goethals is an associate professor at the Université de Lyon II in France, where she teaches the cultural history of the British Empire and Commonwealth. Her research is centred on the interactions of poetry and politics, particularly in wartime. This article first appeared in *Cahiers victoriens et édouardiens* No.60, October 2004. Université Paul-Valéry, Montpellier, and I am extremely grateful to the Rédacteur en Chef, Ms Annie Escuret, for giving me permission to reprint it. *Ed.*]

The relationships between poetry and power are considerably closer and more complex than modern poetics would have us believe. In this short essay I would like to look at power as a source of poetry, first in terms of patronage, then in terms of inspiration, in order to arrive at the question of poetry's relationship with power, the forces at work in political poetry. The discussion will be centred on a poem by Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936), entitled "Bridge-Guard in the Karroo", which was first published in *The Times* on 6 June 1901 and appeared as the thirtieth poem in *The Five Nations* (1903). Although not a well-known poem, it is vintage Kipling: a ballad of 64 lines organized into 16 stanzas of 4 lines, which sings the story of sunset falling on the karroo,¹ the coming of night and the brief halt of a night-train, seen through the eyes and heard through the ears of a small detachment of lonely soldiers sent to guard a railway-bridge.

The poem was written in the context of a struggle for power in southern Africa, between the Boer republics of Transvaal and Orange Free State, and the British settler colonies of the Cape and Natal. Ostensibly, Britain went to war to obtain the franchise for the British subjects working in the Boer republics, but the underlying reason was to obtain better access to the rich gold mines of the Rand. By June 1901, when the poem entered the public debate, the war in South Africa was reaching its final and longest stage. After the initial period involving a number of humiliating defeats, the British forces under Lord Roberts had relieved the sieges of Kimberley, Ladysmith and Mafeking, and had occupied the two Boer capitals of Bloemfontein and Pretoria. At that point most people thought that the war was over, but such was the success of the guerrilla resistance of the Boer commandos that in fact the war was to continue for another eighteen months, becoming increasingly unpopular as Kitchener's scorched earth policy and the herding of farm hands, Boer women and children into concen-

tration camps grew more ruthless. The "bitter-enders" did not finally sign the Peace of Vereeniging until May 1902.

Events in South Africa were reflected in a highly partisan war of words in Great Britain, in which Rudyard Kipling, though by no means uncritical of public policy, was unequivocally on the side of those in power. His first contribution to the public debate about the reasons justifying or not Britain's going to war was a poem published by his friend Moberly Bell in *The Times* on 29 September 1899. "The Old Issue" argued, in (significantly) convoluted verse, that this war would conform to a pattern, that of the struggle for the freedom of the common man, championed by the British since Magna Carta. Once war had been declared, on 11 October 1899, Kipling lost no time in making what turned out to be a substantial financial contribution to the war effort. "The Absent-Minded Beggar" was written to raise money for the families of soldiers fighting in South Africa, and indeed, sold as a pamphlet printed on mugs or sung or recited in music-halls, it had by the end of the war raised more than £250,000. The "Absent-Minded Beggar Fund" was run by the *Daily Mail* one of the new breed of popular newspapers, launched by Alfred Harmsworth (later Lord Northcliffe) in 1896. The masthead of the *Daily Mail* proudly displayed its support for "the power, the supremacy, and the greatness of the British Empire". This patriotic stance helped to more than double its sales during the war.

Kipling himself waived copyright for these two poems, and indeed for any that he considered a direct contribution to the war effort. He did accept royalties from later poems intended to criticize government policy and to prepare the way for army reform, poems such as "The Lesson" (29 July 1901), "The Reformers" (12 October 1901) and the poem which raised a storm of protest, "The Islanders" (4 January 1902). But his quarrel was not with the imperialist war itself, merely with the conduct of the war. In order to be able to publish such poems as these Kipling, while constantly hobnobbing with the powerful, lunching with the likes of Joseph Chamberlain and Alfred Milner, remained anxious to keep some sort of an independent stand. For this reason he refused the knighthood that he was repeatedly offered. Several biographers have commented on Kipling's ambivalent status, as a writer whose position both inside and outside the Establishment was in many ways that of the privileged journalist.

It is important to note the variety of work that Kipling did during the war and the different outlets that Kipling deliberately chose for this work, according to the impact he wanted it to have: some work aimed at the ruling classes, some at the leisure class, yet other work at a popular readership. Nor did his war writing confine itself to poetry. It included open letters, to *The Times* to defend Cecil Rhodes, to the

Daily Express to defend Milner against Afrikaner critics. "The Sin of Witchcraft", a pamphlet warning against the treachery of the Cape Dutch, was published in *The Times* of 15 March 1900 and four short stories² criticizing the conduct of the war were published in the *Daily Express* in June 1900.

War work also took the form of action. In the context of the defeats of "Black Week" in December 1899, Kipling helped raise a volunteer corps in his Sussex village of Rottingdean. In May 1900 he joined in the wild enthusiasm of the local Mafeking celebrations. October 1900 found him opening a rifle range in the village and campaigning for the Conservative candidate at Tisbury during the "Khaki" election. He was also active in the local Navy league and in building a drill hall for future recruits.

Most important of all, he had firsthand experience of life and imperial policy in South Africa, some of which pre-dated the war. He had stopped off at the Cape during his voyage to Australia in 1891, and he had spent the months of January to April 1898 there, at the invitation of his friend Cecil Rhodes. It was during this visit that he had met such arch-Imperialists as Sir Alfred Milner, the architect Herbert Baker, and the Rand millionaire Sir Abe Bailey. At one point he took "the north-bound train" to visit Matabeleland, touring Bulawayo on a hired bicycle with yet another of the great figures of Empire, the railway engineer Sir Charles Metcalfe.

In the winter of 1900 (20 January – 11 April) began the first of eight successive (English) winters spent in South Africa for the sake of the family's health.³ The first few weeks were spent 'dancing among hospitals and running from one end of Capetown to the other trying to be of some use'.⁴ He travelled by hospital train to the Modder River, visiting the main military camp at Stellenbosch with Cecil Rhodes, distributing tobacco, food, clothes and medical items to the wounded troops. In March 1900, he responded to an invitation by Lord Roberts to help edit an Army magazine, the first of its kind, called *The Friend*. Kipling went to Bloemfontein to join the other journalists⁵ and for two weeks threw himself into the task of writing and sub-editing with gusto. "A Song of the White Men" and "Joubert" were published in this newspaper.

The two following winters of the war were less eventful. During the winter of 1901 (8 December – 17 April) Kipling's distrust of the Bond, the Afrikaner party active in Cape Colony, and his appreciation of the need for radical army reform, increased. The winter of 1902 (21 December – 16 April) was dominated by Kipling's anxiety lest the peace negotiations turn out to be a betrayal of the war effort, and the death of his hero, Cecil Rhodes, on 26 March, for which he wrote a poetic tribute, "The Burial".

When he returned to England in the summer of 1901 to find that events in South Africa were looming less and less large in the public mind, Kipling decided to renew his campaign to prick British complacency. It was in that state of mind that he sent "Bridge-Guard in the Karroo" to be published in *The Times*. In it he returns to the point of view of his early poetic successes, the Tommy Atkins of *Barrack-Room Ballads*, rueful soldier and loveable rogue. "Bridge-Guard" sees the war through the eyes of a detail of soldiers sent to guard an isolated railway bridge:

Few, forgotten and lonely,
Where the empty metals shine—
No, not combatants—only
Details guarding the line.

The poem relates the events of the night-watch through the soldiers' perceptions, using the narrative device of free indirect speech. Thus, for example, the mountain ranges that dominate the bridge are 'the aching Oudtshoorn', not just features with an alien and indeed enemy name on a map, but places that conjure up the backache of slogging on foot with a heavy backpack. Kipling's writing is justly celebrated for "its lyric delight in the sounds and colours, in the very odours of empire",⁶ and here we find all the boredom and strain of night-duty among the refuse of rations, the beef and the biscuit-tins, and in the eerie sounds that detach themselves from the silence, the herders and the sheep, the steel contracting in the cold, the jackals and the morsel of dry earth falling into the ravine. And we are given the marvellously Kiplingesque touch of the very detail that would comfort isolated soldiers, the 'voices / Of women talking with men.'

Biographers and critics have often remarked that Kipling had a natural empathy with the ordinary soldier and the junior officer, and this characteristic was certainly in evidence during the war in South Africa. The accuracy of Kipling's depiction of what it was like for the ordinary soldier to fight for the Empire can be tested by comparing this poem with an extract from an actual diary kept during the war. This is an extract from the war diary of Private J. W. Milne, a volunteer in the Gordon Highlanders:

Friday 23rd March

Reveille 5am. Striked our tents, bundled them up and carried them down to the station and put them into wagons. Breakfast at 7.45 am. Got on to the train about 11 am, got some bully beef and biscuits and started for Norvals Pont, which took us 4 hours. All along the

line we could trace the destruction which the Boers had done and for the first time I realised that we would have a chance of a fight with the Boers yet, for we still thought that the fighting would be all done without us getting a chance of firing a shot. We arrived at Norvals Pont in the afternoon and got our tents off the train and pitched just before it came on rain.

Saturday 24th March

Reveille 5 am. Paraded at 6 am and marched to the Station for fatigue unloading wagons of sleepers and rails etc until 11 am without any breakfast, the rest of the Company carrying stones to make a service bridge for the trains to get up with supplies for the Troop in Bloemfontein. In the centre of the bridge the engineers were working. They put planks across the centre, which the Kaffirs carried, and stones at the sides. The Kaffirs also carried stones all day on their heads. There was also an aerial tramway across the old bridge which was carrying across stores to the other side driven by an electric wire across the river. The bridge had 13 spans, 5 of which had been blown up in the centre. We got a glass of rum that night.⁷

With its insistent focus on common soldiers sent out on a lonely mission, "Bridge-Guard on the Karroo" might not at first sight seem a defence of those in power but, as we shall see, the soldiers are in fact a variation on that favourite Imperial theme of "the Chosen Few". By using the same metre as that of "Horatio at the Bridge", the poem that every Victorian schoolboy knew by heart, Kipling implies that his bridge-guard have inherited the legendary courage of that Roman soldier. Macaulay's poem had versified the story told by the historian Livy of how when Rome was threatened by the Etruscan army, Horatio and two companions valiantly save the bridge by holding it long enough for it to be destroyed. One stanza⁸ may suffice to suggest the poetic affiliation between the two sets of humble soldiers:

Haul down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed you may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?

In addition, the 'few, forgotten and lonely' are the humble descendants of those who fought on St Crispin's Day at Agincourt, 'We few, we happy few, we band of brothers'.⁹ In Kipling's own mythology, as expressed in "A Song of the English" and elsewhere, these few are chosen because they come from a higher breed of men, those who obey the Law, taking up their appointed stations in a solid and structured world 'Framed through the iron arches— / Banded and barred by the ties'.

The bridge-guards not only have a fine military pedigree, but their humble task of guarding a railway bridge takes on heroic proportions because it has both biblical and Imperial associations. We owe these patient soldiers a respect which is derived from the Biblical parable of the reward due to the watchful servants¹⁰ and from the echo of the last line of Milton's sonnet "On His Blindness": 'They also serve who only stand and wait.' Finally, the reference to Keats¹¹ reminds us that these 'watchers of the skies', have a part, however humble, to play in the far grander scheme of Empire.

In addition to being on the side of the powerful, Kipling's poetry in general offers a celebration of power, the benevolent despotism of the British Empire. This is most obviously seen here in the dramatic importance given to the 'wonderful north-bound train'. No doubt but that the Age of Empire (1870-1914) was built on the Age of the Railway (1830-1914). Imperialists were, and still are, fond of pointing out the material benefits that Imperialism brought to primitive peoples, in the form of railways and bridges, improvements comparable to the roads and monuments which the Romans left behind. In Kipling's poem, the train is heading north, in the direction of the source of civilization and progress. It is also heading towards the front line, situated on the other side of the 'ramparts of slaughter and peril', where the real military action is taking place.

In Imperialist mythology the train is a powerful symbol of the "forward view" and at this point, appropriately, Kipling's poem manages to suggest a sense of movement. In the first four stanzas of the poem, we have a static painting¹² of the landscape, in which the military detail is also an artistic detail throwing into relief the Turner-esque sunset. In stanzas 11-14, on the other hand, the 'far track humming', the gathering and waiting for the train, the meetings and greetings and the snatched newspapers create suspense and then excitement by a more emphatically rising, anapaestic rhythm.

Most of all, the train is part of the New Imperialists' vision of Empire, the Dark Continent opened up by the railway. Cecil Rhodes' illustrious "Cape-to-Cairo" project had been inspired by the railway engineer Sir Charles Metcalfe, whose article in the *Fortnightly Review* of April 1889 had looked forward to the construction of 'the iron track

that must ultimately join the Cape with Cairo and carry civilization through the heart of the Dark Continent.' By the time of Rhodes' death in 1902, the project was well under way. In 1899 Kitchener had joined Wadi Haifa with Khartoum, the railway built by Indian labour had joined Mombasa to Nairobi by 1899, and Nairobi was linked to Lake Victoria by 1901. Our poem is concerned with the South African stage of the project, which by 1897 ran northwards from Cape Town through Kimberley to Bulawayo.¹³

Metcalfe's project of bringing light into darkness was made into a powerful metaphor by Joseph Conrad in his novella "Heart of Darkness."¹⁴ Conrad and Kipling take the light / darkness metaphor in very different, but equally interesting directions. In Kipling's poem the frightening absence, or near-absence, of natural light is contrasted with the comforting, but temporary, presence of artificial light. In the first four stanzas, the dazzling and aggressive Karroo sunset, a 'raw glare', 'blazing' is succeeded by the sun dying in a grey sky. As well as dipping his brush into the grey palette of the South African landscape, Kipling is suggesting that the British Empire is not, as many think, at its zenith. With the death of Queen Victoria, the imperial sun was setting. Recalling the warnings of the more famous "Recessional", the poet subtly reminds us that the British Empire may be doomed to go the way of the once-proud Zulu kings, defeated by the Boers at Blood River in 1838.

This suggestion of the twilight of the Gods continues throughout the first half of the poem. The light fails, 'the twilight swallows the thicket', masking the familiar natural landmarks. What is celebrated is the sublimity of the karroo, that peculiarly South African landscape, which seems to have caught the English imagination after the publication of Olive Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm* in 1883.¹⁵ The first chapter of this autobiographical novel, entitled "The Watch", is set at night and begins:

The full African moon poured down its light from the blue sky into the wide, lonely plain. The dry, sandy earth, with its coating of stunted karroo bushes a few inches high, the low hills that skirted the plain, the milk-bushes with their long, finger-like leaves, all were touched by a weird and an almost oppressive beauty as they lay in the white light.

Kipling's poem recreates this "weird and oppressive beauty", then goes further by introducing an original twist to the light into darkness theme. While the starlight remains distant and hostile: 'the solemn firmament marches', 'the hosts of heaven rise', 'the monstrous heaven rejoices',

the works of man are a source of hope and comfort. The railway tracks shine, the train's headlight shines plain, the tracks hum and the brief stop of the train brings 'meetings, greetings and voices'.

In other words, Kipling is not just addressing the loneliness of a few soldiers on an outpost of Empire; he is addressing the essential loneliness of man. The bridge-guard against 'the lean track overhead', against the Boer enemy, is also Man's watch against Death. In the context of the end of the nineteenth century and the final ebbing of the sea of Faith, Kipling's poem heralds a new age of Humanism. In the face of the indifference of God and the hostility of the natural world, man's only hope is the companionship of other men and the mechanical inventions that man will invent to overcome disease and natural disaster.

Kipling's poem is able to move from an individual to a political to an existentialist anxiety because it is a poem. The juxtaposition of the terms "poetry" and "power" suggests not just a relationship between poetry and power, but also the power peculiar to poetry. It is a power derived from magic, a primitive quality of poetry that is pre-rational, that appeals to emotions and not to reason. It is not that ideas are not present in poetry, but the listener/reader is seduced, mesmerized, fascinated, by these ideas, not led to question them by pursuing them to their logical conclusion. This magical power has been felt particularly strongly in relationship to Kipling's poetry, which is often referred to as casting a spell. To take just one instance among many:

Powerful as much of the poetry is, this is the Kipling of imperialist incantation, conjuring a vision of empire from a highly dubious mix of race, religion and romance.¹⁶

The phrase "imperialist incantation" encapsulates the widespread unease felt by Kipling's critics. The problem is that poetry, "incantation" is felt to be at the service of partisan "imperialist" politics. Kipling's poetry stands condemned on two counts: it is partisan and it is political. As T.S. Eliot wisely observed, "Poetry is condemned as 'political' when we disagree with the politics".¹⁷ In these postcolonial times imperialism is equated with jingoism and dismissed out of hand.¹⁸

In fact, the uneasiness about political poetry largely pre-dates post-colonialism, nor is it confined to the poetry of Kipling only. Almost all modern critics and many modern poets distrust political poetry *per se*. Keats' famous remark, that "We hate poetry that has a palpable design upon us",¹⁹ has become an axiomatic. Over the years, poetry with political designs has been turned into a veritable contradiction in terms.

This trend became particularly marked during the Second World War. Louis MacNeice put the matter most succinctly:

Art, though as much conditioned by material factors as anything else, is a manifestation of human freedom. The artist's freedom connotes honesty because a lie, however useful in politics, hampers artistic vision. Systematic propaganda is therefore foreign to the artist in so far as it involves the condoning of lies. [. . .] This means that in the long run a poet must choose between being politically ineffectual and poetically false.²⁰

Put more simply (without, I hope, simplifying) poetry and politics cannot mix because the political viewpoint hampers the poetic vision.

In such a perspective, Kipling's poetry can only be experienced as an uncomfortable paradox, for it is undoubtedly political and demonstrably poetical. One way out of the paradox is to argue that Kipling's poetry is not really poetry, but something else, 'great verse' according to T.S. Eliot or 'good bad poetry' according to George Orwell. But this line of argument is not really satisfactory, as these critics themselves half-admit, because it begs the question of what poetry, or at least good poetry, is. Personally, I have never read a better definition of poetry than that given by W.H. Auden: "Of the many definitions of poetry, the simplest is still the best: 'memorable speech'."²¹ By that definition, Kipling is the last person to be accused of not writing poetry.

There is another way out of the paradox, and it involves thinking about the power specific to poetry. One has to begin by dismissing the premise that poetry and politics are poles apart. On the contrary, the methods which both employ are dangerously close. Neither is more "honest" than the other in that both make an appeal to the emotions, rather than rational thought. If, as is generally agreed, the power of poetry is derived from magic, then it should be recalled that the way magic works is by seduction, by distracting the audience from what is really happening, by focussing its senses on something else. Poems and political speeches alike succeed by sleight of hand. Kipling's poetic celebration of Imperialist power reveals some realities of that power, while hiding others. In general, as George Orwell pointed out, Kipling's poetry hides the realities of the economic exploitation which was behind the Imperialist ideal. In this particular poem, the celebration of the humble servants of Empire masks the political, economic and social fact that for the colonized peoples, this military guard are not servants but masters.

Furthermore, it needs to be admitted that all poetry is political. By

that I mean that all poetry has a political dimension. Poetry is fundamentally three-dimensional, working on an individual, a local and a universal level. A poem exists by appealing to the reader's co-operation as an individual, as a member of a particular society and as a member of the human race. To call some poems (or poets) "political" and others not is to mistake nature for what is merely a question of degree. Kipling is a political poet in that his most immediate appeal is to the reader as a member of a group. The peculiar power of Kipling's poetry comes from his drawing on the intrinsic power of poetry to compel the reader to adopt the poet's point of view (political and otherwise), by combining the different powers of music and the written word, and from his use of the ballad form.

Kipling's enunciative use of 'we' requires his readers to include themselves in these 'few, forgotten and lonely'. Further, the ballad form incites them to sing along or at least join in the chorus of stanzas 5, 12 and 16. This is because the ballad form uses accentual metre, in which (unlike the iambic pentameter) the natural stress of intonation and the abstract pattern reinforce each other, thus creating a space for the collective voice.²²

The power of the poetry comes from it being written at a time when the oral tradition had not quite died out and the written tradition was only just beginning. Kipling is thus able to make full use of both traditions, drawing on what Eliot called 'the inspiration and refreshment of the living music-hall' to produce a highly rhythmical poem (suitable for recitation or, if set to music, singing) in which sounds constantly imitate sense. The ballad form offers possibilities for narrative and dramatic effect, and perhaps even announces an early verbal imitation of cinematographic effect. The poet-narrator's eye moves over the bridge-guard scene like a camera: ranging over the desert landscape lit by the last rays of the sun, panning in on the men stumbling into their places in the gathering gloom, then panning out again into the darkness, out of which the train arrives and departs.²³

At the same time the poem creates other meanings by drawing on the many resources of the printed page. This can be seen in the use of punctuation in the choral stanzas. In stanzas 5 and 12 the bridge-guard speak in parentheses, as though they were somehow offstage, thus betraying their peripheral status in the main drama. The parentheses disappear in the final stanza, allowing the non-combatants to emerge, as it were, into the limelight of a final rousing chorus. Moreover, in the chorus itself we see the poet using another resource of written poetry: the line-break after 'only', which creates the double sense, both deprecating and defensive, of 'guards as well as combatants' and 'not combatants but guards'.

On the other hand, poetry that was merely political would not be poetry. "Bridge-Guard in the Karroo" is a poem, not a manifesto, because it can be read in the other two dimensions. Although Kipling hides behind the mask of his chosen Few, the poem can be read autobiographically, as a product of his life as well as his times. It can also be read transcendently, in terms of protest against the human predicament. Read politically, the poem celebrates the courage of those isolated on the frontiers of Empire. Read individually, the poem evokes loneliness, as this spontaneous, contemporary reaction shows:

This morning I have been copying Mr Kipling's "Bridge-Guard" poem with great delight. Someone lent me his copy from *The Times*, and I had not succeeded in getting hold of it before. Don't you think it very fine? Don't you feel the same wonderful self-consciousness in it as in 'For to admire and for to see'. One sees and feels that lonely place in a wonderful way. If you were here now, how we would talk about it!²⁴

'That lonely place' is not only the imperial outpost, it is also the isolation of the individual speaker and the individual reader and, ultimately, the cosmic loneliness of man. Communion with others is possible but temporary. The small space of time that the train stops in the station, the precious but fleeting companionship of ordinary human voices are an echo of the Venerable Bede's metaphor of the life of man:

The present life of man, O king, seems to me, in comparison of that time which is unknown to us, like to the swift flight of a sparrow through the room wherein you sit at supper in winter, with your commanders and ministers, and a good fire in the midst, whilst the storms of rain and snow prevail abroad; the sparrow, I say, flying in at one door, and immediately out at another, whilst he is within, is safe from the wintry storm; but after a short space of fair weather, he immediately vanishes out of your sight, into the dark winter from which he had emerged. So this life of man appears for a short space, but of what went before, or what is to follow, we are utterly ignorant.²⁵

Pace Yeats, poetry writes not only of man's quarrel with himself, and of men's quarrel with others,²⁶ but also of mankind's quarrel with the common and utterly implacable enemy, Death. Some lines from a Jamaican poet writing in the 1980s spring to mind:

No. See the flesh? It is cave, it is
stone. Seals every I away from light.
Alone. Man must chant as Man can
gainst night²⁷.

What unites poets as radically different individually and politically as Rudyard Kipling and Dennis Scott is the shared knowledge that, except for poetry, Man is ultimately powerless.

NOTES

- 1 The karroo, sometimes spelt "karoo", is the wide sandy plateau that covers much of South Africa, from the Khoisan (or Hottentot) word for "thirstland".
2. Significantly, these short stories, "Folly Bridge", "The Outsider", "A Burgher of the Free State" and "The Way that he Took" long remained uncollected. Other stories about the war or with South Africa as a backdrop, were published in magazines after the war and collected in *Traffics and Discoveries* (1904).
3. In 1900 the family stayed in The Mount Nelson Hotel on the slope of Table Mountain. For the other seven visits they stayed in the "Woolsack", the cottage lent to them on the estate of Groote Schuur, Cecil Rhodes' house overlooking Cape Town.
4. Thomas Pinney, ed., *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling*, volume 3, 1996, p. 12.
5. Julian Ralph working for the *Daily Mail*. Howell Gwynne of Reuters, Perceval Landon of *The Times*, and F.W. Baxter of the *Johannesburg Star*.
6. H. G. Wells, *The New Machiavelli*. 1911, chapter 4.
7. Entries for 23 and 24 March 1900. Unpublished diary available online at <http://jwmlne.freeservers.com/>
8. The 29th stanza of 70 in the first of Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome* (1842).
9. *Henry V*, Act IV, scene 3, line 60.
10. Luke 12: 35-38. Other references to this parable in Matthew 24: 45-46, and I Peter, 1: 13.
11. Keats' sonnet "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" is itself a prophetic celebration of the awe of Empire.
12. *Ut pictura poesis*, a poem is like a painting. Horace, *Ars Poetica*. 361.
13. The extension of this line to the Victoria Falls in 1903, to Lusaka and Broken Hill in 1909, and to the mineral-rich Katanga region in the Belgian Congo, completed all that was ever constructed of this mythical Cape-to-Cairo line.
14. Conrad's story had been published in three instalments in *Blackwood's Magazine* in February, March and April, 1899. It was published in book form in *Youth: A Narrative; and Two Other Stories* in 1902.
15. Kipling admired this work and made a point of visiting Olive Schreiner in 1898.
16. Chris Brooks & Peter Faulkner (eds.), *The White Man's Burdens* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1996) 38. The authors are discussing "A Song of the English" (1896).
17. T.S. Eliot, *A Choice of Kipling's Verse*, Faber & Faber, London, 1941, p.7.
18. Despite the sound military adage that wars are won by knowing your enemy.
19. Letter to J.H. Reynolds, 3 February 1818.

20. Louis MacNeice, "The Poet in England To-day: A Reassessment" in Alan Heuser (ed.), *Selected Literary Criticism of Louis MacNeice*, 1987.
21. W.H. Auden & John Garrett, preface to *The Poet's Tongue*, 1935.
22. Derek Attridge, *The Rhythms of English Poetry*, 1982.
23. One wonders if Kipling, fascinated as he was by all new inventions, had seen *L'arrivée d'un train en gare*, one of the first films to be shown by the pioneering cinematographers Auguste and Louis Lumière, in 1895.
24. From a letter from Sarah Orne Jewett to Sara Norton, dated 28 August 1901, letter no.101 in Annie Fields (ed.), *Letters of Sarah Orne Jewett*, Houghton Mifflin, 1911. Online at:
<http://www.public.coe.edu/~theller/soj/let/let-frm.htm>
25. Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (731) Book II chapter 13.
26. W.B. Yeats, *Essays* (1924). 'We make out of the quarrel with others, rhetoric, but of the quarrel with ourselves, poetry.'
27. Dennis Scott, *Dreadwalk*, New Beacon Books, London, 1982.

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BRIDGE-GUARD IN THE KARROO

"... and will supply details to guard the Blood River Bridge. "

District Orders: Lines of Communication—South African War

Sudden the desert changes,
The raw glare softens and clings,
Till the aching Oudtshoorn ranges
Stand up like the thrones of kings—

Ramparts of slaughter and peril—
Blazing, amazing—aglow
'Twi'x the sky-line's belting beryl
And the wine-dark flats below.

Royal the pageant closes,
Lit by the last of the sun—
Opal and ash-of-roses,
Cinnamon, umber, and dun.

The twilight swallows the thicket,
The starlight reveals the ridge;
The whistle shrills to the picket—
We are changing guard on the bridge.

(Few, forgotten and lonely,
Where the empty metals shine—
No, not combatants—only
Details guarding the line.)

We slip through the broken panel
Of fence by the ganger's shed;
We drop to the waterless channel
And the lean track overhead;

We stumble on refuse of rations,
The beef and the biscuit-tins;
We take our appointed stations,
And the endless night begins.

We hear the Hottentot herders
As the sheep click past to the fold—
And the click of the restless girders
As the steel contracts in the cold—

Voices of jackals calling
And, loud in the hush between,
A morsel of dry earth falling
From the flanks of the scarred ravine.

And the solemn firmament marches,
And the hosts of heaven rise
Framed through the iron arches—
Banded and barred by the ties,

Till we feel the far track humming,
And we see her headlight plain,
And we gather and wait her coming—
The wonderful north-bound train.

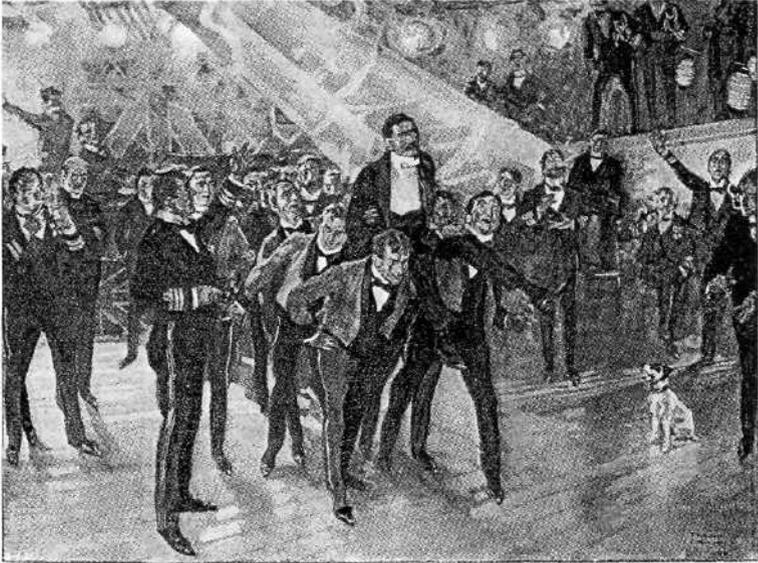
(Few, forgotten and lonely,
Where the white car-windows shine—
No, not combatants—only
Details guarding the line.)

Quick, ere the gift escape us!
Out of the darkness we reach
For a handful of week-old papers
And a mouthful of human speech.

And the monstrous heaven rejoices,
And the earth allows again,
Meetings, greetings, and voices
Of women talking with men.

So we return to our places,
As out on the bridge she rolls;
And the darkness covers our faces,
And the darkness re-enters our souls.

More than a little lonely
Where the lessening tail-lights shine.
No—not combatants—only
Details guarding the line!



ON BOARD H.M.S. "MAJESTIC" (MR. KIPLING BEING CHAIRED BY THE SQUADRENS AFTER RECITING "SOLDIER AND SAILOR TOO.")

Die Fortsetzung des Romans „Eine Weltreise“ von Marie Caule & befindet sich auf Seite 13.

Zeitschau.

Ein Besuch bei Rudyard Kipling.

Von Frau Kellner. Kandrad verköhen.

Heute habe ich dem selbstthätigen Blick ins Auge gesehen. Alle anderen Wahrnehmungen werden von diesem Eindrucke in den Hintergrund gedrängt. Ich erinnere mich Alle der Parabel vom dem Manne, der sagte, das Glück zu suchen und es natürlich nicht fand; ich habe es wirklich und wahrhaftig gefunden: es wohnt in einem von Ihnen beschriebenen Landhause „The Elms“, in dem unweit Brighton gelegenen Dorfe Rottingdean. Alles, was das Schicksal — Kipling würde dafür „der gute Gott“ sagen — an wirklichen Gütern zu vergeben hat, ist diesem wunderbaren Sonntagskinde zutheil geworden: Liebe, Unabhängigkeit, Unabhängigkeit, Ruhm, Macht bei voller Gesundheit und blühender Jugend, und was das Wichtigste ist, die Gabe, sich keinen Missethäter zu frenen. Rudyard Kipling ist zweiunddreißig Jahre alt und hat jetzt schon viel erreicht, was sonst wenigen außerordentlichen Geistes nach einem arbeitsreichen Leben gelangt: er ist der berühmteste Dichter innerhalb der angelsächsischen Rasse und hat — Zola und Tolstoi nicht ausgenommen — mehr Leser, als irgend ein Schriftsteller unserer Zeit. Sein Publicum ist die Welt, und zwar nicht nur die Welt unserer abendlichen Cultur: Seine Bücher werden ins Indische und Japanische übersetzt.

Seine Frau, eine Weibliche mit frohlichen dunkelblauen Augen, hat jene Kammer und sprachliche Geisteskräfte, welche die Amerikanerinnen aus dem Süden der Vereinigten Staaten charakterisirt, und man braucht nur einmal mit diesen zwei Menschen zusammen zu sein, um zu merken, daß sie als gute Kameraden zu einander ge-

The above photograph was printed in *The Academy* of 22 October 1898 (see *A Fleet in Being* for Kipling's description of his two trips with the Channel Squadron).

The Article on the left is the beginning of Kellner's report "A Visit to Rudyard Kipling," *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 10-11 November 1898

INTERVIEWS WITH RUDYARD KIPLING (I)

- I. Leon Kellner. "A Visit to Rudyard Kipling." *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*. 10-11 November 1898.
- II. Jules Huret. "At Home with Rudyard Kipling." *Le Figaro*, 19 September 1905, with Kipling's Revisions.
- III. Joseph Coudurier de Chassigne. "A Visit to Rudyard Kipling." *Le Gaulois*, 5 April 1923.

Edited by PROFESSOR THOMAS PINNEY

[No introduction is needed for Prof Pinney just enjoy the results of his work once again in this and subsequent issues. *Ed.*]

The three interviews with Rudyard Kipling, reprinted here and in subsequent issues of the *Kipling Journal*, are notable in at least two ways. In the first place, they are detailed and authentic as are few, if any, of the interviews in English with Kipling. From the very earliest moments of his career, Kipling was distrustful and defensive in his relations with the press, and, especially after his unlucky encounters with the American newspapers in the 1890s, he studiously avoided giving interviews and tried, as best he could, to keep all merely personal information about himself out of the papers. Occasionally, however, he was prepared to make exceptions in favour of journals not published in English, and to that practice we owe the interviews reprinted here in translation.

In the second place, the three interviews taken together make a sort of triptych, showing three sharply contrasted views of Kipling before and after the great crises of his life at the turn of the century and in the war. At the end of 1898, Kipling is at the height of his still-untroubled fame, in the full exercise of his powers, holding an international audience with a succession of works that dazzle by their originality and brilliance. To this public glory is joined an overflowing measure of domestic content. This picture, the one presented in Kellner's interview, is of course both more, and less, than the reality: Kipling had been distressed and humiliated by the outcome of his quarrel with his brother-in-law Beatty Balestier two years before, in 1896, while he still lived in Vermont. The newspapers had triumphed over the debacle of Kipling's appearance in court to testify against the unruly brother-in-law whom he had charged with a threat against his life. That had been the last, irreversible misstep in what was already a highly difficult and problematic relationship between Kipling and the Americans among whom he had cast his lot. By the end of that summer of 1896 Kipling left his home in Vermont to return to England, and it would be long

before his deeply aggrieved feelings as a misunderstood Englishman would be soothed; they were certainly still turbulent in 1898. Kellner, however, saw nothing of this, and so there was nothing to disturb his impression of Kipling as a confident, fully self-possessed, private person as well as a highly successful artist.

The Kipling that Jules Huret saw in 1905 was very different – still energetic and impulsive, to be sure, but no longer a "child of fortune" devoted to the production of an untroubled art. He had been marked, first, by the death of his daughter Josephine in 1899. The testimony of friends and acquaintances who had known him as he was before – the Kipling that Kellner met in 1898 – is unanimous in holding that he was never again quite the old ebullient self.

The outbreak of the Boer War in October 1899 seems to have given a decisive turn to Kipling's life. He hurried to South Africa to be close to the action, and committed himself unreservedly and somewhat noisily ("The Absent-Minded Beggar" was Kipling's first contribution to the war effort) to the British cause and to its leaders – Milner, Rhodes, and Jameson especially. For the next nine years – every year from 1900 through 1908 – Kipling would spend the winter and early spring in South Africa, in the house built for him there by Cecil Rhodes, enthusiastically studying South African men and things in order to promote the political ideas of his heroes. As Kipling's commitment to an Imperial South Africa grew stronger, so the tone and character of his thought and work changed; his political convictions – now fully "Imperialist" in the form since associated with his name – grew more rigid; his political hatreds – now extended beyond the English Liberals to rival nations like Germany or to rogue nations like the United States – grew more violent. The Kipling whom Jules Huret saw at Bateman's in 1905, though not yet afflicted by the Liberal "betrayal" of South Africa in 1906, nor by the onslaught of the "Huns" in 1914, was nevertheless a different person from the Kipling whom Kellner so admired and envied in 1898.

In Huret's eyes Kipling is only incidentally a writer, and we hear next to nothing about his domestic happiness. The talk is all of politics: the system of English imperialism, and the mounting challenge of Germany. The German theme – perhaps inevitable in a conversation between a Frenchman and an Englishman in the season of the *Entente Cordiale* – dominates the interview, and would be even more prominent had not Kipling edited out some parts of it. Even when, at the end of the interview, the talk at last turns to literature, it is only to exalt the literature and language of France over those of Germany.

The third interview comes after a long interval – 18 years; the mere passage of time, however, is not so important as the catastrophic content of those years. Kipling had suffered greatly, and continued to

suffer, from the war in general, from the death of his son John, and from the illness that would torment him almost without relief from 1915 until his death 21 years later. As the war had gone on, Kipling's feelings towards the Germans – the "Huns" – had grown more and more violent. He came close to holding them responsible for everything that he had ever suffered. There is no doubt that an element in Kipling's exaltation of France and the French was the mere fact that they too were determined to make the Hun pay in the fullest measure. These things all come together in the Coudurier de Chassaigne interview – illness, France, and the Huns. The idea of a guilty and incorrigible Germany managing still to escape "justice" dominates the interview and leaves room for nothing else.

Each interview, inevitably, presents a limited and somewhat distorted view of Kipling. The Kipling of 1898 was by no means so untroubled and so effortlessly successful as Kellner sees him; the Kipling of 1905 was by no means merely the "passionate harpist of jingoism" that Huret discovers: he was even then at work on the complex and difficult stories of *Puck*, which take his art in new directions. The Kipling that Coudurier de Chassaigne saw in 1923, ill and obsessed with seeking "justice" against Germany, was not wholly given over to politics; he was even then deepening and enriching his art with the stories that were collected in *Debits and Credits* to which he turned immediately after finishing his long labour on *The Irish Guards*. But the interviews are striking evidence of the different ways in which Kipling impressed observant people before and after the year 1900. They also testify to an indomitable spirit.

[Kipling's MS emendations and alterations in the Huret interview are published with the kind permission of the National Trust, to whom the copyright belongs, and of the King's School, Canterbury, to whom the corrected proofs belong. The omissions from the Coudurier de Chassaigne interview have been supplied from the typescript draft now in the Tyler Collection at Yale. The translations are by the editor. – *T. Pinney*]

A VISIT TO RUDYARD KIPLING

By LEON KELLNER

(*Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 10-11 November 1898.)

[Dr. Leon Kellner (1859-1928) was a teacher in the *Wahringer Oberrealschule*, Vienna, 1894-1904, and then Professor in the University of Czernowitz, 1904-14. He published a number of learned works on English literature and English philology and was also a student of Jewish literature and history and an early member of the Zionist movement. Kellner spent a year from 1898 to 1899 in England at work on an ambitious history of

English literature in the Victorian age that did not appear until 1909. He also made notes on English life and English culture; some of these he wrote up and sent back to Austria for newspaper publication. A selection of these articles, including a very slightly revised text of the interview with Kipling, were reprinted by Kellner in volume form as *Ein Jahr in England, 1898 1899*. Stuttgart. J.G. Cotta. 1900.

The Kipling interview attracted some attention in the English language press at the time of its first appearance in the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*. I have seen partial English translations in cuttings from the [New York?] *Sun*. 3 December 1898. at Dalhousie University, and from an unidentified paper dated 24 November 1898 at the University of Cape Town. Another partial translation was published by E.W. Martindell in "Kipling Among the Early Critics." *Kipling Journal*. April 1941 (reprinted in Harold Orel. ed.. *Kipling: Interviews and Recollections*. Totowa. NJ.. 1983. I. pp.123 124). So far as I know, the following is the first full English translation to appear. *T. Pinney*]

Today I have seen happiness incarnate face to face. All other perceptions were driven into the background by this impression. You all remember the parable of the man who set out to seek Happiness and of course did not find it; I have really and truly found it: it dwells in an elm-shaded country house—"The Elms"—in the town of Rottingdean near Brighton. Everything that Fate—Kipling would say "the good God"—has to bestow of real value has fallen to the share of this wonderful child of fortune: love, family life, independence, fame, the strength of sound health and a flourishing youth, and, most important, the gift of enjoying his own happiness. Rudyard Kipling is thirty two years old and has already attained with ease what otherwise few chosen spirits have attained after a lifetime of work: he is the most famous poet within the Anglo-Saxon race and has—Zola and Tolstoy not excepted—more readers than any other writer of our time. His public is the world, and indeed not only the world of our western culture. His books are translated into Indian and Japanese.¹

His wife, a brunette with flashing dark-blue eyes, has that charm and sparkling mental vigour that characterizes the American women from the south of the United States,² and one needs to be together with these two people only once in order to note that they belong to each other as good comrades. Kipling has three splendid children of whom the youngest, John, promises to become a Hercules, and the little ones enjoy the best air to be had on God's earth; at the back of Rottingdean are the Downs; in front, the sea.

Kipling has understood how, by wise economy, to obtain complete independence; for many years he has been placed in such a position that he can withstand all the temptations of publishers and editors and in his creative work needs only respond to the inner call and to his literary conscience. Literary creation is his highest pleasure, the calling of the writer is to him the most attractive vocation.

That is happiness, isn't it? Oh no, that is hardly yet enough. The highest happiness that a man can be awarded, when he has attained his goal, has also fallen to Kipling's share: his father and mother are still alive; and he can and does say with proudest reserve, 'All that I am I owe to them.' Kipling's father was a state official in India, and now lives in retirement in the neighbourhood of his son, or what from the standpoint of this globetrotter would be called neighbourhood. The son lives in Sussex, the father in Wiltshire. Kipling showed me in an American edition de luxe of his works an illustration from the hand of his father³—a masterpiece of the first rank.

Happy father, happier son.

One does not speak of one's mother to strangers; but a good son has only to say "my mother" and we know how it stands between those two.

And even with that the measure of Rudyard Kipling's happiness is not exhausted. No, he has much more than all that: the "good God" has also granted him the gift of making others happy, not only through his writing, but especially through personal intercourse. The personality of this child of fortune works like a magician, like a banisher of cares, like a fountain of youth. To me at least the visit to Kipling was a cloudless day.

I think that personal matters, not usually dealt with until the end, may be getting too much space; yet one wants to know about the writer before one interests oneself in the wellbeing of mankind. Certainly, I went to Rottingdean in order to talk to Kipling about some purely literary matters, about which no book can provide information. I wanted to know how the *Jungle Books*, whose forms mocked every literary pedigree, had developed; where the poet took the rhythms of his *Barrack-Room Ballads*, for which one vainly sought a model; whence came to him the wonderful knowledge of so many lands, men and customs; who had betrayed to him the secret of nature in the icy North, in the depths of the sea, in the thickets of the primitive Indian jungle. All that I had come to hear, and more—but as we parted in the twilight of the brief autumn day, the purpose of the trip, the purely literary conversation, was forgotten, and in a mood that I have not known for a long time, I said to myself: today you have seen happiness face to face.

How falsely was I informed about the man Kipling! When I let fall the remark in literary circles, that I would very much like to ask the poet himself about things about which neither books nor periodicals could inform me, people smiled pityingly at my naivete. If I had asked why astronomers never went to the moon in order to find the source of knowledge at first hand, they could not have smiled more pityingly at me. Every literary man agreed: Kipling is not to be interviewed. Only in the reason for this fact did they differ. One gave me to understand through a suggestive silence that he had his own view on that matter, only he pre-

ferred to keep it to himself; another hinted that the author of the *Jungle Books* as a genuine monarch of literature maintained the royal tradition by lingering at his ease, invisible to the people; a third, admittedly a somewhat lower fellow, supposed, it was natural that a man who could sell every word for solid gold would not be inclined to squander his valuable breath in a scholarly conversation; yet another made out Kipling to be a misanthrope, who in his hermitage on the sea gave himself up to gloomy thoughts, and only occasionally as a sort of Swift published a poem or a story, in order to show mankind his complete contempt.

When, between eleven and twelve in the morning I went to Rottingdean, I tried to reconcile the man who had written me an obliging letter with the dark hermit of my imagination, and I was quite disturbed to find that the carriage went so fast. According to the invitation, I should not arrive before one; when we stopped before "The Elms" twelve had scarcely passed. If the housemaid had said "not at home" I would certainly not have been annoyed, nor even surprised, but would have taken a stroll through the pretty village. But Mr. Kipling was at home, and received me in his work room with a hearty handclasp. A figure of middle size in comfortable informal dress: knickerbockers, etc. The strong brown hand held a short-stemmed pipe, an ordinary "briar," the eyes, whose exact colour I can't now specify, were distorted through steel spectacles. A vigorous moustache shadowed a delicate mouth; the brown hair, lightened at the temples and somewhat thinned at the crown, allowed the strong arched forehead to appear larger than it is. The colour of his countenance is sallow, almost dark. And the total impression? When Kipling speaks and turns to face one fully, one supposes one sees before one a very alert, very lively, but harmless child; but the profile shows a strong man who did not grow up in the peaceful atmosphere of the study. I have seldom received such different impressions from one and the same countenance.

The workroom is of a surprising simplicity. The north wall is covered with books halfway up, before which stands a light couch and one or two cane chairs; over the door opposite hangs the picture by Burne-Jones⁴; on the right, just by the window, stands a plain table—not a writing table—on which lie a few leaves of paper written upon; I suppose it was verse. No artworks, no comforts, no knick-knacks; a bare room, empty and serious like a puritan chapel.

'I am very much afraid that I have come too early and have disturbed you in your work . . .'

'No, no,' Kipling interrupted me quickly, 'I have done my daily task.'

I looked at him in surprise. The late Trollope came to my mind, who wrote his twenty pages a day no matter what the circumstances and who did not allow this Job's torment to be interrupted even once by

seasickness when he went on official business from Marseille to Cairo in order to set up a European postal service in Egypt. But Trollope and—Kipling!

He guessed at once what had astonished me.

'I take care of my daily task conscientiously; but not everything that I write is printed; the larger part goes in there.'

The wastepaper basket under the desk received a strong kick, and a tangle of crumpled leaves rolled on the floor. Kipling's movements are quick, lively, perhaps indeed rather nervous. A thoroughly southern temperament.

'You have a very heavy labour before you,' he continued. I had told him that I had been working for more than ten years on a description of "English Literature in the Age of Queen Victoria."

'Indeed, the study is as difficult as it is interesting, and you can lighten my work if you will answer some questions about your own work.'

Kipling answered at first hesitatingly and embarrassedly, for my questions referred to personal matters, but gradually the field of the conversation broadened, and he spoke as naturally and without constraint as a child. He replied and put questions, talked and listened; we talked about all kinds of different things that stood only in the most remote relationship to the strict purpose of my research, and thus was every word that he said a new little stone in the mosaic picture that he himself unintentionally designed. Not even under torture would I be able to approximate faithfully the conversation, which lasted from twelve until five o'clock—lunch was certainly no interruption, only that Mrs. Kipling illuminated men and things from the feminine standpoint, and indeed in the brightest way, but the picture of the man stands vividly before me, and I may try to record in words how it developed in words.

A very difficult to describe, very complex nature. At least three different racial sorts come together in his being: from the father's side comes English blood; from the mother's, Scottish and Irish. If one follows the family tree back for four hundred years, one finds the Kiplings as Dutch immigrants. There is likewise a curious mixture of two exactly opposite temperaments. The grandfathers on both sides were ministers. With the father, however, the artist nature prevailed over every puritanical inclination. The mother has composed stories in verse and prose all her life. This child of contrasts spends the first years of his life in the mysterious Indian world of wonders and, through the extraordinary relations of that country, becomes familiar with the oldest culture of the east on the one hand, and, on the other, with the developed, even over-sophisticated civilization of the west, as the English men and women of India presented it in their salons. The child sees

how a family in an Indian village enjoys its life, if it has four clay walls, a straw roof, three crockery pots to call its own and earns a handful of rice each day through hard labour; the same child grows up in a neighbourhood where a thousand ingenious devices are necessary in order to make existence even bearable to the spoiled foreigners. As the child begins to babble, he learns to name things in two languages; Kipling speaks Hindustani as fluently as English. Through the servants he is made familiar with all the religions of the east: the *ayah* is Roman-Catholic, and with her he kneels at the same altar; his body servant takes him with him to the mosque, others take him into the temples of the Hindus and Parsees.

He is torn from this strange world as soon as he reaches a boy's age and is sent to an English public school at Westward Ho. But he has no time to learn the homeland and to forget the east, for at sixteen years he is again in India earning his own bread. For seven years long he suffers the dangerous drudgery of the journalist; he remains always on the plains, even when all the Europeans fly to the hills⁵; he stays in the hot weather as in the rainy weather and observes the English military and civil administrators at work. No man, not even a doctor, sees so much of life as a journalist, if he has eyes with which to see. Kipling sees and hears with all his senses, and what has once found entry through these gates, is held fast forever by his fabulous memory.

After Kipling had observed and listened and put things together for several years the spirit of his father rose in him; he began, as an artist, to give form to what he had seen, to give artistic beauty to what he had heard. He had lived much with the officers and soldiers posted to India and had studied their ways; the common soldier, despised at home, the poor devil "Tommy Atkins", who carries out the hard dirty work of empire, who is shoved around in all five corners of the world as the necessity of the hour demands, without ever hearing a word of thanks, this world-striding Tommy Atkins in India had developed his own lifestyle, his own morality, his own song, almost his own speech. Kipling is surprised and caught by the barrack room ballad, with its thrilling swing, its laconic eloquence, its catchy refrain; he listens. The words are crude, often half incomprehensible; an abundance of filth encloses a noble gem. He clears away the waste, splits the diamond, and the world sees with astonishment an unsuspected treasure of poetry. The *Barrack-Room Ballads* are at times cultivated folk poetry, for which Kipling has done something similar to what Goethe has done for the "Heideroslein"; but only at times: most are from Kipling in spirit and are composed after the melodies of old soldiers' songs.

Almost at the same time as the *Barrack-Room Ballads* the *Plain Tales from the Hills*⁶ bore the name of Kipling out into the world;

poetry and prose had the effect of a revelation. Through the thin volumes of the youthful artist a new world was disclosed, even to those who thought that they understood India because of their official service. "A new light!" wrote Marie v. Bunsen⁷ in Germany; "a new poetic genius!" prophesied all the critics unanimously.

The period of apprenticeship was over. How did Kipling behave himself in this sudden good fortune?

The puritanical element in his being comes through most strongly where others—Robert Burns is one example of many—lose themselves in the intoxication of success. Kipling is never so humble, never so strongly inclined to self-communion and self-examination as when the triumph of his success swirls around him.

'I am very suspicious of praise,' he told me, 'very suspicious of fame. You know the history of eighteenth-century English literature. How many "immortal" poets has that fruitful period not produced! And now ask yourself how much of that "immortal" poetry has come down to us as a living word. To name only one: who today reads Pope? Sometimes I leaf through those volumes there' (he pointed to the great Deluxe Edition of his works by Macmillan)⁸ and ask myself: 'How much of that, which is printed on such handsome paper, ought never to have seen the light of day, how much, my dear friend, have you written out of greediness, how often have you bowed down in the House of Rimmon?' (a favourite phrase of Kipling's).

After the first great success Kipling buried himself in the remotest region of North America, spent the winters in latitudes where the snow lies six feet deep on the ground for half a year, near the French Canadians, whose folk poetry he could not recommend enough to me, went then to Alaska, from whence he went to Japan and around Asia and then back again to Europe.⁹ Where has he not been since then? I always asked myself where the man got his details, details that carry the seal of absolute reality to the remotest regions. The answer is very simple: he has seen the things on the spot.¹⁰

Who does not remember the splendid story of "The White Seal" in one of the *Jungle Books*? It tells the life of the seals in Novastoshnah, how, year in year out, they carry on their war with one another, until every father has provided a living place for his wife and brood; how the young bachelors play farther inland and how the natives drive them together like lambs and slaughter them by thousands—the whole fascinating precisely through its detail.

'Where have you found the material?' I asked.

'I have seen it with my own eyes,' was the answer.¹¹

I know no better example to show of the fashion in which Kipling works and to partially explain his great success than that which

follows. A London company advertises its meat extract with a picture showing an entire ox in a teacup: the meat of a whole ox was needed in order to prepare a cup of beef tea. The short stories of Kipling recall this picture. No reader has a clue about how much know-how, how many impressions, how many detailed studies enter into those few pages that a boy can turn over in a few minutes.

And this fact has its weighty moral. I believe that the time of the boulevard and coffeehouse writers, who portray themselves and their like, is over, for a good while at least; the greatest art will not get over the lack of a rich material. Today we want a rich material in a flawless form.

Kipling, who commands an infinitely abundant material, puts the greatest weight on form. He has of course founded a school, and of course the students imitate the weakest points of his youthful work: abundance of material with sovereign neglect of form. Kipling is annoyed by that and is now inclined rather to exaggerate the value of form.

Yet another example of the form and style of his work may be cited. The book *Muthige Capitanen* (to be sure a dim translation for the title taken from an old Cavalier song, "Captains Courageous") describes the work in the mid-Atlantic Ocean on the so-called "Banks." For a land-lubber almost too much detail is packed in the book; but he has seen it with his own eyes, and it has so worked on him that he tries to produce the same effect upon the reader.¹² What he told me in the case of Shakespeare's *Tempest* is artistically of the greatest interest. When Kipling visited Bermuda,¹³ he was especially surprised by the landing place in one part of the coast, without being able to account for this feeling. Everything seemed to him to be familiar. Then on a walk he came across a spacious cavern: now the riddle was solved. It was the scene of Shakespeare's *Tempest* as it had stayed in his imagination. An inquiry into the sources of Shakespeare's play showed that the great dramatist in fact had read the narrative of a voyage to Bermuda and had faithfully taken over the details.

Of course Kipling's art is not exhausted by these analyses. An abundance of material, a consummate form—that would put any writer in the first rank. But Kipling knows how to find the soul of mankind. I knew that from his work; in conversation he showed himself a student of the soul, who through observation and reflection has arrived at the same results as the most progressive German psychologists without ever having heard their names or the titles of their works.

'All thought,' he said casually, 'is abortive speech.' How the late Professor Stricker¹⁴ would have congratulated himself to have found so powerful a supporter for his much-disputed theory of the nature of speech performance.

When I complained to him how hard it is to harmonize the reputation of an English poet in his own country with the critical judgment of other nations, one of the most difficult things that a historian of a foreign literature encounters, and indeed one that touches the heart of criticism and literary history, he said:

'I perfectly understand the difference of tastes, and accordingly the difference of judgment of the same poet by two different peoples: I am surprised only that here and there a general agreement exists. You Germans can understand English, so far as grammar and the dictionary provide the means to understand the language; but when you translate justice with *Gerechtigkeit*, virtue with *Tugend*, then you do not get the impression from these words what the Englishman gets when he writes them down. We write indeed in letters, but psychologically every printed page is a picture book, every word, concrete or abstract, a picture; the picture never comes to the reader consciously, but deep below in the realm of the unconscious the picture works wholly and fully. And there lies the catch. Every nation has for every word its own picture that will be handed over unspoken from one generation to the next. The German has from *Gerechtigkeit* a distinctly different picture than the Englishman has from justice. And every poem contains a hundred such pictures. Is it not remarkable that one nation generally understands the poetry of another?'

'And then'—he went on thoughtfully—'it is really time that the nations understand one another!'

Is it perhaps surprising to hear such pacific talk from the imperialist Kipling, who through his songs and stories has done more than any living politician to extend the imperial idea and to strengthen the feeling of community of all Britons? It is one of the fixed ideas of the continent that imperialist politics are identical with jingoism; on the contrary, from what I heard from him, the pacifists would not have the least difficulty in securing Kipling as a member of their society.

'The violation of one white nation by another I take to be the greatest mistake that a politician can make,' he said. 'Don't annex white men!'¹⁵

'But the black?'

Yes, this is something else. Kipling has very heretical views on the subject of the Blacks.

'I am against slavery for a single reason: the whites are demoralized by it.'

He talked enthusiastically about Rhodes,¹⁶ whom he knows personally, and whose effectiveness he was in a position to judge from his last visit to Matabeleland.¹⁷

'What is Rhodes like personally? How does he appear to you?' I asked.

'Rhodes is greater than his work.'

I expressed my surprise that Olive Schreiner¹⁸ presents the man and his work so darkly. Kipling rejected shortly and smartly all of the reproaches of this writer as wholly groundless—the only harsh judgment that I actually heard from Kipling. He was as unreserved in his appreciation of others as he was diffident about himself. He was enthusiastic about Stevenson, marvelled at Henley's poetry, and expressed himself in exceedingly laudatory words about the latest work of Leonard Merrick, *The Actor-Manager*,¹⁹ that he read in serial parts in the newspaper, the *Daily Mail*. He took in general a lively interest in all literary movements and speculated about the currents and counter-currents in the spiritual life of England. We ran through one literary province after another—Kipling is at home in all of them and has by and large an optimistic view of the state of contemporary English literature.

'If I had your book to write,' he said, 'I would try in a final chapter to point out a possible way to get over from our somewhat chaotic literature to the literature of the twentieth century. I would call the chapter "Between the Tides." We are, I feel, between ebb and flow—it is now what one calls "slack tide." We are waiting for the great man who will unite all the little tendencies, collect all the little, fragmented energies, and who will give a new and adequate expression to a new time.'

Is the man still to come, or is he already here?—

The next few years will tell.

NOTES

1. The list of translations of Kipling's work made by Flora Livingston does not include anything in Japanese, Hindustani, or Urdu as early as 1898 (*Supplement to Bibliography of the Works of Rudyard Kipling*, Cambridge, Mass., 1938). That list is, however, incomplete.
2. Caroline Kipling was not from the South but from Rochester, N.Y., only a few miles from Canada.
3. John Lockwood Kipling illustrated seventeen of the first twenty-one volumes of the American "Outward Bound" edition of R. Kipling's works, an edition that began publication in 1897.
4. In the original "das Bild von Burne-Jones." I do not know what Kellner means by the definite article, nor what picture is referred to.
5. Kipling in fact visited the hills in every one of his summers in India: Dalhousie in 1884 and Simla in the other years.
6. *Plain Tales from the Hills* was published in 1888; *Barrack-Room Ballads* not until 1892 in England.
7. Marie von Bunsen (1860-1941), novelist, travel writer, biographer, and memoirist.
8. Macmillan's "Edition De Luxe" appeared in 38 volumes from 1897 to 1938 as the English equivalent of the American "Outward Bound" edition.

9. Kellner has confused the account here: Kipling never went to Alaska, though he considered the possibility in 1889; he visited Japan twice, in 1889 and 1892; his only travels "around Asia" apart from India were in 1889, when, on his return to England from India, he made brief stops in Burma, Singapore, and Hong Kong. In 1891 he visited New Zealand and Australia.
10. Whether Kipling gave Kellner this idea or whether Kellner invented it, who can say? My guess is that Kellner shared the "realist" assumptions of his day and supposed that observation and experience were the basis of art. The fact is that most of Kipling's representations of exotic places and forms of life, apart from certain Indian scenes, were drawn from books and his own invention. See the next note.
11. The main source of "The White Seal" is Henry W. Elliott, *The Seal Islands of Alaska*, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1881. Kipling must have been teasing if he actually said that he had seen "with my own eyes" the life of "The White Seal." In the mock-serious "Preface" to *The Jungle Book*, Kipling poses as an "editor" who has merely edited the contributions of "specialists," including such experts as 'Bahadur Shah, baggage elephant 174 on the Indian Register.' The "specialist" to whom he owed the story of "The White Seal" he identifies in the "Preface" as a 'fellow-voyager' on the *Empress of India*: this, it appears in the story itself, was 'Limmershin, the Winter Wren [who] told me that tale when he was blown on to the rigging of a steamer going to Japan, and I took him down into my cabin and wanned and fed him for a couple of days till he was fit to fly back to St. Paul's again.'
12. Kipling had in fact visited Gloucester and Boston in preparation for writing '*Captains Courageous*', but he had never been on the Grand Banks. He relied on the stories of his friend Dr. Conland, who had sailed with the cod fleet, and on his usual work of bookish inquiry.
13. In February-March 1894. Kipling's ideas about the sources of *The Tempest* are written out in "Landscape and Literature," a letter to the *Spectator*, 2 July 1898 (reprinted in Sussex Edition as "Shakespeare and *The Tempest*"), and in "The Coiner" (*Limits and Renewals*). Kipling thought that Shakespeare heard the story rather than read it.
14. Salomon Stricker (1834-98), distinguished Viennese research pathologist, who also published philosophical and speculative works, including *Studien über die Sprachvorstellungen*, Vienna, 1880.
15. "Don't annex white men!" is in English.
16. Kipling had made his first extended visit to South Africa in the first months of 1898; his friendship with Rhodes began then.
17. Kipling travelled into Rhodesia (as Matabeleland had been called since 1895) by the railway that had been built just a year before Kipling's visit.
18. Olive Schreiner (1855-1920), South African writer best-known for *The Story of an African Farm* (1883), had once been on admiring terms with Rhodes but was opposed to his politics and his exploitation of the natives. She broke with him in 1893. Her *Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland* (1897) contains bitter attacks on Rhodes. Kipling, who knew and admired Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm*, had met Schreiner in Cape Town in 1891, but he appears to have had no acquaintance with her during his South African years from 1898 to 1908. Politics would have separated them.
19. Leonard Merrick (1864-1939), English novelist and playwright; *The Actor-Manager*, 1898.



THE STAMERS-SMITH KIPLING DISPLAY CABINET
The Library, University of Sussex

A VISIT TO THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX LIBRARY

By ROGER AYERS

A small but very interested group of members, including one who had come from Finland for the event, took advantage of the invitation from Sussex University Library to visit their Special Collections on 19 July. This invitation was extended to the Kipling Society following the installation of the cabinet for the display of Kipling-related items from the Special Collections which had been paid for by the Society from the Eileen Stammers-Smith bequest and individual contributions.

The visit started in the foyer of the Library where the cabinet (pictured opposite) is one of several displaying choice items from the many collections. On the day, it held a first edition of *Just So Stories* and original sketches of Rudyard Kipling's illustrations for that book together with drawings by Lockwood Kipling, some to illustrate Rudyard's books and others to entertain Elsie and John at the time they were living in Rottingdean. Most poignantly, also displayed was the original round print of the photo of Josephine, Elsie and John taken shortly before Josephine's death in 1899 and one of the last letters from John before he was killed at Loos in 1915. The contents of the cabinet are to be changed regularly and will be Kipling-related for most of the year, allowing its use, along with the other cabinets, for larger displays on a single theme.

Our hosts, Dorothy Sheridan, head of Special Collections (and a member of our Council), and her staff then took us up to their department where we were briefed on the number of collections of documents and letters which go to make up their Rudyard Kipling holding, which is itself just one part of an extensive range of collections which they look after. We were then allowed to inspect a wide selection of most interesting note-books, sketch-books, papers and letters and, what is more, to touch as well as look, since the Library has a 'no gloves' policy. After a few readings of favourite pieces we were then able to talk with the staff over a welcome sandwich lunch. We are most grateful to Debby Shorley, the University Librarian, and to Dorothy and her staff for providing this fascinating glimpse of their work.

The day's visit, ably organised by our Meetings Secretary, Jeffery Lewins, did not end there, for he had arranged that we should go on to Rottingdean where once again we were made welcome by our old friends, Michael and Audrey Smith, and had a chance to see the Grange, the Kipling garden, the Burne-Jones' windows in the church and, with Lorraine Price, the grave of her grandfather, Cornell Price, in the churchyard. Ending with tea at the Grange, it was altogether a most interesting and rewarding day. *(continued on p.52).*



KRISHNA MULVANEY

By William Nicholson (1872 – 1949)

Reproduced by permission of Elizabeth Banks

THE KRISHNA MULVANEY PRINT

BY WILLIAM NICHOLSON

By BRYAN DIAMOND

The exhibition at the Royal Academy at the end of 2004 of works by William Nicholson included several connected to Kipling. The lithograph entitled *Krishna Mulvaney* was shown from a series "Characters of Romance" and was briefly referred to by Merry in 1994¹. Dr C. Campbell (an authority on Nicholson's prints) describes this series as mostly from 18th and 19th century fiction, the choice of subjects presumably made largely by Nicholson. The project was started by November 1899, and he considers the male figures as the more successful characterizations, each carefully matched to his style². Sadly, the Heinemann archive did not contain material referring to the choice of any of the subjects.'

The drawings were completed by July 1900 and the series was published by Heinemann in October. The farcical, Rabelaisian⁴ "The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney" was published as Kipling's first signed story in *Macmillan's Magazine* as recently as December 1889 (Stewart³); so Nicholson was very soon aware of this recent publication (collected in the book *Life's Handicap* in 1891). The novelty of his writings on the soldier in India had been widely noted and the back-numbers of the magazine were in demand⁶. Henry James had by 1900 instanced the Irish soldier Terence Mulvaney as one of Kipling's most remarkable portraits⁷ "a charming man. a creation to be proud of; he was the wisest of the three soldiers but tending to romanticism and also immorality⁸.

In the story, at page 33 [Macmillan Edn.] the drunken Mulvaney has been taken in a palanquin to a temple where the big Queens' Praying (for royal women) was in progress. Nicholson's picture is of him playing a beer bottle, which had come with the lining he had ripped from the palanquin, as if it were a flute: "... I was out av the dhark av the pillar, the pink linin' wrapped round me most graceful, . . . an' a could draught blowin' round my bare legs. . . I was Krishna tootlin' on the flute—. . . my face was wax- white. . . . but they took me for the livin' god. . . an' I crooked my legs like a shepherd on a china basin,⁹ an' I did the ghost-waggle with my feet... I sang— (a song by an Irish humorist¹⁰) 'Only say . . .'. His white face was presumably due to his fright. He becomes larger than life, and in a mysterious way equivalent to Krishna¹¹.

In the print, Mulvaney, the Irish giant¹², is shown correctly with his boots off. one bare foot turned sideways, within the cloak his legs must

be apart and bent. His right-hand fingers are extended as if ready to play a flute, the beer bottle is a dark mass with two highlights. The pink cloak is indicated by deeper patches of pink within the overall pink sheet; the women are sketchily indicated by five praying or ecstatic figures at the lower portion. Mulvaney knew about Krishna as "the god that the rig'mental chaplain talks about". He is also mentioned (or as Shiv) in other stories, e.g. in several *Jungle Book* tales.¹³ Krishna is one of the most commonly worshipped deities in Hinduism, an incarnation of Vishnu, the all-pervader. The heroic god is traditionally depicted as adorned with flower-like garlands, dressed in a yellow garment and playing a flute¹⁴, whose impact was bewitching. How much detail would the chaplain have told the soldiers in the late 19th century? Evidently enough for Mulvaney to portray himself adequately to satisfy the women, although I doubt that the god would have waggled his feet. Although the women were familiar with Krishna from images, they prayed to a big fat "she-god"; presumably there was no Krishna image in the temple?

In 1931 the *Punch* artist Cleaver¹⁵ illustrated Mulvaney as he returned to his companions, proclaiming "I have come back a pink god", standing, still hatless and barefooted, draped in the cloak of the palanquin lining, the artist has indicated a little of the embroidery showing "the loves of the Hindu gods"; Nicholson has also shown this by his squiggles and three sketchy figures.

Kipling has told a vivid tale, and Nicholson has chosen to depict this dramatic incident in his series of characters from fiction, of which this by Kipling was the most recently published.

NOTES

1. Peter Merry, "Rudyard Kipling and William Nicholson", *Kipling Journal*, No.270, June 1994, pp.31-35.
2. Colin Campbell, *William Nicholson: the Graphic Work*, Barrie & Jenkins, 1992, pp.97-99; and in *The Art of William Nicholson*, Royal Academy of Arts, 2004; p.160, cat. No.83. *Mulvaney*.
3. Dr Campbell, personal communication, 2005.
4. "with a Rabelasian tang" : R. Thurston Hopkins, *Rudyard Kipling: A Literary Appreciation*. 1915, p.3.
5. James McG. Stewart, *Rudyard Kipling: A Bibliographical Catalogue*, Toronto, 1959. p.78.
6. Edmund Gosse in *Century Magazine*, XLII, October 1889, in *Kipling: The Critical Heritage*, Roger Lancelyn Green, 1971, p.110; and Hopkins, v. note 4.
7. Sir Walter Besant, *Contemporary Review*. LXXV11, January 1900, in Green, v. note 5, p.253; and H. James' Introduction, March 1891, in Green, pp. 163-5.
8. J.H. Fenwick, "Soldiers Three", in *Kipling's Mind and Art*, ed. by Andrew Rutherford, 1964, p.235.

9. 'China' is a term commonly, although erroneously, used to refer to both earthenware and porcelain and he may simply have meant a printed, white-bodied, basin. Printing became very popular on ceramics from the late 18th century as an inexpensive way of applying complex decoration to wares for a mass market. Rustic scenes, including shepherds (perhaps with crooked legs) and shepherdesses were a popular subject, even in the 19th c. when the country was gradually being urbanised (personal communication.. Miranda F. Goodby, Collections Officer – Ceramics. The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Hanley.
10. By Francis Mahoney (1804-66), former priest usually known as 'Father Prout', see *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, per A.O.J. Cockshut in his note to p.33 of *Life's Handicap*, The World's Classics, 1987.
11. Louis L Cornell, *Kipling in India*, 1966, pp. 159-160.
12. Gosse, v. note 6.
13. W. Arthur Young, *A Dictionary of Characters in the Stories of Rudyard Kipling*, 1911, p.182; Young and John H. McGivering, *A Kipling Dictionary*, 1967, p.165.
14. e.g. as shown in 18th century roundels, Wellcome Library.
15. Reginald Cleaver, in *Humorous Tales*, Macmillan, 1931, b/w illustration facing p.356; reproduced in *Kipling Journal* No.19, Frontispiece, September 1931.

JUST SO STORIES

A two CD set of ten of these stories would make a wonderful Christmas gift. Well received by those who have already listened to them they may be obtained for £15.00, including postage, packing and VAT. Please send a UK cheque to:

Michael Ducarel, 14B Kennington Oval, London, SE11 5SG

"WHEN THE EMPIRE CALLS"

A double-CD of "Barrack-Room Ballads" and "Popular Songs of the Boer War" has just been released in Australia by ABC Classics (ABC Classics 476 8063), sung by the baritone Michael Halliwell who is accompanied by David Miller on the piano. The first disc is the same as "Soldier, Soldier" which was noticed in the September 2001 *Journal* No.299, p.59, whereas the second is new material that includes "The Absent Minded Beggar" and "Recessional" in its 28 tracks. The package includes a booklet giving the text of all the songs together with notes about them. The website is abcshop.com.au where the set is priced at AU\$ 30.95

PARODY, PLAGIARISM AND PASTICHE

Readings after the A.G.M., 6 July 2005

[The latest record in the *Journal* of an evening of readings by members is in June 2001, No.298 which took place in Melbourne, Australia. The first was recorded in the *Journal* for April 1930, No.13 as being held at the Hotel Rubens in London, December 1929. These readings were all from Kipling's works, but those that were enjoyed at the Royal Over-Seas League this year came from a considerably wider range. The programme of readings is set out below, and is followed by the new material that members had prepared for the occasion. – Ed.]

Item (Source)

Read by:

By **KIPLING**

- "Gertude's Prayer" (*Dayspring Mishandled*) Jeffery Lewins
 "Donec Gratus Eram" (*U.S.C. Chronicle, No.10*) Jane & Sharad Keskar
 "Muse Among the Motors" (extracts) Roger Ayers
 "The Long Trail" ("L'Envoi") (*Barrack-Room Ballads*) John Radcliffe

By **OTHERS**

- "Night Mail" (*W.H. Auden*) John Radcliffe
 "IF—" (*Machine Translation*) Sharad Keskar
 "IF—" (*Robin Mitchell*) Robin Mitchell
 "IF—" (*Sebastian Faulkes to a tabloid journalist*) Jane Keskar
 "The Seventeen Camels" (*Retold by Jeffery Lewins*) Jeffery Lewins
 "Post-Recessional" (*G.K. Chesterton*) Alan Underwood
 "Talky and Friends"
 (*Punch* 18 Oct 1899 & *Journal* No.290) David Page
 Kipling's Three Enemies (Boer war items) Shamus Wade
 "Lines in Praise of Tommy Atkins"
 (*William McGonagall*) Roger Ayers
 "The 'Absinthe' Minded Beggar"
 (A loose sheet found in a copy of *The Years Between*) Roger Ayers
 "A Ballad: Proser and poet too" (*Guy Wetmore Carryl*) George Engle
The Five Notions (extracts) (*T. W.H. Crosland*) Bryan Diamond
 "The Assertion of the Black and White Cat" (*Lisa Lewis*) Jane Keskar
 "The Green Eye of the Little Yellow God"
 (*Sketch based on the poem by J. Milton Hayes*) Jeffery Lewins,
 John Chapple,
 Roger Ayers
 "The Species of the Female"
 (*Sidney Low, the Standard, 14 Oct 1911*) Sharad Keskar

"IF—"

OR THE JOB DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL TRUST
PROPERTY MANAGER – BATEMAN'S

By ROBIN MITCHELL

If you can manage the estate of Rudyard Kipling
According to the rules of Queen Anne's Gate
If you can meet the season's problems without tipping
Or imbibing more than one drink over eight.

If you can keep the Lords of Scotney happy
When tourist numbers plummet to the ground
And smile when bolshie stewards make you snappy
You'll find your c'reer with great success is crowned.

If you can cope when waters from the Dudwell
Have turned the Bateman's gardens into mud
And jest when beams inside the mill fell
And lay out sandbags to avert the flood.

If you can keep the fields of Burwash sterile
Untainted by the blight of foot & mouth
Forbidding any kind of G.M. Crops trial
You'll be the Trust's best manager in the south.

THE SEVENTEEN CAMELS

Retold by JEFFERY LEWINS

In the High and Far Off Times, Oh Best Beloved, there lived a Sheik of the desert who had three sons and a herd of racing camels numbering even unto seventeen. The camels, even like his sons, were the light of his declining days; silver in coat and fleet of foot. Truly they were like unto no other camels.

When the Sheik felt the approach of the years of his numbering, he called to him his three sons that he might settle his affairs. To the first he said: "Oh my eldest son, light of my own youth – my days are numbered and you, the eldest, will become Sheik in my place. To you therefore, so that you may rest in the oasis in tranquillity, I leave one-half of all that I possess, including one-half of my fleet of racing camels, like unto which there are none finer."

And to his middle son he said: "Oh my second son, delight of my middle years – you have yet time to dwell here in the dessert and to make some gain. To you I leave even one-third of my wealth including one-third of my racing camels, unto the like of which there are none finer."

And calling to him his youngest son, the Sheik said: "Oh my third son, light of my declining years – your years will be long in the land and you will yet achieve happiness and prosperity beyond the desert. But to help you to this end, to you oh third son of a third son, I leave one-ninth of all I possess, even one-ninth of my fleet of racing camels, the like unto which there are none finer."

So the Sheik departed this life and when the days of mourning were concluded and all that was proper was observed, the eldest son, Mubruk, called unto him his two brothers to conference in the oasis in the desert.

And he said: "Oh my brothers and sons of my Father. Our Father is gone to rest, imsh'Allah, and all that is proper has been performed. But one thing remains; his will on earth is meet to be done. As the eldest. I shall chose first." And the eldest son chose nine from the seventeen camels, of which there were none to compare, as his portion.

But the middle son, Ibrahim said: "Oh my elder brother and son of my Father; this is not just. Indeed our Father did leave unto you the one half of our inheritance. But one-half of the seventeen camels is but eight-and-a-half, not nine. See you then that you leave one-half of a camel behind, the head and the forelegs, for me and my brother Yakub. Else shall the will of our Father be brought to naught."

Then the brothers fell to arguing. The eldest allowed the truth of his father's will but a camel divided, like a family divided, would die and be of little value. Then said the middle brother:

"Oh my brothers and sons of my Father – since we cannot agree as to the share for our elder brother, let me, as the next son, take my inheritance, even one-third of our father's possessions." And Ibrahim went to the herd of the camels and selected six, of which there were none fairer.

But the youngest brother, Yakub, said: "But not so. Did not our Father leave you but one-third? And is not one-third of seventeen but five-and-two-thirds of a camel? If you take six camels, then shall my share be diminished from the promise of my Father. See that you return one-third of a camel, even the hind legs and the tail. Or surely shall the will of our Father be brought to naught." And the brothers fell again to quarrelling, until Yakub said:

"Since we cannot agree on the inheritance of either my eldest brother or my middle brother, let me take my inheritance as given by our

Father, even one-ninth of all he possessed." And going to the herd, he chose two of the camels, of which there were none finer.

But discord again arose between the brothers. "Oh my youngest brother and son of my Father. Is not one-ninth of the seventeen camels (of which there are none finer) but one-and-eight-ninths? See then that you leave the hump of one camel behind that you do not cheat your brothers of their inheritance."

So the three brothers set again to argument and acrimony, each claiming his share as was just but denying that he should receive any part of a slaughtered camel, of which there were none finer. The noise of their dispute was heard even for miles around the oasis.

As they quarrelled, a figure was seen afar off, approaching across the desert to the oasis. It was a Stranger, a Sheik like unto their father, and mounted on a camel the like of which they had not seen. Its coat was as of gold and it was fleet of foot. Surely neither hoof nor hump, nor head nor hide was like unto the Stranger's camel. As befits greeting a stranger in the desert, the three sons ceased their dispute and when the Stranger had taken bread and salt, and water for his camel (the like of which the sons had never seen), he said to them, enquiring:

"Oh my hosts and sons of my Brother, for I am indeed your Father's long lost brother I have heard of the death of your Father and come from afar to pay my respects. But as I approached the oasis, did I not hear the noise of a quarrel between the sons of my Brother and my nephews? Now why should you quarrel?"

And the sons said that this was so and told the Stranger of their dispute. That seventeen camels were to be divided even as one-half and one-third and one-ninth, but that they could not agree as to the division of the camels (of which there were none finer) saying that neither head and forelegs, nor a hind legs and tail, nor hump, would be right to slaughter even if just. And so the sons fell again to argument.

Then said the Stranger: "Cease this noise. I will help you divide your Father's patrimony even unto the fleet of racing camels (like unto which there were none finer). So take my camel to your herd." And the Stranger placed his camel (the like into which the sons had never seen) with the seventeen racing camels of their Father. "Oh Mubruk, son of my Brother and my eldest nephew, chose one-half of the camels, there being now eighteen camels."

And the eldest son chose one-half of the camels, marking nine of his favourites of his Father's fleet, but leaving nine that included the camel of the Stranger. Then said the Stranger:

"Oh Ibrahim, my middle nephew and son of my Brother – choose you now even as to one-third of the camels." And one-third of the herd being six, the middle son marked even six, choosing his favourites

from his Father's herd of racing camels (like unto which there were none finer), and likewise leaving the camel of the Stranger and two others. And then said the Stranger:

"Oh Yakub, my youngest nephew and son of my Brother – choose now one-ninth of the herd."

And the youngest son chose two camels, from the remainder of his Father's herd, being one-ninth of eighteen camels, but leaving the Stranger's camel.

Then there remained in the herd, unchosen, the eighteenth camel of the Stranger. And the Stranger mounted his golden-coated camel (the like of which the sons had never seen nor man should see again) and leaving the three sons with their father's camels, rode from the oasis away into the desert.

KIPLING'S THREE ENEMIES

By SHAMUS O.D. WADE

Kipling had three different enemies in South Africa.

When I first joined the Kipling Society (long ago when the World was young) I took it for granted that soldiers were grateful to Kipling for his poem "The Absent-Minded Beggar". Well some were and some were not.

"The Absent-Minded Beggar's Apology" by Colour-Sergeant J. Sheldon Redding of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry was one of the many poems in which soldiers objected to Kipling's condescending appeal for charitable hand-outs to their dependents. I only know 4 lines:

And if they're left in poverty you must not blame him for that,
For he hadn't any railway scrip to sell;
And a working man and family can't prosper and grow fat,
And put money in the Three per cents as well.

The message is quite clear. The reason why the soldiers' families are short of money is because rich civilians, like you Mr Kipling, are too mean to pay proper taxes so that soldiers can be paid a decent wage.

The anonymous author of "Mrs. Tommy Atkins on the Situation", purporting to come from a soldier's wife, made a similar reply to Kipling –

Let me have my Tommy's pay in a decent sort of way,
And not depend on charity for bread—

Some civilians in South Africa thought that Kipling was a running dog for Cecil Rhodes.

T.W.H. Crosland, editor of *Outlook*, wrote two volumes of outright parodies of Kipling, *The Absent-Minded Mule* (1899) and *The Five Notions*. The title poem conveys Crosland's comments on what he regarded as Kipling's remarkably naive concept of what the war was all about:

'E 'ath a notion that the War
Was a Imperial beano, gave
By a 'eroic pople for
A people twenty times as brave.

Ar—you might think from Rudyard's lines
That Cecil went about in white:
'E never ownded no dimon mines,
'E drank no fizz with Verner Beit!

To quote "Drummer Hodge" by E. Van Wyk Smith "(Crosland) played havoc with Kipling's imperial sanctities and solemnities; *his* 'The White Man's Burden' is a corrosive complement to Kipling's poem, filling in the parts of the picture of empire that Kipling left out":

Take up the White Man's burden,
Descend his reeking shafts,
Gasp in his red-hot workings
And get your air in wafts:
And since there is no telling
How soon you may be dead,
Remember, that fat White Man
is shooting overhead!

Kipling's third and most savage enemy is the untraceable author of a recipe for "Rudyardkiplingese" that appeared in the *Bloemfontein Friend*:

The Man that writes a poem
In praise our Tommy A.'s
ain't got no call to study
Their manners, nor talk, nor ways,

'E's only to fake up something
 What's Barracky—more or less—
 And civilians don't know as its rubbish and so
 The Ballad's a big success.

Real thumb on the blade and strike upwards stuff!

THE "ABSINTHE" MINDED BEGGAR

From an American newspaper 4 December 1899, F.S.

(With apologies to Rudyard Kipling)

When you've shouted "Mort aux traitres!" and you've sung out
 "Vive l'armee!"

And have got back Alsace-Lorraine—in your mind,
 When you've "conspue'd les Juifs?" have forgotten Boulanger,
 And have washed the stain that Dreyfus left behind.
 Then you absinthe-minded beggar, in your muddle-headed pate,
 Turn about for something fresh to kick and hit at;
 But we'll give you timely warning, which we hope won't come
 too late,

That the British lion's not the chap to spit at.

King's son, Duke's son, sons of a hundred cooks,
 Hundred and fifty thousand men at Metz gave up the day;
 The enemy was far smaller, yet they struck you on the books,
 But did we laugh and jeer at you then? now say—say—say?"

When you lay besieged in Paris, by the foeman's iron grasp,
 Starvation grim, a-staring in your face;
 Who was it sent you vittles, gave your hand a friendly clasp?
 Why, the British, whom, you're striving to disgrace.
 But of course it's all forgotten, now the danger's past and gone,
 For an absinthe minded beggar all will find you;
 But if you go too far, we must put the stopper on,
 And, by George, we'll take the trouble to remind you.

Cook's son, Duke's son, son of an aristocrat;
 Son of a sea cook, son of a gun, old, or young and gay;
 Each of 'em hunting about for himself, in search of a sewer rat,
 Wasn't it thus, till we sent you help? now say—say—say?

Though we've visited your country in a friendly sort of way,
 Though we've freely spent our cash in every town,
 Yet now you darkly murmur, "ev'ry dog must have his day,
 Let us try and bite the lion when he's down."
 You're an absinthe minded beggar, or by now you'd realize
 That the British lion's far from being flurried;
 You surely will regret it, if, when Leo sleeping lies,
 With impunity you think he can be worried.

Cad's voice, sneak's voice, voice of a snivelling cur,
 True enough the adage runs, " Each dog must have his day;"
 But till yours dawns, wear asses' skins, don't cover the lion's fur,
 Slink back into your kennel, quick, and stay—stay—stay!

If you're anxious to revile us, why then do so to our face,
 It's a method that we very much prefer;
 But for God's sake, keep your insults from the head of all our
 race.

For we can't stand much of that applied to Her.
 You're an absinthe minded beggar, and you may forget this too,
 But in case it haps again, we will remind you
 That you left from Trafalgar, not to mention Waterloo,
 In a hurry, with the Britishers behind you.

Cook's son, Duke's son, son of a cuisiniere,
 Though you make your country ring, with shouts of "Vive l'armee"
 Empty boasts won't frighten us, in spite of your martial air.
 Keep a civil tongue in your heads, or you'll pay—pay—pay!

THE ASSERTION OF THE BLACK AND WHITE CAT

OR MY APOLOGIES (to the shade of R.K.)

By LISA LEWIS

Servant, behold your Master – six inches from nose to tail -
 He has been horribly kidnapped, and the world can hear him wail.
 No sight or sound of his mother, and oh! how he misses her!
 He has need of a faithful Servant, to tend him and make him purr.

Servant, behold your Master! He has grown and grown and grown,
 Till now his faithful Servant has a panther all of her own.
 Large he is and stately—pleased don't call him fat—And when he stretches lengthwise, there

Servant, behold your Master. This is a mournful day!
That vet to whom you sent him stole his manhood away.
He told you he wasn't ailing! And now that he is sore,
Weep for your wounded warrior as you babble of stinks and war.

Servant, behold your Master. He wishes to pass this door.
And what on earth does it matter he was through it ten minutes
before?
Something else may have happened – the smells are ten minutes
old-
Servant! Obey your Master! Do what you're damn well told!

Servant, behold your Master! He smelleth wonderful smells.
And why should you spoil his pleasure just for somebody else?
So what if your guests are tardy? You know he's fond of a roast.
Take that joint from the oven and forget your duties as host!

Servant, behold your Master. You have been long away,
And the house was dark and empty, with nothing to do all day.
Now you are tired and footsore, and your shoes are wet with rain.
Your Master will dust your ankles and rub away the pain.

Servant, behold your Master! It is time for you to rest.
The night is a cat's for hunting. For humans, sleep is best.
But when the dawn is breaking, and the birds shout their applause,
Your Master will wake his Servant with the weight of his muddy
paws.

Servant! Behold your Master! A mighty hunter is he!
Here is a mouse he has captured, alive and ready to flee.
Wake and admire your Master! Wake from your peaceful dream'.
Here is a gift for his Servant. Accept it and NO! DON'T
SCREAM!

(continued from p.39)

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Write to Special Collections, University of Sussex Library, Brighton, BN1 9QL, United Kingdom or telephone 01273 678157. E-mail to librarv.specialcoll@sussex.ac.uk

THE TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT
24 JUNE 2005

FROM A POSTER ISSUED WITH *TES TEACHER*

Text by GERALD HAIGH

[Earlier this year I was made aware that *TES Teacher* was planning to issue a poster on Rudyard Kipling as a resource for teachers in the issue of 24 June 2005. When I received the finished article I was very much impressed with the interesting explanation of "The Way Through the Woods" and the accompanying short but reasoned and balanced description of Kipling's Life and Work.

The poster is in full-colour A2 format, with "The Way Through the Woods" superimposed on an evocative image of a wood. The other side of the sheet carries the text with photographs of Rudyard and John Kipling. "My Boy Jack" and an engraving of *The Puzzled Fox* by Currier & Ives of 1872. I am most grateful to Mr Adam Jezard, Poster Editor of *TES Teacher*, for giving me permission to reproduce the text in the *Journal*, and to Louise Mills, Picture Editor, for arranging this. *Ed.]*

The Way Through the Woods

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

Yet, if you enter the woods
Of a summer evening late,
When the night-air cools on the trout-ringed pools
Where the otter whistles his mate,
(They fear not men in the woods,
Because they see so few.)
You will hear the beat of a horse's feet,
And the swish of a skirt in the dew,
Steadily cantering through
The misty solitudes,

As though they perfectly knew
The old lost road through the woods. . .
But there is no road through the woods.

(Rudyard Kipling)

It is said that Kipling wrote this poem for a young woman friend of the family who had been on holiday in the New Forest. Kipling asked her how she had enjoyed her holiday, and she replied that it had been good except that she found the woods rather scary. There and then, Kipling promised to write her a poem about a ghostly wood. The girl in question – her name was Christabel – would surely have found the poem powerfully evocative of her feelings while she was under the leaf-covered canopy.

Kipling's language is a model of how to write poetry using everyday words. The effect it creates is one of mystery, quietness and nameless shapes and sounds in a deep wood at twilight.

When discussing this work, there may well be a mismatch of experiences teachers will need to be aware of. For some, the poem paints a familiar picture of an English wood. The sounds of creatures, the rustle of leaves, the half-fearful attempt to see if there is something hiding in the trees – all of these are to be found in the poem. Yet it is increasingly unlikely many of today's children will have had these experiences.

By far the best place to read or hear this poem is in a real wood. For some schools that will be difficult, but the Forest Schools movement and other national initiatives, such as the National Forest plan, increasingly open up the possibility of introducing children to the feel, sights and sounds of woodland – so don't forget to take along suitable poems and stories.

One of the main points to get across is that the natural vegetation of much of the British Isles was, and is, woodland – although much of it has now been cleared away. For centuries, people lived in groups of dwellings, perhaps near a river or stream, with some cultivated land. Beyond that, however, was the edge of the mysterious forest. To get anywhere, be it the next village or one of the great cathedral cities of the pre-industrial age, you would have had to go through the woods. This was scary, not least because they were home to wild animals and "outlaws" – people who were not welcome in law-abiding communities. If you have time, read stories about woods with the children. Roger Lancelyn Green's *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (Puffin, £4.99) is good for able readers and older children, and evokes the idea of a Britain covered in trees. For younger children, Enid Blyton's *The Faraway Tree Stories* (Egmont, £6.99) are set in an enchanted wood.

These stories remind us that, because of fears of wild animals, spirits and thieves, people didn't go in to woods and forests too often. As a result, they seemed more frightening than they really were.

What's the poem about?

This is basically a ghost story. The road through the woods is overgrown and forgotten and yet, in the right circumstances, someone – or something – rides along it and you can hear "the beat of a horse's feet, / And the swish of a skirt in the dew". Does the swish of the skirt tell of a ghostly woman riding through the woods?

There are other themes to explore – the evocative description of woodland creatures and plants for instance. It is also possible to see the poem as a comment on the transience of all things – including life itself – in the fact that, left to its devices, the wood reclaims its own. Kipling brings that sense of mystery and wonder alive.

Things to discuss and do

- It is not difficult to imagine ghosts in a wood. Human perceptions are quick to make reality out of very little. Compare the poem with similar situations, such as a quiet bedroom, a holiday caravan or tent at night.
- Who is the ghostly lady? Is she riding a horse side-saddle? Is she running through the undergrowth, with a horse accompanying her? Ask pupils to write a story or draw a picture explaining her story.
- Kipling is very precise about the road being closed 70 years ago. Is it possible for your class to come up with a good, sinister reason for this?
- It is not often that you will find a road reclaimed by nature near your school, but it is certainly possible, and a bit of research with maps or talking to local historians may be productive – many a cart-track or footpath is a relic of a once-important route. In a more urban setting it is sometimes possible to trace major routes that have been bypassed, or had curves straightened out. A project about "forgotten roads" would sit well with geography and history, as well as literacy: can children write their own poems or stories about local lost roads?
- The picture *The Puzzled Fox*, right, [omitted – Ed.] can be used to further explore the theme of a mysterious or enchanted wood. There are many spirit-like apparitions hidden in it, including a horse; a lamb; a wild boar; people's faces in the trees. Are these real, or are they just in the fox's imagination?

Resources

- The National Forest is a plan to create 200 square miles across three counties in the Midlands, in which woodland cover will increase

through conservation and new planting. An excellent place for children to see what is happening is Conkers, an education centre in Leicestershire, which has walks through the treetop canopy. Tel: 01283 213731.

- Forest Schools is a movement that aims to get young children into woods wherever and whenever possible for substantial parts of the week. The idea has been established in early years education in Denmark since the 1980s and it is growing in popularity in a number of U.K. authorities, and there is particular interest in Wales. A number of education authority websites have details, for example Worcestershire, at www.bishopswoodcentre.org.uk/schools/forest.html

RUDYARD KIPLING (1865-1936)

Rudyard Kipling was born in Bombay, where his father was a teacher. Like most children of the Raj, he was sent back to a boarding school in England at the age of six, an experience that he understandably didn't enjoy. His parents wanted an army career for him, but his eyesight let him down, and he returned to India in 1882, starting work as a journalist.

He wasn't in India long – he came back to England in 1889 but he was still at an impressionable age, and everything about his work tells us that India stayed with him for the rest of his life. Kipling married in 1892 and, after a brief and unsuccessful period in the United States, he settled with his wife in Sussex.

It was during the turn of the century that Kipling was at his most prolific. *Barrack-Room Ballads* appeared in 1891, and his novels *The Jungle Book*, *The Second Jungle Book*, *Captains Courageous*, *Kim* and *The Just So Stories* were all published between 1894 and 1902. His work was hugely popular, and he was seen as the natural heir to the mantle of Dickens. He was awarded a Nobel Prize for Literature in 1907. After that, his output slowed down.

In 1915, his only son, Jack, was killed in the First World War. Kipling and his wife never really recovered from a loss that was the all the more painful because Kipling had urged Jack to join up. Jack's body wasn't found, and Kipling and his wife toured the battlefield where he died after the war in the vain hope of finding some clue to his resting place. (Many years later, long after Kipling's death, a likely body was found.)

Kipling died in 1936 and is buried in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey.

A writer's reputation

In terms of reputation, Kipling has had his ups and downs. At the start of the 20th century he was immensely popular, but in the aftermath of the First World War many felt him to be out of tune with the disillusionment of the times. It is a feeling that has continued to the present time for many people.

The big problem with Kipling is that he is seen as a purveyor of a rather simplistic jingoism. Take the poem "Gunga Din", for example, one of the *Barrack-Room Ballads*. It is a terrific story, one that was made into a classic action film in 1939, with a cast including Cary Grant, the biggest star of his day. That such a film should have been made is testament to the standing of the poem and its author at the time. The plot inspired by rather than based on the poem – even features Kipling himself. The poem's opening is gripping, and to read it is to long to share it with children. Kipling invites us to imagine the old soldier talking to wide-eyed recruits:

You may talk o' gin and beer
When you're quartered safe out 'ere,
An' you're sent to penny-fights an' Aldershot it;
But when it comes to slaughter
You will do your work on water,
An' you'll lick the bloomin' boots of 'im that's got it.

Sadly, however, the racial assumptions of the rough, soldier narrator – not necessarily of Kipling himself – rule the poem out in today's classrooms, except perhaps with older students, when it could be used to open up a discussion about the complex history of the British in India. The couplet: "An' for all 'is dirty 'ide / 'E was white, clear white inside", which is sincerely meant as a salute to Gunga Din's bravery, is typical of the attitude of the poem, and of many of those who ran India in late Victorian times. As a Victorian Christian, with the streak of sentimentality that always accompanied that mixture, it is not surprising that Kipling shared the assumptions of his time, his upbringing and his class.

It is far too easy to judge Kipling by 21st-century conventions, however, or to write him off as insensitive or bombastic. Everything in his work speaks against that. His love of India and its people, though framed within the society and the politics of his time, was genuine and deep. Similarly, his poems about the lot of the ordinary soldier speak of an understanding of what life in the barrack room was like that was surely beyond the emotional reach of many of his social contemporaries.

Another of the *Barrack-Room Ballads*, "Tommy", starts with a soldier, refused a drink in a pub in peacetime, who expresses a bitter insight that has been recognisable to every soldier in every age, and is summed up in the lines: 'O it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy, go away"; / But it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins," when the band begins to play.'

Kipling was immensely prolific. A volume of his poems runs to more than 800 pages of shifting moods, reflecting the complexity of the man. Choosing another single work to illustrate his range is difficult, but "My Boy Jack", a reflection on the First World War, is painfully poignant, especially in view of the loss of his son Jack – although "Jack" is, of course, the all-purpose name for a sailor, just as "Tommy" is the universal name for soldier.

My Boy Jack

"Have you news of my boy Jack?"

Not this tide.

"When d'you think that he'll come back?"

Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.

"Has any one else had word of him?"

Not this tide.

For what is sunk will hardly swim,

Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.

"Oh, dear, what comfort can I find?"

None this tide,

Nor any tide.

Except he did not shame his kind—

Not even with that wind blowing, and that tide.

Then hold your head up all the more,

This tide,

And every tide;

Because he was the son you bore,

And gave to that wind blowing and that tide!

(Rudyard Kipling)

BOOK REVIEW

By THE EDITOR

THE JUNGLE LAW by Victoria Vinton, published by MacAdam/Cage Publishing. San Francisco. October 2005. 312 pages, hardback. US\$ 25. ISBN 1-5962-149-8.

The Jungle Law is a first novel for Victoria Vinton, though not her first publication. It is set principally in Vermont in 1892 when the Kiplings were living in Bliss Cottage, and has a short list of principal characters Rudyard and Caroline Kipling, their Swedish maid, a necessarily brief appearance by Josephine, and a fictional family named Connolly who scratch a living from the small farm that they have near to Bliss Cottage.

The story is built upon a series of factual pegs from the Kiplings' lives, around which Ms Vinton has woven a net of fictional and descriptive detail. The main theme is the interaction between these two very disparate families and particularly the use that Rudyard makes of the boy, Joe Connolly, as a sounding board for his ideas for *The Jungle Book*, and the effect that this has on Joe and the other Connollys. A secondary theme, in contrast, is the rather high-handed use that Caroline makes of Joe's mother Addie as a laundress, which does not change even after her overwhelming need for Addie's services as midwife at Josephine's birth. There is no mention of the other Balestiers, although Jack Connolly does seem to be modelled on Beatty at times, nor is there any mention of Beatty's involvement in building "Naulakha".

A sense of immediacy runs right through this story, created by her frequent use of the present tense, which I found very effective. Ms Vinton has made very good use of her research sources which are acknowledged at the end of the book. The several early Kipling biographies and the *Letters* edited by Prof Pinney supply the Kipling facts, whilst local U.S. publications provided the details of Vermont life in the 19th century as well as laundry practices and hydrotherapy. Although unacknowledged, she has also clearly read the relevant Kipling works.

There is the occasional *longueur* but one's interest quickly picks up again. What is commendable is the rarity of incongruous speech patterns for Kipling, the only English, as opposed to the American/Irish, protagonist. The occasional modern colloquialism appears (e.g. miffed) and Kipling does sometimes tend to read like someone from the 1940s rather than the 1890s, but these are minor quibbles.

This is a credible, and creditable, exposition of the Kiplings' possible first year of living in America together, and of the evolution of *The Jungle Book* stories – what is more, it will help to claw back the authorship of those works from the Disney Corporation.

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

NEW MEMBERS

Mr John Baesch (*Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.*)
Dr Mary Hamer (*London, SE1*)
Mr T.P.A. Healy (*Otford, Kent*)
Mrs P.C. Lamb (*London, SW7*)
Dr Kate Macdonald (*Brussels, Belgium*)
Mr John Marjot (*Crowthorne, Berkshire*)
Commander John Muxworthy (*Chilbolton, Stockbridge,
Hampshire*)
Mr N.P. Pollard (*Surbiton, Surrey*)
Mr Paul Senior (*Hayfield, High Peak, Derbyshire*)

SUBSCRIPTIONS and MEMBERSHIP FLYER

While the system of reminding individual Members who pay by cheque or bank draft each year as their subscription falls due is working reasonably well, it could still be refined to make life a little simpler for the Member and much simpler for the Membership Secretary. Details of the minor changes necessary to accomplish this are published in a flyer accompanying this issue.

For Members with British bank accounts, it is even simpler for them to use a Standing Order so that no reminder is ever necessary. The Membership Secretary is very grateful to the large number of Members who already do this but the flyer also carries the appropriate mandate for those who might yet use a Standing Order and so benefit from the reduced subscription that this attracts. A Gift Aid Declaration is also appended for any British tax payers who have not yet completed one, so that we can maximize the tax reclaimed from the Revenue and Customs.

For those who already take advantage of these forms, or who are not in a position to use them, the flyer has one further use – as a form to recruit an additional member to the Society. We do need more individual members, to contribute to the active life of the Society and, incidentally, to help keep the basic subscription at the level which we have managed to maintain with only one minor increase in over ten years.

Please look at the flyer and use it – any way you can.

Roger Ayers. Hon. Membership Secretary

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

KIPLING CRITICISM

From: Mr John Wusteman, 152 Palace View, Bromley, Kent BRI 3ER

Dear Sir,

On rereading the excellent critical introductions to some of the Penguin editions of Kipling stories, I was struck by a paradox: many modern critics feel compelled to open with some form of disclaimer, as if an interest in Kipling was somehow in need of apology, while, say, no apology is needed for an interest in that vicious racist snob Virginia Woolf (if in doubt, read her letters). They usually make some further reference to the eclipse of Kipling as an author to be taken seriously.

But my own impression, from the books on Kipling I have collected over the years, and still more from the enormous number of further references I have seen in work such as the aforementioned Introductions, is that the flow of serious biography of, and comment and analysis on, Kipling has been continuous and is obviously continuing.

In terms of sheer volume, is there any other late-19th-century author who has attracted more critical attention? Has anyone published a historical analysis of the volume of published criticism on Kipling? I am not implying that volume of comment equates to quality, but it must certainly indicate continuing interest, since few authors write to be remaindered.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN WUSTEMAN

MORE NOTES ON FAUNUS

From: Mr Gerald V. Coles, 2 Highview Rise, PO Box 317, Metung, Victoria 3904, Australia

Dear Sir,

Kipling's derivations from Horace in the Puck tales, cited in Prof Wiseman's paper in the June 2005 *Journal* [No.314], extend beyond the description of Puck himself as Faunus. Surely others will remember that near the Great Wall there was 'a little altar of cut turf on which Pertinax 'laid ... a letter from a girl in Gaul' – although *he* 'sacrificed to his dead youth', unlike Quintus Flaccus, who thrice offered his sacrifice, on such, to Faunus as his guardian deity. The altar which Parnesius *indeed* 'built to the Sylvan Pan', was 'of round pebbles in memory of my first bear. It took me one happy day to build' and was '... by the pine-forest.' And, there *was* indeed a third altar, built of stone by Pertinax, but with a line from Xenophon, not Horace, after *he* shot his first mountain-hare.

Yours faithfully,
GERALD V. COLES

A QUESTION OF PRONUNCIATION

From: Mr C.C. Campbell. Woolpit Farm, Ewhurst, Cranleigh, Surrey GU6 JNR

[This letter was addressed to Mrs Jane Keskar, our Hon. Secretary, who answered it in her usual helpful way. An edited version of her reply is given below Mr Campbell's Letter. *Ed.*]

Dear Sir,

In the 1930s the pronunciation of "Rudyard" that I was accustomed to hear was as a trochee, with the "ard" spoken with the short, indefinite, vowel used in "forward", backward", etc.

These days on radio and television the pronunciation is more often as a spondee, with the "ard" rhyming with "hard".

In the same way, in the name "Mowgli", I would pronounce the "ow" to rhyme with "how", "plough", etc., I have heard one, if not two, eminent presenters on the B.B.C. rhyme it with "hoe", "though" etc.

I should be grateful if you or some of your older members could tell me which Kipling himself would have expected.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES CAMPBELL

Edited reply from Mrs Jane Keskar:

I am sure that you are right in your pronunciation of "Rudyard". I would certainly pronounce it that way. We can console ourselves that the B.B.C. does not always get these things right.

The *Journal* No.121 of April 1957 referred to Kipling's advice on the pronunciation of "Mowgli", which I quote 'Kipling explained the meaning or origin of most of the names in the *Jungle Books* in a special note at the end of Vol. XII of *The Sussex Edition* which, with the aid of "How to Pronounce the Names" at the beginning of *All The Mowgli Stories*, leaves little to be desired. It even settles, once and for all, the question, which one is often still asked: the pronunciation of 'Mowgli'—the accent being on the first syllable, which rhymes with "cow" and not with "low." '

A VISIT TO RAJASTHAN

From: Mr Bryan C. Diamond. Flat 2. 80 Fitzjohn's Avenue. London NW3 5LS

Dear Sir,

After I had visited Rajasthan in 2003, Jane Keskar referred me to Kipling's visit in 1887 as he described in the *Pioneer*¹ his articles then collected in *Letters of Marque* (1899). His style does not now make easy reading (the intrusive narrator, as Laski² noted). He covered the regular tourist route as I also did. Kipling found 'a perplexing mixture

of ancient and modern' (Cornell³). The buildings he saw ruined and neglected are now mainly restored and looked after; to me the perplexing mixture was of the beauty of the royal architecture and the squalor of much of the buildings and roadsides elsewhere.

The Taj Mahal, now the most famous sight in the state, Kipling saw only from the train 'wrapped in the mists of the morning'⁴ and vowed to never go nearer for fear of breaking its charm; I naturally joined the throng and dutifully proceeded through the gateways and the garden and up to the platform and tomb, then around the Taj to see the river below; Kipling chose to miss this detailed contact.

In Jaipur Kipling describes the Jeypore Museum⁵ as having South Kensington display cases and labels,. This was my own immediate impression when I visited the upper floor of the Central Museum in the ornate Albert Hall building; it seemed that these had remained unaltered and un-dusted since Kipling's visit; when he was enthusiastic about the cleanliness. Many of the natural history exhibits had no labels visible, and I wondered what benefit the Indians who thronged the museum could gain from them (downstairs there were informative more recent displays of local ethnology). Kipling visited the 'great neglected' Jantar Mantar Observatory where the Sanskrit on the dials no one then understood; since then it has been well restored and I found it most impressive. In the Maharaja's palace Kipling wandered 'through a wilderness of sleepy courts' to an inner square with old men squatting playing a game, and then saw a tank with two slimy muggers (crocodiles); nowadays the current Maharaja keeps the palace in good order, one cannot wander in without payment, and the crocodiles are not to be seen but there are good exhibits of the royal collections.

Of the Amber Fort, on a hill near Jaipur, Kipling wrote that it was in good repair, he admired its beauty while he wandered alone in the dead palace with no one to stop him. Today this beautiful place is busy with numerous tourists, many of whom still ride up the hill on one of the elephants as Kipling did.

Some things change in the last 115 years, some have stayed much the same.

Yours faithfully
BRYAN C. DIAMOND

NOTES

1. *Pioneer*. 14 to 31 December 1887. see Cornell, p.177.
2. Marghanita Laski. *From Palm to Pine: Rudyard Kipling Abroad and at Home*. 1997. p.51.
3. Louis L Cornell. *Kipling in India*, 1966. p. 147.
4. *Letters of Marque*. Chap.I.
5. *Ibid.*. Chap.V.

ABOUT THE KIPLING SOCIETY

The Kipling Society is for anyone interested in the prose and verse, and the life and times, of Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936). It is one of the most active and enduring literary societies in Britain and, as the only one which focuses on Kipling and his place in English Literature, attracts a world-wide membership. (Details from the Society's web-site and membership forms from the **Membership Secretary, Kipling Society, 295 Castle Road, Salisbury, Wilts SP1 3SB**. The forms quote the minimum annual subscription rates. Some members contribute a little more.)

The Society is a Registered Charity and a voluntary, non-profit-making organisation. Its activities, which are controlled by a Council and run by the Secretary and honorary officials, include:

- maintaining a specialised Library in City University, London,
- answering enquiries from the public (schools, publishers, writers and the media), and providing speakers on request,
- arranging a regular programme of lectures, and a formal Annual Luncheon with a Guest Speaker,
- running the web-site at **www.kipling.org.uk** for members of the Society and anyone else around the world with an interest in the life and work of Rudyard Kipling,
- and publishing the ***Kipling Journal***, every quarter.

The *Journal* of the Society aims to entertain and inform. It is sent to subscribing paying members all over the world free of charge. This includes libraries, English Faculties, and 'Journal – only' members. Since 1927, the *Journal* has published important items by Kipling, not readily found elsewhere, valuable historical information, and literary comment by authorities in their field. By not being wholly academic, the *Journal* is representative of Kipling, whose own diverse interests and versatile talent covered a wide range of literary writing – letters, travel, prose and verse. For the serious scholar of Kipling, who cannot afford to overlook the *Journal*, a comprehensive index of the entire run since 1927 is available online to members or in our Library. Apply to: **The Librarian, Kipling Society, 72 Millbank, Headcorn, Ashford, Kent TN27 9RG, England or email to jwawalker@gmail.com**

The Editor of the *Kipling Journal* publishes membership news, Society events, and the texts of talks given by invited speakers. In addition, he is happy to receive letters and articles from readers. These may be edited and publication is not guaranteed. Letters of crisp comment, under 1000 words, and articles between 1000 – 4000 are especially welcome. Write to: **The Editor, Kipling Journal, 32 Merton Road, Harrow HA2 0AB, England or email to davpag@yahoo.co.uk**

