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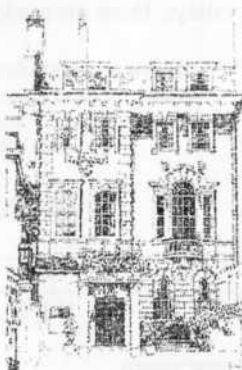
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SECRETARY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

SOME FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 10 April 2013, 5.30 for 6 p.m. in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League, **Dr. Jane Ridley**, University of Buckingham, author of *Bertie: The Life of King Edward VII*, will speak on the subject of "The King and his Trumpeter", Kipling's relationship with King George V.

Wednesday 11 May 2013, 12.30 for 1 p.m. in the Hall of India and Pakistan, Royal Over-Seas League, **The Society's Annual Luncheon**. Major General Sir Sebastian Roberts, 9th Colonel of the Irish Guards: will speak on "Kipling: A Military Mystery" For details please see December flyer or contact Jane Keskar.

Wednesday 10 July 2013, 4.30 p.m. **Annual General Meeting** in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League. A complimentary tea will be served at 4.00 p.m. in the Wrench Room for members who inform the Secretary in advance. The talk (5.30 for 6.00 p.m.) will be announced later.

Wednesday 11 September 2013, 5.30 for 6 p.m. in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League, **Speaker to be announced.**

Wednesday 13 November 2013, 5.30 for 6 p.m. in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League, **Speaker to be announced.**

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EDITORIAL

SELECTED VERSE: RUDYARD KIPLING

Last autumn, C.R.W. Publishing Ltd brought out a book containing 114 of Kipling's poems as one of their *Collector's Library* series. This is a hardback, printed on fine paper, and small enough to fit into a pocket (15.2 x 9.8 x 2 cm). There is an excellent "Introduction" by one of our Council Members, Dr Lizzy Welby, and our Society gave some advice to the publishers. The book has a good selection of Kipling's verse, including several of his less well known pieces. It should be obtainable from most bookshops under ISBN-13: 978-1907360657, priced at £7.99.

RUDYARD KIPLING: LIFE, LOVE, AND ART BY WILLIAM B. DILLINGHAM

This is Prof Dillingham's third book on Kipling's life and his writings due out in March 2013; it follows his *Rudyard Kipling: Hell and Heroism* and *Being Kipling*. I understand that the focus of this latest book is on major short stories, mainly from Kipling's later period, beginning with an earlier work, "The Finest Story in the World", and concluding with the last story he wrote, "'Teem'—a Treasure-Hunter". The book analyses stories that are not only among Kipling's most accomplished but also demonstrably in need of a fresh, thorough reassessment, furnishing insights into how such intricately complex works as "'Wireless,'" "Mrs. Bathurst," "The Bull That Thought," and "The Wish House" were conceived and how they reflect Kipling's most cherished beliefs, including his commitments and his fears.

The publisher is ELT Press of the University of North Carolina (\$60, 200pp, ISBN 978-0-944318-54-6).

BATEMAN'S OPENING IN 2013

The National Trust have made available on their website, the times and days on which Bateman's (and other properties) will be open in 2013. There is a major change at Bateman's where the house will now be open seven days a week, from 2 March to 3 November, and again from 30 November to 23 December. Previously, the house had been closed on Thursdays and Fridays during the season.

A POTENTIAL RESOURCE

Completely by chance I came across a resource that could be of interest to members. In 2011 an eBook was published by Delphi Classics with the title *The Complete Works of Rudyard Kipling (Illustrated)*. Obviously I was curious to know just how much it warranted this all-embracing title, and was surprised and delighted to find that it included

far more than any other "complete" work that I had come across other than the Sussex Edition. As an indicator, I found that it had the texts of *War in the Mountains*, *The Complete Stalky & Co.*, *Abaft the Funnel*, *The Graves of the Fallen*, *Brazilian Sketches*, even *A History of England* amongst others. A large number of Kipling's poems are also included despite the "Contents" giving the impression that it was only a list. The work is of course, not quite complete since almost all of the "uncollected" material printed in the Sussex Edition is missing, as is the new material that has been recognised since Kipling's death.

The version of the book that I found was on Amazon and available for their Kindle eReader for a price of £1.88. If you have a PC, it is not necessary to buy a Kindle since you may download a free software program from the Amazon website which will let you use the book. I have written "use" quite deliberately, since I would probably not read it as it stands, other than any pieces that I did not already own in print. At first glance, there are typographical mistakes and the formatting is erratic, particularly the verse, the punctuation marks (particularly apostrophes) are all too often wrong, but it does offer one valuable resource – the whole of the book is searchable from within the Kindle software, although it is a very slow process. Unusually, the verse is also included in the search.

In carrying out searches, it is best to avoid all quotes with punctuation marks in the text and to keep the search to as few words as possible. Searching for " 'Omer" for example finds it and also Homeric, St. Omer, Montgomery, Somerset, boomerang, cryptomerias, customer, comers, and an amusing 'pomeranate sherbert' from *The Naulahka*.

The 'Illustrated' included in the title does seem to have most of the illustrations from the various printed collections of stories as well as those from *A History of England* and *The Graves of the Fallen*, but I have found no maps from *The Irish Guards in the Great War*. However, there are additional paintings and photographs of the Kiplings, Bateman's, and the covers of various books. It is regrettable that the quality of the reproductions is very low in most cases.

One other section includes a small selection of the Criticisms by various authors – David Christie Murray, Richard Le Gallienne, John Palmer, G.K. Chesterton, George Orwell, Andrew Lang, and finally G.F. Monkshood's *The Less Familiar Kipling and Kiplingana*. It will be seen that whilst the eBook is not perfect, for £1.88 there is a lot of meat in it.

There are other *Complete Works* published by Delphi in this series – Mark Twain, R.L. Stevenson, H. Rider Haggard, Oscar Wilde, Joseph Conrad, and quite a few others but I haven't had the opportunity to look at them as yet. Delphi also publish their eBooks in ePUB format.

'BUT NOW ENGLAND HATH TAKEN ME!'

By QING XIE

[Qing Xie's work last appeared in the December 2010 issue of the *Journal* (no.339) where she considered *Plain Tales from the Hills*. She finished her studies at the University of Kent at Canterbury at that time and returned to China where she now works in the Department of English of Xianda Economics and Humanities College, Shanghai International Studies University. – Ed.]

'There can be but one King.'

["The Tree of Justice" from *Rewards and Fairies*]

1

In November 1902 Kipling wrote to Charles Eliot Norton:

We discovered England, which we had never done before and went to live in it. England is a wonderful land. It is the most marvelous of all foreign countries that I have ever been in. It is made up of trees and green fields and mud and the gentry and at last I'm one of the gentry.³

Kipling's final settlement in England signified a return to the place that had trained him into an empire boy. There was no better place than England to support his sense of national identity till his last days, and thus, he gradually achieved his status as a so-called 'True Born Englishman'.⁴ Most significantly, his completion of the last step in the transformation from a lower-class writer to 'one of the gentry' as he delightedly exclaimed thereby entitled him to question, 'What do they know of England who only England know?'

If *Kim* and *The Jungle Books* stand midway in his search for a solution between his Sahibdom and Indian complex, the Puck stories mark his transition from a writer who told stories from the periphery of the British Empire, including its former colony the United States, to a narrower-minded gentleman who focused on the core of the British Empire. Kipling wrote the Puck stories as a middle-aged man. His memories still vivid from his overseas experience, he claimed later to use the Puck stories as 'a sort of balance to, as well as a seal upon, some aspects of my "Imperialistic" output in the past ...'⁵ He acknowledged that the tales 'had to be read by children', but were really 'meant for grown-ups'.⁷ In fact, the tales are, as Roger Lewis believes, meant first and foremost for Kipling himself – a grown-up Mowgli, an outsider who desperately wanted 'to reassure himself he has a home and a history, redeeming him from time.'⁸ But this time, Kipling adopted an

approach different from that in his earlier tales in order to accomplish his own reassurance. The symbolic moment occurs at the beginning of the whole series, when Puck, 'the oldest Old Thing in England', solemnly hands a clod of land to Dan and Una, and thereby pronounces, 'Now are you two lawfully seized and possessed of all Old England.'

In *The Jungle Books* and *Kim*, Kipling's young heroes are the protagonists who participate in games and adventures to explore their respective worlds and identities. The same applies to Harvey in '*Captains Courageous*'. By contrast, in the Puck stories Dan and Una's identity is granted and they are only two little audience members while nearly all activities centre around the grown-up people in the adult's world. The only tale directly concerning a child's growth is "Cold Iron" in *Rewards and Fairies*, and even in this tale the child does not experience any serious adventures: it is more a story about his legendary step-parents than about the boy. Sometimes Dan and Una play the part of questioning the adults, but their questions tend to make the tale less myth-like. For example, in "The Joyous Venture", they correct the medieval people's ignorance of the real world, making Sir Richard unhappy as he asks, 'Is there no sorcery left in the world?'"

This cosy environment enjoyed by Dan and Una is a far cry from the thrilling and diversified worlds faced by Mowgli and Kim, where the environment is a feature that the children must conquer. Moreover, in the light of his earlier children's tales, Kipling seemed to regard parental control as a handicap in children's development. In *The Jungle Books*, the accomplishments of the young protagonists – animals or humans – are only achieved when they are distanced from their parents or old lifecycles. The wolf-boy Mowgli completes his mastery of the Jungle when he is exiled to the village, away from his wolf parents and his animal patrons. Kim's adventure leads him out of his old city, Lahore. Later, Kim obviously turns himself into the protector of the old lama and the rescuer of Mahbub Ali, as Mowgli eventually becomes a source of salvation for the Pack. In '*Captains Courageous*', Harvey is faced with an unpredictable ocean and becomes a man after he has lost every connection to his family. So enters Wee Willie Winkie into his six-year-old manhood after having defied the armed Afghans single-handedly. This idea may have come from Kipling's own experience. He left his sweet home in India for the isolated Southsea, and came back to India as a young man. Then he toiled in the formidable Eastern world to establish his fame. Not surprisingly, the sense of being independent and adventuresome is fully present in his early children's works. However, it is not the case in the world of Dan and Una. This difference signifies a metamorphosis in Kipling's mentality. Probably, as a father, he did not wish his children to suffer his own youthful hardships. As a member of

the gentry, the middle-aged Kipling was willing to stay away from the 'naked humanity' that he had discovered since his hard Indian years, preferring not to participate again in exploring English history. Thereby, he also betrayed his earlier belief in

God's wisdom in the baby tongue
That fears not anything.¹¹

Dan and Una's activities are limited by both the small but safe space of the Old England's countryside and the middle-aged writer. In Kipling's opinion, the restriction is necessary to becoming a grown-up. The tone is presented in the opening tale of *Rewards and Fairies*, "Cold Iron", where the children have to be confined to their shoes. The free life of the fairy-adopted boy and his childhood come to an end when he touches the Cold Iron. These provide the shoes and Cold Iron with a philosophical content:

'They've put us into boots,' said Una. 'Look at my feet—they're all pale white, and my toes are sqdged together awfully.'

'Yes—boots make a difference.'...

'And boots simply ruin one's climbing.'¹²

Naturally, boots signify uncomfortable confinement, but the growing-up children accept it as a matter of fact:

'There's Cold Iron in them,' said Puck, and settled beside her. 'Nails in the soles, I mean. It makes a difference.'

'How?'

'Can't you feel it does? You wouldn't like to go back to bare feet again, same as last year, would you? Not really?'

'No—o. I suppose I shouldn't—not for always. I'm growing up, you know,' said Una.¹³

In *Kim*, when Kim is on the train to St. Xavier's, he also looks at his boots sadly, but his return to Sahibdom means that he has to wear them as a normality. This sounds like Rousseau's sigh many years before Kipling's time: 'Man is born free; and everywhere he is in chains.'¹⁴

Fortunately, as a story-teller, Kipling could free himself from the boots to forge English history in his own way.

Contrary to Alexander Herzen's epiphany in 1848 that there should be no script for history and that the singer of history should focus only on his singing, Kipling was a 'singer' with a clear 'script'. Moreover, as an artist who was unnecessarily hindered by the 'walking stick'¹⁵ of

genuine historical facts, he would not suffer from the split 'between the continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical, and the repetitious, recursive strategy of the performative' when '*writing the nation*' [sic] as Homi Bhabha suggests.¹⁶ The output is good, claims Marcus Crouch: 'Kipling gave children the best of his English experience, as he gave in *Kim* a share of the best of his Indian thought.'¹⁷

Coincidentally, Kipling's concept of 'making' England corresponds with that of the French philosopher, Ernest Renan. Concerning the Anglo-Saxon race, Renan argues that

An Englishman is indeed a type within the whole of humanity. However, the type of what is quite improperly called the Anglo-Saxon race is neither the Briton of Julius Caesar's time, nor the Anglo-Saxon of Hengist's time, nor the Dane of Canute's time, nor the Norman of William the Conqueror's time; it is rather the result of all these [elements].¹⁸

This argument is a condensed prefiguring of Kipling's Puck series, particularly in *Puck of Pook's Hill*. Renan's argument that 'unity is always effected by means of brutality'¹⁹ also bears a striking likeness to the other core idea of the Puck stories, as Kipling asserts, 'Weland gave the Sword! The Sword gave the Treasure, and the Treasure gave the Law. It's as natural as an oak growing.'²⁰

Actually, Kipling's pedagogic purpose continues with the Puck stories, particularly obvious in the Roman tales, for these tales especially set up an implied parallel between the ancient Roman and the British Empire. He assembles the re-created 'scraps, patches, and rags'²¹ in daily history and turns them into re-created historical performance. This is his way of finding cultural roots for himself and the empire. In this sense, the Puck stories enable him to transform what he called 'my "Imperialist" output in the past' into a 'nation-state' output in the present, and thereby, the idealised India of *Kim* transforms into the idealised history of making England according to Puck.

The main themes of *Puck of Pook's Hill* concern the two major conquerors in English history, the Normans and the Romans. These themes are the most closely linked to Kipling's own search for identity, as the former is connected to the shaping of modern England, and the latter to Kipling's unfulfilled dreams in colonial India.

2

The Norman tales constitute the beginning and the end of a nation's evolution in Old England. They are the key to Kipling's root-seeking ambitions. Since the conqueror and conquered fit within a similar

cultural framework, the contents of the tales and Kipling's psychology are much simpler than in his Indian tales. Such simplification enables Kipling easily to blur the line between the conqueror and the conquered, as his purpose is to show that the Normans and Saxons had evolved into a brotherhood through marriage, adventures and fights after 1066.

This assimilation starts with the friendship and marriage between the conqueror and the conquered in "Young Men at the Manor". True as Hugh Brogan's suspicion is, of the Norman's instant establishment on a Sussex estate right after the Battle of Hastings,²² Kipling goes beyond that miracle. The friendship between Sir Richard the Norman and Sir Hugh the Saxon is formed with incredible velocity, though they once had only a fleeting acquaintanceship in childhood. Sir Hugh's sister, Lady *Ælueva*, who first treats Sir Richard as a Norman thief,²³ later surrenders their manor to him with a gentle 'Sir Richard, will it please you enter your Great Hall?'²⁴ Together with the manor, she surrenders herself to be the young conqueror's wife. Obviously, Kipling believes that marriage is an important means to achieve unity. We note that this kind of marriage is definitely impossible in Kipling's Indian tales, where all marriages between Sahibs and native girls end in tragedy. Since there is no such racial barrier in the Norman tales, marriage undoubtedly plays an activator role in the unification. Moreover, we can see that Kipling did not view the Normans as a Master Race or the Saxons as inferior; otherwise, the marriage between the Saxon Lady and the Norman Lord would still be impossible. However, this love and marriage move forward too quickly to be plausible, considering the fact that the Normans and the Saxons took three generations after 1066 to achieve their unity. Sir Walter Scott displays a genuine understanding of the historical phenomenon between the Norman ruler and the Saxons in *Ivanhoe*, where the Saxons still have a strong enmity against their Norman ruler in King John's regime. As for the function of marriage, E.M. Forster clearly declares his viewpoint in *A Passage to India*, 'Why all this marriage, marriage? ... The human race would have become a single person centuries ago if marriage was any use.'²⁵ Ironically, in reality Kipling's marriage to an American family did not yield a permanent settlement in the United States, though he openly claimed, 'I love this People ... My heart has gone out to them beyond all other peoples.'²⁶

One of the crucial characters in the Norman tales is De Aquila. Obviously, the powerful and long-lived Norman Baron is an idealised conqueror, who, together with his friends Sir Richard and Sir Hugh the Saxon, represents the assimilation of Norman and Saxon. In "Old Men at Pevensey" De Aquila declares this idea with such a frequency that perhaps it becomes a bit redundant:

'In fifty years there will be neither Norman nor Saxon, but all English,' said he, 'and *these* are the men that do our work!'²⁷

'I do not think for myself,' said De Aquila, 'nor for our King, nor for your lands. I think for England, for whom neither King nor Baron thinks. I am not Norman, Sir Richard, nor Saxon, Sir Hugh. English am I.'²⁸

Generally speaking, there are no serious villains in the Norman tales to stop the assimilation, just as there are no serious villains to stop Mowgli and Kim. The only relatively dangerous person is Fulke in "Old Men at Pevensey". But he is not qualified as a true rival of De Aquila. He is outwitted and has to leave his son in De Aquila's castle. This is Kipling's clever way of educating the younger generation of the new ruling class in the right direction. As a result, the young Fulke turns out to be De Aquila's ally in "The Tree of Justice".

The death of the old half-insane Saxon King Harold in the last tale of the whole Puck series symbolises the prefiguring of the assimilation. The King's death is a tragic necessity because 'there can be but one king'. Harold's ending is in line with Kipling's tradition of disposing of the misfits – stripping them of their sanity, as if the insanity were a punishment for their obsolescence, as well as an excuse for their inevitable death.

Mcintosh Jellaludin in *Plain Tales from the Hills* and the insane old soldier in "The Man Who Was" serve the same function. The only exception is Akela the Lone Wolf, as madness is a disgrace in the Jungle; however he does not enjoy a natural death like Mowgli's wolf parents. Akela dies in Mowgli's arms after a glorious fight, as if in compensation for the shame of losing power. Similarly, Harold dies liberated on the breast of his sometime knight. This parallel cruelly points out that the change of the ruler in the human world is similar to the change of the Head Wolf in a Wolf Pack. Since it is the end of an era, the former ruler must end in a necessary death. In a sense, this sustains Noel Annan's viewpoint that Kipling had more interest in society than in individuals.²⁹

The other series of the conqueror theme is the three Roman tales concerning the ending days of the old ruling regime. In these tales the Roman conquerors are regarded as the civilised colonizers in a barbarian land. This is just another version of the British-Indian colony. Andrew Rutherford clearly relates the Roman-British colony in the Puck tales to the declining British Empire in Kipling's time. 'The Roman Empire (prototype and symbolic equivalent of the British) is declining, contracting...'³⁰ Therefore, the British-Roman tales are cryptically penetrated by Kipling's unrealised dreams in his Indian writings.

Where he failed in Anglo-Indians, he succeeded in British-Romans. In the Roman tales, the young colonists accomplish their double identities—the well-established officers in the colony, and the acknowledged heroes of the Empire.

There are many similarities between British-Romans and Anglo-Indians, as described by Kipling. Both of the colonizers treated their colonies as their homes, except that the British-Romans were more complete.³¹ Moreover, like Anglo-Indians, British-Romans felt alien to their countrymen at Home, as Parnesius complains to his father that 'the Roman-born officers and magistrates looked down on us British-born as though we were barbarians.'³²

The Roman-British colony in the tales is as diversified as Kipling's India – multicultural and multiracial, full of the people at different stages of human development, as Parnesius depicts the scene in *Aquae Sulis*:

All the old gluttons sit in hot water, and talk scandal and politics. And the Generals come through the streets with their guards behind them; and the magistrates come in their chairs with their stiff guards behind them; and you meet fortune-tellers and goldsmiths, and merchants, and philosophers, and feather-sellers, and ultra-Roman Britons, and ultra-British Romans, and tame tribesmen pretending to be civilised, and Jew lecturers, and—oh, everybody interesting.³³

In "On the Great Wall" he says, 'Remember, also, that the Wall was manned by every breed and race in the Empire. No two towers spoke the same tongue, or worshipped the same Gods.'³⁴

This is Kipling's indulgence in his previous colonial experience. Moreover, his attitude towards the colonized from his Indian years remained. The 'tame tribesmen pretending to be civilised' reminds us of the babu gentlemen and 'students of the Punjab University who copy English customs' in *Kim*.³⁵ Young as Parnesius is, his condescending attitude toward the Picts is obvious, as Kipling habitually treated the colonized people as children. "Therefore the Picts were well fed that winter, and since they were in some sort my children, I was glad of it."³⁶ This colonial psychology is also presented in "Brother Square-Toes" where George Washington is called 'a great chief. As a son of empire, Kipling's Anglo-Indian ruling-class complex subconsciously turned this American forefather into the model Anglo-Indian officer of his early Indian tales. When the American Indians hand Washington a compliment,

'Big Hand [Washington] looked down on 'em. First he says quite softly, "**My brothers** [my emphasis] know it is not easy to be a

chief." Then his voice grew. "*My children* [my emphasis]," says he [Washington] "what is in your minds?"³⁷

The other continuation of his past displayed in the tales is Kipling's deep concern for the Empire. Behind the prosperous scenes and colonizer's complacency, there lurk the same inner and outer threats, the same as those that the British-Indian Empire had to face. J.M.S. Tompkins asserts that the 'equivalent of the Winged Hats are doubtless the Russians, and the equivalent of Mithraism, that binds together men of different and hostile races, is Freemasonry.'³⁸ The native people, the Picts, are similar to the restive natives in "On the City Wall". The pro-Roman Pict's chief Allo is undoubtedly a reincarnation of the older loyal Indian native generation, now dying out of history. His grudges and prophecy represent a similar theme in *Kim* and *The Jungle Books*?³⁹

Whether in "On the City Wall" or "On the Great Wall", the situations in the two colonies look alike. I believe that Edward Said underestimates Kipling's ability to disclose the real situation in colonial India. Speaking of the native's loyalty in *Kim*, Said asserts that "The conflict between Kim's colonial service and loyalty to his Indian companions is unsolved not because Kipling could not face it, but because for Kipling *there was no conflict* [sic] ... Kipling was therefore untroubled by the notion of an Independent India."⁴⁰ On the contrary, as the national movement in India had already emerged in the 1880s, it was impossible for a keen observer like Kipling to be blind to the conflict and its possible consequences.

Already in *The Jungle Books*, Kipling symbolically shows his concern for the Empire's future, which makes Allo's warning iterative. Signs start in "Red Dog" where Mowgli lives away from the Pack, and only 'came to the Council Rock for memory's sake'. Though Mowgli still 'sat at Akela's side on the rock above Phao',⁴¹ the Seonee Wolf Pack grows stronger under the leadership of the new Head Wolf, Phao, who is more self-confident than his predecessor Akela in front of Mowgli. Further, Phao shows no sign of friendship with Mowgli. In "The Spring Running", Mowgli's Wolf parents and his old ally, Akela, have died. When 'the Time of New Talk' comes, Mowgli's master call is only answered by a few aging allied animal lords and his wolf brothers. The other animals in the Jungle do not show any concern for Mowgli's leaving:

'But the Master of the Jungle goes back to Man,' Gray Brother would repeat.

'*Eee—Yoawa?* Is the Time of New Talk any less sweet for that?' they would reply.⁴²

The reference to 'Time of New Talk' in the last story of Mowgli's adventures should be considered as having a deeper meaning than simply a physical phenomenon. In the same vein, Kim's future is vague due to its direct link with the future of the colonial Empire. "A Pict Song" is Kipling's reiteration of his concern indeed:

No indeed! We are not strong
But we know Peoples that are.
Yes, and we'll guide them along,
To smash and destroy you in War!
We shall be slaves just the same?
Yes, we have always been slaves,
But you—you will die of shame,
And then we shall dance on your graves!⁴³

Though facing a tough situation, Kipling would not abandon his beloved colonial Empire so easily. Naturally, the task of defense falls on the shoulders of the young officers. They are both young men from British 'Dominions' as Miss Tompkins has suggested,⁴⁴ and the ideal officers in the Indian Army according to Charles Carrington.⁴⁵ Both Parnesius and Pertinax are locally-born young colonists who know the natives well. They are the respectable and trusted friends of the natives, but also retain the merits of their metropolitan ancestors. However, the respect from their foreign enemies and countrymen cannot ensure their future in the colony, just like Kim's unpredictability in India. "The Winged Hats" moves to its end with Dan and Una's unanswered questions:

'I want to know, oh, ever so many things,' said Dan. 'What happened to old Allo? Did the Winged Hats ever come back? And what did Amal do?'

'And what happened to the fat old General with the five cooks?' said Una. 'And what did your Mother say when you came home? ...'⁴⁶

But Kipling does not continue the story. Instead, he ends the series with old Hobden's spell-like calling:

'She'd say you're settin' too long over this old pit, so late as 'tis already,' said old Hobden's voice behind them. 'Hst!' he whispered.⁴⁷

Just like the end of the Roman colony, the final loss of British colonies was merely a matter of time.

3

'There are only two places where I want to live—Bombay and Brattleboro. And I can't live in either,'⁴⁸ Kipling said sadly on the night before leaving America. Although Kipling finally took England as the Home, England remained in some ways foreign to him.

To some extent, Kipling's Home was none other than the Empire itself because 'the Empire is Kipling's Catholic Church'.⁴⁹ It was also his final asylum. In fact, his life-long exploration centred around the 'Church', starting from the Empire's Eastern colony and ending in its core – Old England. Therefore, his constant identity was none other than the son of empire.

This identity was a historical mark for many people at that time when empires were a matter of fact, particularly for a person like Kipling whose own experience perhaps had a deeper influence than that of his countrymen at Home. If Kipling's exploration of India was an adventure which helped establish his idea of cultural superiority, his exploration of England as the 'core' of the British Empire strengthened the idea, together with the by-product of strengthening his son-of-empire identity, because 'This core is something older, more natural and more permanent'.⁵⁰ He was so proud of this identity that he could boast for England in his later story – "An Habitation Enforced":

I am the land of their fathers,
 In me the virtue stays;
 I will bring back my children
 After certain days.⁵¹

Evidently, the Puck stories are influential; but while Kipling successfully gives the readers as well as himself a vivid 'vision' of English history,⁵² he has to pay a price for his quick marriage to the cultural heritage. This marriage seems as unnatural as the rushed one between Sir Richard and Lady Ælueva. Edmund Wilson describes Kipling's dramatic change as a colonial boy returned home as astonishing:

having declared his allegiance, he is free to hate the enemies of England... The bitter animus so deeply implanted by those six years of oppression of his childhood ... has turned into a generalized hatred of those nations, groups and tendencies precisely, which stand toward the dominating authority in the relationship of challengers or victims.⁵³

This is a dangerous sign for a person like Kipling, for, after all, he was a man who always held the Master Race ideology firmly installed alongside

his hierarchical complex. Obviously, Kipling's caste mentality was still strong when writing the Puck stories. When classified roughly, there are mainly two types of people in the Puck tales – the celebrities in history, who are the centres of the tales, and the minor common people who are the narrators or witnesses of the leading characters. Undoubtedly, the Puck stories do not lack the description of the working class, but the leading characters are no more Mulvaney-like lower-class people. One exception is the Jew Kadmiel in "The Treasure and the Law," but he plays a critical role directly linked to the King's decision on the future of England. Old Hobden is an important character throughout the Puck tales – a representative of the nostalgic Old England. This man and his family have an important linkage to English heritage but not to any significant powers. He certainly gains Kipling's affection, but he never appears as a main character of any tales, even in "Dymchurch Flit", where the emphasis is on a missing link in English heritage rather than on the narrator or his family. Old Hobden's roles in the tales are similar to that of Simple Simon and Pharaoh Lee in their respective tales, more like the witnesses and narrators of historical events and great people than the centre of their own stories.

The first tale in *Rewards and Fairies*, "Cold Iron", is a sad story about the final return of a slave's son to the slavery. Kipling did not even give the boy a name, as he is just briefly called 'the Boy'. Kipling may have deliberately kept him anonymous to complement the poem, "A Charm", which precedes the story:

Take of English earth as much
 As either hand may rightly clutch.
 In the taking of it breathe
 Prayer for all who lie beneath—
 Not the great nor well-bespoke,
 But the mere uncounted folk
 Of whose life and death is none
 Report or lamentation.
 Lay that earth upon they heart,
 And thy sickness shall depart!⁵⁴

Undeniably, Kipling showed his sympathy for those 'uncounted folk', but the following stories in *Rewards and Fairies* indicate that they are no longer his focus. Edmund Wilson has noticed that Kipling in his later years tended to represent all the people he disliked as lower-class folk and he was no longer so sympathetic toward them.⁵⁵

The second dangerous sign shown in the Puck stories is Kipling's heightened worship of power and strong leadership. There is no

better example than "The Knife and the Naked Chalk" to display his *Realpolitik* viewpoint. Even in the Mowgli tales, Mowgli, the son of nature, has to carry a knife, with which he kills enemies and intimidates friends.¹⁵⁶ Obviously, the skinning knife is a symbol of Mowgli's authority over inferior animals. The symbol of authority in the Puck tales is a sword forged by a heathen god signifying the legitimate ruling power of England. The sword appears in the opening tale of the whole series. It first comes to Sir Hugh the Saxon. Later, Sir Hugh surrenders it to the new conqueror Sir Richard the Norman. The theme of Mowgli's knife reincarnates in "The Knife and the Naked Chalk", where a knife turns a primitive man into an unwilling god, even though he has to pay a price for it.

Interestingly enough, human psychology, though complicated, is basically the same in different cultures. Kipling was used to treating the inferiors as 'children', and in "The Knife and the Naked Chalk", he called people 'sheep':

He wrenched his knife from the turf, thrust it into his belt and stood up.

'And yet, what else could I have done?' he said. 'The sheep are the people.'¹⁵⁷

This tale, together with the Parnesius tales, shows the role of the rulers to rule while at the same time to sacrifice. A relative parallel can also be traced in Chinese culture. Traditionally, there is a strong notion to deprecate people as 'sheep' and 'children' in China. Therefore, in the past Chinese Empires, the official title of powerful governors, equal to barons in the West, was 'Shepherd' and the officials were called 'the parental lords of the commons'. Unfortunately, the expression is still alive in today's China. The ideal concept is that a good parental lord must be a superior controller of his people while ready to sacrifice himself to their benefit, though few of the privileged lords can really achieve the latter norm.

Edward Shanks believes that 'He [Kipling] came to realise that the Englishman who wants to know the world must know his own country as well.'¹⁵⁸ The Puck stories are meant to serve the purpose. However, they show more of Kipling's previous colonial mentality than the direct connection to the real history of England. In this sense, the tales are the extension of his colonial writings. Their author, a gentleman who came back to the Western world through a hard struggle, was more like a grown-up Kim than a 'grown-up Mowgli'. Therefore, in order to establish a more reasonably attached psychology to this new foreign country called England, Kipling had to force himself to be the most law-biding

and British.⁵⁹ 'There can be but one King', as he claimed in "The Tree of Justice". To Kipling, the 'one King' means the core of the British Empire that is composed of the heritage of Old England, the Master of all present colonies of the British Empire, as well as the Mother of all native English-speaking people. Therefore, he did no more exploration of the other worlds, but narrated them as a matter of fact. Morton N. Cohen once claimed that 'Literature is history's handmaiden'.⁶⁰ But the function of the Puck stories is the other way around. In these stories, history turns into literature's loyal instrument. Kipling used a story-teller's privilege to rearrange history for his own needs. His purpose is so obvious and his narration so in line with his colonial mindset that these inevitably make his effort to stop his 'Imperialist' output, and his previous efforts to balance his so-called two-sided head, an illusion in the end.

NOTES

1. Rudyard Kipling, "Sir Richard's Song", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1906), p.63.
2. Rudyard Kipling, "The Tree of Justice", in *Rewards and Fairies*, edited with an Introduction and Notes by Roger Lewis, (England: Penguin Group, 1987), first published 1910, p.252.
3. Rudyard Kipling to Charles Eliot Norton, quoted in Philip Mason, *Kipling—The Glass, the Shadow and the Fire*, (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd, 1975), p.128.
4. See Roger Lewis, "Introduction" to *Rewards and Fairies* 1987, where he quotes Defoe's poem, "The True Born Englishman", in Rudyard Kipling, *Rewards and Fairies* 1987, pp.3-4.
5. Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself* 2006, (Nanjing: Jiangsu Education Press, 2006), p.108.
6. Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself* 2006, p.226.
7. Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself* 2006, p.226.
8. Roger Lewis, "Introduction", in Rudyard Kipling, *Rewards and Fairies* 1987, p.3.
9. Rudyard Kipling, "Weland's Sword", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.13.
10. Rudyard Kipling, "The Joyous Venture", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.99.
11. Rudyard Kipling, "Tods' Amendment", in *Plain Tales from the Hills* 1900, (1888; London: Macmillan & Co., Limited, 1900), p.196.
12. Rudyard Kipling, "Cold Iron", in *Rewards and Fairies* 1987, p.54.
13. Rudyard Kipling, "Cold Iron", in *Rewards and Fairies* 1987, p.56.
14. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Discourse*, translated with Introduction by G. D. H. Cole, (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd), first included in Everyman's Library 1913, last printed 1968, p.3.
15. R. L. Green, *Kipling and the Children*, (London: Elek Books LTD, 1965), p.202.
16. Homi K Bhabha, "DissemiNation: Time, Narrative, and the Margins of the Modern Nation", in Homi K Bhabha (ed.) *Nation and Narration*, (London/New York: Routledge 1990), p.297.
17. Marcus Crouch, "Puck Country", quoted in R. L. Green, *Kipling and the Children*, p.203.

18. Ernest Renan, "What is the nation?", in Homi K. Bhabha (ed.), *Nation And Narration*, p.15.
19. Ernest Renan, "What is the nation?", in Homi K. Bhabha (ed.), *Nation And Narration*, p.11.
20. Rudyard Kipling, *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.303.
21. Homi K Bhabha, "DissemiNation: Time, Narrative, and the Margins of the Modern Nation", in Homi K Bhabha (ed.) *Nation and Narration*, p.297.
22. Hugh Brogan, "Kipling and History", December 16th 2007, source from The Kipling Society website, http://www.kipling.org.uk/rg_history1.htm.
23. Rudyard Kipling, "Young Men at the Manor", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.47.
24. Rudyard Kipling, "Young Men at the Manor", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.58.
25. E. M. Forster, *A Passage to India*, edited by Oliver Stallybrass, (Penguin Group, 1979), first published by Edward Arnold 1924, p.207.
26. Rudyard Kipling, *From Sea to Sea* II, Chapter Thirty-Three, quoted in Edmund Wilson, "The Kipling That Nobody Read", in Andrew Rutherford (ed.), *Kipling's Mind & Art*, (Edinburgh/ London: Oliver & Boyd, 1965), p.35.
27. Rudyard Kipling, "Old Men at Pevensey", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.112.
28. Rudyard Kipling, "Old Men at Pevensey", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.119.
29. Noel Annan, "Kipling's place in the History of Ideas", in Andrew Rutherford (ed.), *Kipling's Mind & Art*, p.99.
30. Andrew Rutherford, "Officers and Gentleman", in Andrew Rutherford (ed.), *Kipling's Mind & Art*, p.186.
31. Rudyard Kipling, "A Centurion of the Thirtieth", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.147.
32. Rudyard Kipling, "A Centurion of the Thirtieth", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.152.
33. Rudyard Kipling, "A Centurion of the Thirtieth", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.149.
34. Rudyard Kipling, "On the Great Wall", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.176.
35. Rudyard Kipling, *Kim* 1993, (1901; Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1993), p.13.
36. Rudyard Kipling, "The Winged Hats", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.207.
37. Rudyard Kipling, "Brother Square-Toes", in *Rewards and Fairies* 1987, p.161.
38. J. M. S. Tompkins, *The Art of Rudyard Kipling*, (London: Methuen & Co., LTD, 1959), p.78.
39. Rudyard Kipling, "On the Great Wall", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.188.
40. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993; New York: Vintage Books, 1994), p.146.
41. Rudyard Kipling, "Red Dog", in *The Jungle Books*, edited with an Introduction by W. W. Robson, (1894-5; Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p.279.
42. Rudyard Kipling, "The Spring Running", in *The Jungle Books* 1992, p.321.
43. Rudyard Kipling, "A Pict Song", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.226.
44. J. M. S. Tompkins, *The Art of Rudyard Kipling*, pp.78-9.
45. Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling: His Life and Work*, (London: Macmillan & Co., Limited, 1955), p.381.
46. Rudyard Kipling, "The Winged Hats", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.224.
47. Rudyard Kipling, "The Winged Hats", in *Puck of Pook's Hill* 1906, p.224.
48. Charles Allen, *Kipling Sahib—India and the Making of Rudyard Kipling*, (Little, Brown Book Group, 2007), p.339.

49. Boris Ford, "A Case for Kipling", in E. L. Gilbert (ed.), *Kipling and the Critics*, (London: Peter Owen Limited, 1966), p.66.
50. T. S. Eliot, *A Choice of Kipling's Verse*, (London: Faber and Faber LTD, December 1941), p.27.
51. Rudyard Kipling, "An Habitation Enforced", quoted in George Shepperson, "The World of Rudyard Kipling", in Andrew Rutherford (ed.), *Kipling's Mind & Art*, p.144.
52. J.I.M. Stewart: "The Unfading Genius of Rudyard Kipling", quoted in R. L. Green, *Kipling and the Children*, p.213.
53. Edmund Wilson, "The Kipling That Nobody Read", in Andrew Rutherford (ed.), *Kipling's Mind & Art*, p.40.
54. Rudyard Kipling, "A Charm", in *Rewards and Fairies* 1987, p.50.
55. Edmund Wilson, "The Kipling That Nobody Read", in Andrew Rutherford (ed.), *Kipling's Mind & Art*, pp.43-4.
56. See Rudyard Kipling, "Letting in the Jungle", in *The Jungle Books* 1992, p.185.
57. Rudyard Kipling, "The Knife and the Naked Chalk", in *Rewards and Fairies* 1987, p.139.
58. Edward Shanks, *Rudyard Kipling—A Study in Literature and Political Ideas*, (London: Macmillan & Co., LTD, 1940), p.197.
59. Charles Allen, *Kipling Sahib*, p.364.
60. Morton N. Cohen, "Introduction", in *Kim, with an introduction by Morton N. Cohen*, (1901; Bantam Classic edition, May 1983), x.

A COLLECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS¹

By RUDYARD KIPLING

[This review is by Rudyard Kipling of a set of 24 photographs of the 1886 Lahore Durbar taken by John Burke. The text has been abstracted from Omar Khan's *From Kashmir to Kabul: The Photographs of John Burke and William Baker 1860 - 1900*. The book was first published in 2002 and presents a magnificent collection of 136 photographs – landscape, architectural, and portrait – from the northwest of the Indian Sub-Continent. The subjects included are of Imperial, military, and sporting events, each of which is illuminated by detailed explanatory notes.

Omar Khan has also founded a website, www.harappa.com/pict.html which is concerned with the photographs that are available of the Sub-Continent for the century up to 1947. I can recommend a thorough exploration of it.

I am most grateful to Mr Khan for his permission to use the Kipling text that he has re-published. – *Ed.*]

Mr. J. Burke², the well known photographer of Lahore and Murree, has made the most of the opportunities afforded by last month's Lahore Gathering; and the result is as fine a collection of photographs as we have ever seen.

Taking the best among many good ones, first, the highest praise should be awarded to a large photo of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, the Viceroy and Lady Helen Blackwood and Sir Charles and Lady Aitchison, Sir West Rid[g]ewey, and the Minor Stars of the Ducal and Viceregal Staff, grouped outside Government House. All the likenesses are good, and—since they must have been scores of times photographed—the principal figures have posed themselves naturally—which is a great thing in State pictures. This photo, to people who cannot purchase the entire set—about twenty-four—is the one to be secured as a memento.

The views of the Viceroy's arrival at the Lahore railway station are very good specimens of short exposure without the shutter. First, we have the interior of the Lahore railway station, swept, garnished and decorated for the Viceroy's arrival; next, two or three views of the Guard of Honour and troops outside the station, in which the Lahore Volunteers look remarkably imposing. These two views are taken from opposite ends of the station buildings, and would almost delude the unwary into the belief that the castlemented, battlemented, brick and half structures were massive buildings. Save that here or there a horse has switched a hasty tail, and so blurred himself, these views are practically instantaneous, and it is possible to recognize, one by one, the faces of the Volunteers and their officers.

Mr. Burke has taken at least half a dozen photos of the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the Punjab Chief's College. The best of all, a front view of the brilliant gathering under the big Shamiana [decorated tent], and full in the foreground, the white dust of Mian Mir on his boots, stands a soldier of the 5th Fusiliers, the man who was later knocked over by the sun, staring with drawn face and fixed eyes. Whether intended or not, the contrast between the Private, and the Prince plumed and decorated in a silver chair just behind, is a most artistic one. The photos of the actual ceremony of laying of the stone are all that could be wished for in the matter of portraiture, the many ropes and chains attached to the stone being kept out of the groups, thus securing a clear photo.

In the view of the Montgomery Hall, crammed and double crammed at the Punjab University Convocation, we have a grand picture, though marred in places by too strong a light, and the peculiar perspective of the central chandelier, which thrusts itself as it were into the bosom of the assembly. All the likenesses, minute as the faces are, have come out almost faultlessly. As good as, if not better than the photo of the Viceregal Party and Royal party, is the one of the Afghan Boundary Commission—native and English officers in their camp. It is to be noted that the tanned, brown hands of the Englishmen show almost as darkly as the hands of the natives and in one case, specially, the demarcation between a bronzed face and a white turban-protected forehead is curiously distinct.

The Inspection of the Commission by the Viceroy is wonderfully good, and Mr. Burke has availed himself of a chance not seldom offered to a photographer—that of photographing a rival. Now a man with his head inside the black velvet of a camera, and his legs much astraddle, is neither a comely nor dignified object, and his appearance just behind the lines of the Commission Escort is very funny.

There are, besides the photos we have mentioned, many smaller ones of minor incidents during the Lahore Gathering and the series should form a valuable and interesting memento of some great and notable ceremonies.¹

NOTES

1. This review can be found under "Printed Material, 1. Press-cuttings, a. Bound Volumes, 28/3, p.58, Kipling Archive, University of Sussex Special Collections."
2. In 1885 John Burke opened a branch of J. Burke & Co in Lahore.
3. First published in the *Civil and Military Gazette*, 6 December 1886.

'THREE DABS AND TWO SCRATCHES':
PAINTERLY IMPRESSIONISM IN
THE LIGHT THAT FAILED

by RICHARD M. BERRONG

[Richard M. Berrong is a professor of French literature at Kent State University, in Kent, Ohio. For the last decade or so he has been working on the relationship between literature and painting, particularly the painting of Claude Monet. He began with the works of French novelist Pierre Loti, and has since branched out to examine those of several of Loti's late nineteenth-century contemporaries. – *Ed.*]

'How the deuce do three dabs and two scratches make the stuff stand away from the body as it does?' said Torpenhow, to whom Dick's methods were always new.

'It just depends on where you put 'em.'

That Rudyard Kipling, in *The Light that Failed* (1891), chose the world of contemporary painting and painters as a metaphor through which to lambast the disappointing literary world that he had encountered in London since he arrived there in 1889 as a suddenly very popular writer has never surprised anyone. He was the son of an art teacher and talented draftsman, Lockwood Kipling, who, when they visited the Paris Universal Exposition in April 1878, prompted the then thirteen-year-old boy to visit art galleries and that year's Salon (Lycett 56). He spent his English Christmases with his Aunt Georgie and her husband, the distinguished Pre-Raphaelite painter Edward Burne-Jones. Another of his aunts, Agnes, had married the Orientalist academic painter Edward Poynter, who had known James Whistler in Paris and studied there with Charles Gleyre at the same time as Claude Monet (Flanders 104). After Whistler sued Ruskin for libelling his work neither Burne-Jones nor Poynter seems to have thought much of him or it (Flanders 256), but they continued to be aware of what was going on in modern French painting. In 1888 Whistler, by then a friend of Monet, married Beatrice Godwin, the widowed daughter of Lockwood Kipling's artistic mentor, John Birnie Philip (Lycett 64). Rudyard's familiarity with Whistler's style by the time he began work on his first novel is demonstrated by the fact that he entitled one of four sketches he did for his friend Edmonia Hill in early 1889 "Study (after the fashion of Whistler)" (Lycett 171).'

What comes as more of a surprise, given all this, is that closer attention does not seem to have been paid to the discussions of painting in Kipling's first novel. Read in the context of the arguments that had been occupying the art world for the previous two decades, *The Light that*

Failed turns out to be the interesting expression of a hesitant fascination with the revolutionary development, Impressionism, that was then gaining respect both in Paris and abroad.

Kipling devotes little description to Dick Helder's first style of painting. What there is comes from the comments of other characters. The first is when war correspondent Torpenhow, upon meeting Helder in North Africa and seeing the sketches he has with him, remarks 'can't say I care for Verestchagin-and-water myself, but there's no accounting for tastes' (20). By 1890 when Kipling wrote *The Light that Failed*, Vassili Verestchagin (1842-1904) had developed an international reputation as a painter and illustrator who travelled the globe to do almost photographically-detailed depictions of war, sometimes of its most gruesome moments. Verestchagin had sufficient standing in England by the time Kipling set to work on his novel that Bentley and Son, Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen, had seen it fit and potentially profitable to bring out an English translation of his illustrated two-volume autobiography, thereby giving Kipling some assurance that his readers would understand Torpenhow's reference.² The titles Helder gives two of the sketches he shows the journalist, 'Chief mate dirked by a comprador' and 'Soldier lying dead in the moonlight outside Suakin,—throat cut by Fuzzies.' as well as the scene that had caught his eye when Torpenhow encounters him, 'sketching a clump of shell-torn bodies on the gravel plain' (20, 19), suggest that at this period Dick, like the Russian artist, has a particular interest in depicting the worst effects of war on those engaged to fight it. Another of the war correspondents, the Nilghai, assumes that Helder desires to equal or surpass Verestchagin's success by doing more of that sort of thing. When he tries to convince Dick to join him and the other war correspondents who will be covering the next British campaign in North Africa, he describes it as 'the chance for you of seeing things that would make the reputation of three Verestchagins' (85).³

These two comments by themselves do not necessarily indicate Helder's style as opposed to his subject matter, however. That the Nilghai does when inspecting what remains of the prettified second version of Helder's depiction of a soldier, "His Last Shot", through which Torpenhow has just put a disgusted boot: 'You know these people here have no sense of proportion. They'll call him a second Detaille and a third-hand Meissonier while his fashion lasts' (54). In 1890 Ernest Meissonier (1815-1891) was the most highly admired and paid living painter in France, if not indeed the Western World, an eminence that he had held since the death of Ingres in 1867.⁴ Meissonier had taken the line-oriented, classical style promoted by David and Ingres in the first part of the nineteenth century and developed it to an extreme, working

painstaking long hours to depict with better than photographic precision even the smallest details in his subjects. As Ross King has recalled,

Meissonier's paintings ... rewarded the closest and most prolonged observation. After purchasing one of his works, the English art critic John Ruskin [a taste maker for the Pre-Raphaelites] would examine it at length under a magnifying glass, marveling at Meissonier's manual dexterity and eye for fascinating minutiae ... No one in the history of art, it was said, ever possessed such a superlative and unerring touch with his brush. (6-7)

Edouard Detaille (1848-1912) was a student of Meissonier who specialized in war paintings done with the same attention to minute detail. Certainly part of the Nilghai's comparison of Helder's prettified war painting to the work of these two French artists stems from a belief that, in conceding to the art-manager of *Dickenson's Weekly's* complaint that his first, more realistic version was too 'brutal and coarse and violent' (49), Dick has sacrificed the ugly truth of war, Verestchagin's and evidently his own original focus, to the noble and more stirring aspects. When Meissonier did war scenes, as in "The Emperor Napoleon III at the Battle of Solferino" (1863) or "The Campaign of France" (1864), they did not focus on the suffering of the common soldier but rather glorified generals, as did Detaille's most famous works. In his "Reminiscences" of Meissonier that Verestchagin published in the *Contemporary Review* in May, 1899, the Russian artist noted that his French colleague presented war 'as seen from the place of the general staff; 'the troops are dealt with not so much as men, but rather as a flock' (9). Part of the Nilghai's comparison would also seem to suggest, however, that Helder painted in the same very precise, detail-oriented style. This is supported by the fact that Torpenhow, though not himself particularly impressed by Dick's early work, nonetheless has him taken on by the Central Southern Press Syndicate to illustrate his war correspondence knowing that all that organization 'demanded was picturesqueness and abundance of detail' (19).

This understanding of Helder's style is borne out by remarks that he himself makes later to his childhood and then adult love, Maisie. He comes back repeatedly to the importance of line or drawing. Early on, displaying a lack of tact that marks most of his art talks with her, he tells Maisie

I've a notion that you're weak in drawing ... Suppose you spend some of your time on line alone ... Do line-work for a little while, and then I can tell more about your powers ... You *have* a sense of

colour, but you want form. Colour's a gift,—put it aside and think no more about it,—but form you can be drilled into. (79)

In this respect Helder presents himself as an unquestioning spokesman of the conservative, establishment position in the debate on painting that had been on-going in France since the early part of the nineteenth century, the two figureheads of which had been Ingres (1780-1867) for drawing/line and Eugene Delacroix (1798-1863) for color. As Ross King has summarized it, there was 'a bias against color on the part of the Neoclassicists in the Academie [des Beaux Arts]: Ingres had once famously declared that thirty years was needed to learn to draw but only three days to learn to paint' (99). This is Helder's argument that drawing/line-work involves diligent study, painting as a learned craft that is the product of constant disciplined effort over time, whereas color comes without study like the emotion it expresses and so is (just) a gift.

The conservative, establishment position that Dick preaches at poor Maisie is not always what he practices, or at least dreams of practicing, however. In the style that he uses upon his arrival in London he does impress with his ability to depict all the details of reality like Meissonier. When, one day, he takes Maisie past a print shop that features a reproduction of one of his paintings in its display window, they overhear two artillerymen who take Dick's work for the very thing that it represents:

'They've chucked the off lead-'orse,' said one to the other. ' 'E's tore up awful, but they're makin' good time with the others. That lead-driver drives better nor you, Tom. See 'ow cunnin' 'e's nursin' 'is 'orse.'

'Number Three'll be off the limber, next jolt,' was the answer.

'No, 'e won't. See 'ow 'is foot's braced against the iron? 'E's all right.' (66)

This is the sort of photographic realism in the depiction of combat action that Meissonier worked years to achieve in his most ambitious undertaking, "Friedland" (1876).

Helder himself loves color, though. When Torpenhow gets him to recall the Sudan, he exclaims: 'What colour that was!' and goes on at length remembering all the shades of color he saw there (47). When Dick describes tropical islands south of the equator to Maisie, sounding like Gauguin *avant la lettre*, he assures her that there 'you'll see for yourself what colour means' (103). Despite his dismissal of it to Maisie at one moment, Dick does, therefore, get excited about color. He

realizes, however, that to appeal to the public and the art establishment he has to key it down. To Torpenhow he explains that

if you try to give these people the thing as God gave it keyed down to their comprehension and according to the powers He has given you ... half a dozen epicene young pagans who haven't even been to Algiers will tell you, first, that your notion is borrowed, and, secondly, that it isn't Art. (47)

Ross King provides the context for this:

artists learned to tone ["key"] down their works by coating them with transparent brownish glazes made from ingredients such as bitumen. As a collector had once informed John Constable: "A good picture, like a good fiddle, should be brown." Painters who challenged this prejudice against color [such as Delacroix and his great admirer, Monet] ... found themselves reviled by conservative critics. (268)

This clarifies Heldar's remark to Torpenhow about the English audience for painting: 'If they want furniture-polish,' his description of bitumen, 'let them have furniture-polish, so long as they pay for it' (50). He clearly has no respect for such an approach to painting, however. In the long version of the novel, to the significance to this issue of which we shall turn shortly, one of the curses Heldar hurls at Beeton is 'you impotent Academician!' (261).⁵

Dick's fascination with color goes beyond a desire to use it even at its most powerful, however. He also sees the various tones in what those without such perception view only as uniform tones. Early on he ridicules his newly-acquired English audience to Torpenhow on this issue as well: 'Limited isn't the word to describe 'em. I met a fellow the other day who told me that it was impossible that shadows on white sand should be blue,—ultramarine,—as they are' (46). Later, when he meets Maisie again,

it was an additional joy to Dick that Maisie could see colour even as he saw it,—could see the blue in the white of the mist, the violet that is in gray palings, and all things else as they are,—not of one hue, but a thousand. (113)

In this sense Heldar is an outright Impressionist. Such 'decomposition of light' (315), as Émile Zola christened it in one of his articles on Monet's work, was one of Impressionism's most radical innovations.

Paralleling Dick's words to Torpenhow, Monet at one point recalled how his division of colors into all their various hues brought him strong rebukes from the art establishment early in his career. Speaking of his early large canvas "Women in the Garden" (1866) he explained

I was still far from having adopted the principle of the division of colours which turned so many people against me, but I was beginning to experiment with it in part, and I was working at effects of light and colour which ran counter to accepted conventions. (House 111)⁶

It is not surprising, given this, that Maisie's housemate, the nameless 'red-haired impressionist girl' (76), at one point tells Maisie 'I think [Dick] knows there is something in impressionism, after all'" (82).

Kipling takes Helder's Impressionism further in the remarkable eighth chapter, the central chapter of the fifteen-chapter "sad" version of the novel that he published in book form in England in March 1891.⁷ This chapter, which Kipling positioned at the centre of the novel like the element in a canvas that the artist most wants his audience to see, shows that Dick's understanding of the effects of light on color is not the only thing that makes him resemble a Monet-style Impressionist. Tired of being criticized by Torpenhow and the Nilghai for not working, Helder decides to do an erotic picture of the latter shinning naked up the phallic Nelson's Column. Altogether ignoring the establishment teaching he had preached at Maisie in Chapter VI, he simply skips the preliminary drawing altogether, explaining to the two journalists that for this creation he will 'begin without a pencil' (127). 'Dick brought out of the paper with three twirls of the brush a very fat back and labouring shoulder pressed against the stone' (127-128). This is far from the meticulous, detail-oriented style of a Meissonier, but very close to contemporary descriptions of Monet-style Impressionism. As Gustave Geffroy, Monet's early biographer and an important art critic, wrote: 'Monet sees the overall entirety of things, tries to represent them with the fewest lines possible' (114). Helder's most demanding critic, Torpenhow, is dazzled by the result:

'How the deuce do three dabs and two scratches make the stuff stand away from the body as it does?' said Torpenhow, to whom Dick's methods were always new.

Dick replies. 'It just depends on where you put 'em', adding to this description of Monet-style Impressionism that

'I'm content with the knowledge that I've done my best up to date, and I shan't do anything like it again for some hours at least—probably years. Most probably never'. (128-129)

Heldar here paints like an Impressionist and the results are most effective, though in a way that is different from the effect that his highly realistic painting of the battle scene had had on the two artillerymen.

That Kipling understood Heldar's depiction of the Nilghai to be Impressionism and meant it to be seen as such by at least the careful reader is evidenced by the fact that the other artist to paint in this style and with this same powerful effect is the unnamed 'red-haired impressionist girl'. One Sunday when Dick is visiting them she 'announced that she would make a study of Dick's head, and that he would be good enough to sit still, and—quite as an afterthought—look at Maisie' (81). 'It was the merest monochrome roughing of a head', the narrator observes, recalling Heldar's 'three twirls of the brush' in his depiction of the Nilghai, 'but it presented the dumb waiting, the longing, and, above all, the hopeless enslavement of the man in a spirit of bitter mockery' (81). Every bit as effective as the Nilghai draft, this work so clearly and forcefully captures the truth of Heldar's feelings for Maisie that he tries to buy it to keep her from seeing them. When the impressionist girl drops it in the fire moments later, Dick thanks her 'under his breath' (82).

Such a positive presentation of Impressionism might seem surprising from the pen of the nephew of the Pre-Raphaelite Edward Burne-Jones, whom Ruskin had cajoled in 1874 into attacking the work of the English Impressionist James Whistler (Flanders 153-154). As already noted, Christmases spent with Burne-Jones and his wife, Kipling's Aunt Georgie, had been bright spots during the dreary years young Ruddy spent in school in Southsea. Still, by the time Kipling returned to England in 1889 his view of the Pre-Raphaelite movement was not positive, especially its literary element. On 13 July 1888 he had written his friend Edmonia Hill that Burne-Jones' daughter, his cousin Margaret, 'lived in an entirely different life from mine—all among the aesthetic folk and the writer-men of Oscar Wilde's epicene stamp. Now she has married a scholar of Balliol and from the height of her happiness looks down on me' (Kipling, *Letters* 1.252).

Perhaps because her biography is so closely modelled on that of Florence Garrard, an art student whom Kipling first met as a child at Southsea and then re-encountered after his return to England in 1889, no one seems to have thought it worthwhile to consider what little we know about Maisie's painting. As J.E. Monro remarked of her, however, 'to trace the origins of an author's characters is of interest, but

to consider that any one is a direct portrait is dangerous' (21).⁸ Usually scholars repeat the worst that Dick has to say about it, though Kipling clearly presents his judgments as highly biased. After one Sunday visit to Maisie 'he realized that [her paintings] were productions on which advice would not be wasted' and that 'she certainly has some notion of drawing' (76-77). A week later, however, when she refuses to abandon painting and marry him, Helder tells her 'I've a notion that you're weak in drawing ... you shirk hard work ... You have a sense of colour, but you want form' (79). Still later, when she continues to reject his marriage proposals, he dismisses her work as 'hermaphroditic futilities' (152).

The text does provide some more objective information, however. Early on Maisie, referring to her impressionist roommate, tells Dick that 'all our notions clash' (70), so she is not herself an Impressionist. This is reinforced by the fact that, when Maisie decides to paint a figure based on a passage in James Thomson's poem "The City of Dreadful Night", the impressionist girl makes 'no attempt to conceal the scorn of [her] lazy voice' (149) when she reads the passage in question.

Dick does not approve of this subject matter either: 'that's bad, to begin with. Books aren't the places for pictures' (148).⁹ And yet, books, rather than Monet's nature, were the inspiration for many Pre-Raphaelite canvases, both by Gabriel Rossetti and by Burne-Jones. Given that Dick also describes Maisie's work as 'hermaphroditic futilities', it may be that Kipling used his encounter with Flo Garrard to disguise a critique of an art movement that, for family's sake, he could not condemn more directly. Painting may well be operating as a metaphor for literature again here, since by 1890 Kipling found the literary branch of the Aesthetic Movement, as developed by Oscar Wilde, to be particularly unappealing (Lycett 216-217). This interpretation of Maisie's painting would also explain why, though Dick's notions of art clash with hers (70), Kipling indicates that Helder had once studied with Maisie's teacher, Kami (46), whom the narrator later describes as 'monotonous' and 'a leaden artist' (211-212): Kipling had grown up, especially in England, in a Pre-Raphaelite world, but he had moved far from it.

If the two episodes of Impressionist painting in *The Light that Failed* declare the effectiveness of a Monet-style technique in art – and perhaps literature as well, since the novel uses the art world to talk about the London literary scene – they also introduce the idea that great art must involve sexual desire: the naked Nilghai flees his many wives, Helder experiences the emotions captured by the impressionist girl's monochrome roughing while looking at Maisie. Kipling considerably developed this idea immediately after the first of these two episodes

in that central Chapter VIII when Dick tells the story of the painting that he regards as his greatest work. Executed during a voyage through the Society Islands (for which Gauguin would leave in March 1891 as *The Light that Failed* made its first appearance in England), this seven- by fourteen-foot painting depicted angels and devils fighting over a woman drowning at sea. The work was created in instability of movement – 'we didn't know whether we should go up or down any minute when there was a sea on' (131) – and light – 'all done in shifting light for shifting light' (132) – which makes it sound very much like Monet's work, which focuses on change and movement, especially of light. As with the Nilghai draft, traditional emphasis on drawing/line was of no importance here: 'There was a heap of bad drawing in that picture', Helder explains to his two friends, 'but for all that it's the best thing I've ever done' (132). It was also created amid thoughts of sex: 'unlimited love-making' with the Negroid-Jewess-Cuban woman who was the ship's only other passenger (132). When the Nilghai urges Helder to 'try something of the same kind now' in London, however, the artist declares that he cannot find the same elements there and 'shut the sketch-book with a bang' (133), perhaps because he knows that the art world that would not accept his first, rougher depiction of a soldier's "Last Shot" would never deal with the sort of sex-inspired, unstable, drawing-unconcerned art that he felt to be 'the best thing I've ever done'.

Though the shorter, "happy" version of *The Light that Failed* does not make such a direct, foregrounded assertion of the necessity of sex in great art, it does raise the issue early on. When, after working for Torpenhow in the Sudan, Helder goes off to wander through the East by himself, he settles for awhile in Port Said. There one night he decides to do a portrait of the failed painter Binat, so he pays to have

naked Zanzibari girls dance ... furiously by the light of kerosene lamps ... till the whirl of the dance ... stole into the ... blood in [Binat's] veins, and his face glistened ... Dick leaned against the wall and sketched [Binat's face] for an hour. (33)

He never pronounces judgment on the quality of the result, however.¹⁰

There remains Helder's last painting, "Melancholia", for which he uses as a model another sexual figure, the not overly moral Bessie Broke. The text says little about the first version of it, which Dick discards unfinished as a failure. For the second one he once again sidesteps establishment-sanctioned practice, declaring that 'all those [preparatory] studies of Bessie's head were nonsense' and that 'there shall be some drawing in it' (174) but evidently not as much as would

normally have been expected in an academic, Meissonier-style work. Something between his greatest work, done on the cargo ship with 'a heap of bad drawing', and his early detail-precise style. Once finished, he finds this "Melancholia" to be 'all or nearly all that he had hoped she would be' (181), and Torpenhow, making an art technique wordplay of which he is no doubt unaware, announces to the Nilghai that Helder is 'doing first-class work ... and it's quite out of his regular line' (182). Having only 'some drawing', this painting is not as line-centred as his earlier work, that with which Torpenhow was familiar, which is why it is 'quite out of his regular *line*.' There is some sex in it, since there is some of Dick's perception of Maisie and some of Bessie (174). Helder pronounces it 'the best I can do' (183), but makes no comparisons with his cargo-hold masterpiece, suggesting once again that the current Chapter VIII, at least as we know it, was written after the original "happy" version and, more importantly, leaving some ambiguity as to which of the two paintings and styles better represents Helder's – and his creator's – idea of the best possible work of art. (Remember that Dick describes "Melancholia" as 'all or nearly all that he had hoped she would be', whereas his praise for the cargo-hold painting is unconditional: 'the best thing I've ever done.') In either case, however, Helder has forsaken the detail-oriented realism of his first style, though not his conviction, and certainly Kipling's, that what counted in the end was a work of art's effect on its audience, be it artillerymen, the stevedores who are scared by his shipboard masterpiece (132), or Torpenhow, who can 'feel' the worth of the finished second "Melancholia" (184). What seems to change in the course of *The Light that Failed* is Helder's, and perhaps Kipling's, understanding of how best to achieve that effect."

Kipling's family connections to the art world were such that it would have been very hard for him to have been unaware of the debate that Monet's Impressionism had been raising in Paris since at least 1874 and in London since his principle dealer, Durand-Ruel, had started showing his work there. Looking for a metaphor through which to talk about literature and the literary world that he found upon his arrival in the English capital, Kipling was therefore able to use painting without having to do the sort of background research that he undertook for other works large and small, perhaps most notably to make the '*Captains Courageous*' tale of cod fishing in the North Atlantic seem like such a lived experience, or even that he did for the Sudan war sections of *The Light that Failed*. There is no reason to believe that he settled on painting just for its ease, however. Already in 1879 the distinguished French literary critic Ferdinand Brunetière, in an often-cited article, had undertaken to show how certain modern French novelists like Alphonse Daudet were adopting Impressionist painting techniques to

literature. Kipling may well have found certain aspects of this new style of painting to be convenient ways of talking about what he wanted to do, or already saw himself as doing, in his own work. The knowing use of a few telling lines to capture characters more effectively than a lot of painstaking detail such as he found in Zola and other realist writers was certainly a metaphor for what Kipling had been trying to do, often very successfully, in his short stories and narrative poetry. Dick's desire to use unvarnished vivid color that included all its hues and the repeated suggestion that the best art must include sexual desire no doubt express Kipling's repeated frustrations with the censorship some of his publishers and family members tried to enforce on some of his earthier works, a censorship that played a part in his abandonment of the novel project *Mother Maturin*, a tale of Lahore low-life on which he had been at work for five years when he wrote *The Light that Failed*.

Kipling's first completed novel is not his masterpiece. Even some Kipling lovers have had unkind words for it. It is a complex, crafted, and thoughtful work, however, that participates in the dialogue about the nature of good painting that was perhaps as known to the general public of its time as that particular discussion has ever been. It is therefore not surprising that when Henry James wrote a decade later to congratulate him upon the publication of *Kim*, he described Kipling's literary work using that same metaphor: 'stick to your canvas and your paintbox. There are good colours in the tubes as ever were laid on, and there is the truth. The rest is humbug' (Allen 363).

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NOTES

1. Near the end of his life in his not always reliable autobiography *Something of Myself*, Kipling claimed that the novel had its origin in painting, "a picture of the death of Manon Lescaut" that he saw in Paris in 1878 while there with his father (244). How much one can read into this it is difficult to say, but it is interesting that he then describes *The Light that Failed* as 'a sort of inverted, metagrabolised phantasmagoria based on [the Abbé Prévost's novel] *Manon*', which is the story of a young man who keeps shifting the blame for his moral failings onto a woman. Coustillas dismisses Kipling's remark as an 'obvious red-herring' (127), but Newsom shows some bases for it (14).

In 1899 Kipling entitled one of his *Stalky* stories "The Impressionists." It deals with the efforts of the three companions to impress certain false ideas on Prout, but never mentions painting.

2. Also in 1887 there was an exhibition of Verestchagin's work in London's Grosvenor Gallery, with which Kipling's uncle Burne-Jones was closely associated. A catalogue was published.
3. If Verestchagin focused on the horrors of war, it was because he was a pacifist who used his art to preach his cause. (In 1892, the year after the publication of *The Light that Failed*, his autobiographical sketches were published in London by the Peace Society.) To these ends he travelled to India in the 1880s to paint scenes of the British repression of indigenous revolt, such as his graphic "Blowing From Guns in British India" (1884) that depicts a horrific moment from the 1857 uprising. Torpenhow's disdainful tone could suggest that he saw Helder trying to discredit the

- British army in the same way with his own work, but the text is not clear on that. Certainly there is nothing later to suggest that Helder's military art is anti-war. For an often unintentionally funny effort to turn Kipling into a Verestchagin pacifist, see Dolmatovsky's Soviet-era essay.
4. For a good study in English of Meissonnier's incredible fame during his lifetime see Ross King's very readable *The Judgment of Paris*.
 5. The art-manager of *Dickenson's Weekly* rejected Helder's first version of "His Last Shot" because he found it 'brutal and coarse and violent' (49). This refers in part to the subject of the painting, of course, but it is also the language that critics were hurling at that same time at Monet's use of undimmed, vibrant color. In 1887 the French art critic Jules Desclozeaux, for example, wrote in *L'Estafette*, describing some landscapes that Monet was then exhibiting that contained no acts of violence: 'we do not understand what interest the brutal paintings of M. Claude Monet can have' (Bonafoux 241).
 6. House explains how in this respect Monet was building on the work of Delacroix, who in turn attributed the importance of the division of colors to Constable (House 111).
 7. *The Light that Failed* had first appeared two months before in a shorter, "happy" version in the American *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, where it consisted of twelve chapters, those we now know as I-VII and IX-XIII, with certain differences to the last part of XIII that indicate Maisie will remain in England and marry Dick Helder. When Macmillan brought out the novel in book form in England in March, a new chapter, the remarkable eighth, had been inserted between VII and the old VIII, the old XII's last section was different, indicating that Maisie will not stay with Helder but will return to her study of painting with Kami in France, and there were two new chapters, XIV and XV, that describe Dick's short reunion with Bessie Broke and his fatal flight to the Sudan. (On the different editions of the novel see Stewart 81-88.) This fifteen-chapter edition was prefaced with the statement 'This is the story of *The Light that Failed* as it was originally conceived by the Writer', an assertion that has been accepted by some Kipling scholars and not by others. Charles Allen, for example, who dislikes the novel, calling it a 'serious miscalculation' (310), dismissed that assertion as 'the author's untruthful remark' (312). We will weigh in on this dispute shortly.
 8. Carrington shows, moreover, how much of the Maisie story was in fact based on a book, Mrs Browning's *Aurora Leigh* (6).
 9. Remember that in *Something of Me* Kipling later asserted that *The Light that Failed* began with his reading of *Manon Lescaut*.
 10. When, in the "sad" version's Chapter XV, Helder returns to Port Said on his way back to the Sudan, he stops to see the by then widowed Mme Binat. She remarks with regard to Dick's work: 'thou hast used the head of Yellow 'Tina—she is still alive—so often and so well ... It was always something that we here could recognise in the paintings' (268). Since she is part of the world of Mme Binat, Yellow 'Tina is no doubt meant to be read as a sexual, permissive woman, like the Negroid-Jewess-Cuban, though Kipling never introduces her during Helder's first Port Said sojourn to make that clear, which is strange and suggests that the author may have cut something from Chapter III while preparing the first, "happy" edition of the novel. (My guess is that when Kipling sat down with Wolcott Balestier in 1890 to prepare the novel for *Lippincott's*, the manuscript consisted of earlier versions of

the present Chapters I-VII and IX-XV. [Newsom offers reasons to believe that 'the longer version of the book was very nearly complete in (Kipling's) head, if not on paper, by 1885' (14-15).] Kipling changed the conclusion of XIII to produce the "happy" ending and set aside XIV and XV for use later in the subsequent English book edition, but he also excised passages from III that dealt with Dick's involvement in the seamier side of Port Said, Yellow 'Tina, etc. [Since the manuscript of the "happy" version, which Kipling later gave to Frank N. Doubleday, is missing Chapter III (Rice 129), this hypothesis cannot be verified.] Then, when it came time to prepare the English book edition, Kipling resurrected the original XIII-XV as he had left them, but rather than returning to the original III as well, wrote VIII to develop further and foreground the ideas broached in the original III. [This is my answer to Carrington's questions regarding Kipling's insertion of this chapter (8), for which he does not seem to have shared my admiration.] In the process, Kipling forgot to remove this mention of Yellow 'Tina in XV that no longer makes sense.) Mme Binat's comment is also strange because the descriptions of the artist's London work, with the exception of his final "Melancholia", which Bessie destroys before it can be reproduced in the papers, indicate that all Helder painted there were soldiers and not women. This would suggest that Chapter XV (and probably XIV) were set aside very early, and that Kipling subsequently revised III-VII to make Helder a more exclusively military painter even before showing the manuscript to Balestier. Or that Kipling meant to imply the existence of a sexually ambiguous element in Helder's London work, which nothing else in the text supports.

11. Given the highly autobiographical nature of much of *The Light that Failed*, it is difficult not to wonder what Kipling might have been thinking when he had Bessie destroy "Melancholia". A bad feminist reading done by either sex could declare it to be yet another example of the late nineteenth-century belief that women were vampires who threatened to destroy creative artists and let it go at that. That would be poor scholarship, however. Anyone who has read Judith Flanders' fascinating study of Kipling's extended family on his mother's side, *A Circle of Sisters*, cannot help but be struck by the fact that an individual suffering from depression, or melancholia, would have been an unfortunately apt image of most of that family as the author found them when he returned to England in 1889. Just as Kipling used Florence Garrard to give a misleading outward cover to his critique of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, so he may well have used some of the low-life women he met in the vicinity of his bachelor quarters in London, descriptions of whom can be found in his letters of the period, to give deceptive embodiment to those members of his family, and in particular his mother, who tried to prevent him from using what they found to be unseemly material in his work. More generally, of course, Bessie's destruction of "Melancholia" is a *mise en abyme* of the story of *The Light that Failed*, which Kipling had to deprive of its "sad" ending and perhaps otherwise censor for publication in *Lippincott's*.

FACT INTO FICTION MAKING A NOVEL OUT OF KIPLING

By MARY HAMER

[Dr Hamer gave this talk to members in London on 14 November 2012, just after the publication of her novel *Kipling & Trix*. Mary is a member of our Council, and has been very active in working on the Readers' Guide as is made clear in her talk. Her novel won the Virginia Prize for Fiction and was published by Aurora Metro Books as a paperback at £9.99, 361 pages, ISBN 9781906582340 – *Ed.*]

We don't always pay it much attention, caught up as we are in the pleasures of reading his work, but reading Kipling himself, I mean making sense of him as a person, as a man, poses quite a challenge. One that in many ways it's more comfortable to overlook. He started off a fire-brand, a young journalist who was the scourge of authority, a writer who spoke for the common soldier and was in love with the life of the bazaar and the Great Trunk Road. But within ten years of leaving India Rudyard Kipling was positioning himself alongside the grandees in charge out at the Cape, the men running the Boer War. He was now indifferent, if not contemptuous concerning the 'natives'. The change in him that this shift marked was soon accompanied by a decline in his popularity. He began to lose readers.

Understanding this shift, asking what changed for him, has been the challenge I've been trying to meet in writing *Kipling & Trix*. When I put together the death of his small daughter, Josephine, with the outbreak of war against the Boer republics, both of which took place in 1899, I thought I could begin to make out a pattern. In the end I came to believe that it was anger and despair at his own perceived failure to protect his child, which overtook Kipling and clouded his vision at that time. But this was not his first and most primitive experience of loss. It seemed to me that under the shattering blow of his child's death, he was overwhelmed by a return of the blind rage and despair he'd known as an abandoned child in Southsea.

Like most of us, I'd come to Kipling as a child and loved him at once. But reading Carrington's biography, when I was in the Sixth Form, left me with a sense of disappointment. I really wanted to like Kipling as a man but something held me back, leaving me troubled. Later I thought of working on him for my Ph.D. but this was discouraged and instead I devoted myself to Antony Trollope and his forty-seven novels. That kept me busy. Yet thoughts of Kipling continued to beckon, teasing away at me from the wings.

When at last the moment for engaging with them did arrive, it was prompted by research I'd done for my previous book. I started seriously thinking about Kipling as a subject soon after I'd just published a book that focussed in part on children, asking what experience causes them serious psychological harm, the sort that gets in the way of a child's development. And as I read my way into Kipling's life, in order to start thinking seriously about him, I was struck by the match between his experiences in Southsea and those childhood experiences known to cause damage that I'd just been writing about. I was immediately engaged.

Probably I don't need to remind this audience of what went on in Lorne Lodge, The House of Desolation. No wonder Kipling gave it that name. For we now know that lengthy separation from parents, involving the withdrawal of affection and intimacy, will produce a state of loss in children, one that is chronic and not easily healed. It is also known that it's dangerous for children to be subjected to terror. The small Kiplings experienced both loss and terror, each enough on its own to leave a child vulnerable. And I mean vulnerable for life, without appropriate intervention. Such a child may grow up with poor physical health, for instance – I notice Andrew [Lycett] has a separate heading for RK's health, it was so troublesome – but it may also experience also great difficulty in coping with renewed loss, like the pain when someone close to them dies.

I found myself wondering whether the theory, the likelihood that such experience would leave an enduring legacy of harm was borne out in the case of Rudyard Kipling and might go some way to explain the shifts I've mentioned. I simply didn't know. But I thought it would be extremely interesting to investigate, to see if there was a match between the theory and the actual evidence of Kipling's life as he grew up into manhood. And what about the impact of The House of Desolation on his younger sister, Trix? Did it make any difference that she was so very little when they were dropped off at Southsea, and her mother disappeared? These questions were at the back of my mind as I stepped further into the research that led to this book.

As I said just now, it is established that it's dangerous for children to be exposed to terror. That can impair neurological development if the child is young enough. In Southsea, terror came in the guise of religious instruction. I'm going to break off here to read you just a page from very early in *Kipling & Trix*, that presents Ruddy not yet six and Trix not quite three and a half in the first days at Lorne Lodge: I've used a quotations from Kipling to head each section and the one dealing with their years in Lorne Lodge is entitled "How Fear Came".

'Rudyard, I'm not going to tell you again. Let go of Trixie's hand. Come and sit in your own place and eat up your tea.'

He stared back at the strange woman who wanted him to call her 'Auntie Sarah' and said he must forget about India.

At the other side of the table, Harry, the big boy who called the woman 'Mother', stuck out his tongue.

'You live in Southsea now and that's where you're staying. And lucky to be away from those heathens,' she kept telling him. He didn't believe her. Not staying for years and years. Not till he was nine or ten and grown up.

Trix was crying again.

She wasn't eating that bread and butter either, even though for Trix, Auntie had put sugar on it. He patted Trix's head, like Ayah did when they hurt themselves. He was big, nearly six, he had to look after Trix. Three was very little.

'Trix, Trix, don't cry. Mama and Papa are going to come back. Soon. They'll come back soon.'

He could feel the strange woman waiting, her eyes on him.

He shook his head.

Losing patience, Sarah Holloway swept round the table and dragged him back to his chair, where he sat, not eating, glaring defiance.

'Do you know what happens to bad children?' she asked.

'No, what?' In spite of his misery he couldn't help asking.

'God sees what they do and he marks them down for punishment. He watches them all the time and when they die he sends them to burn forever in Hell.'

The children were glazed with shock.

'We have different gods in India,' he attempted boldness. Then, quavering, 'Mama wouldn't let him. Ayah - '

'It was because you're so bad and wicked that Mama left you. And anyway your Mama has to do what God tells her.'

Struck silent, he gazed trembling at the new world that she had revealed, while Trix sucked frantically at her thumb.

It did take me a while to realise that Trix couldn't help but be at the centre of my novel, standing alongside her brother just as she had when they were children. She shared his experience so closely at that time. Growing up she also shared his ambition as a writer. Some of the parodies in *Echoes* were hers and she contributed a story to the family publication *Quartette*, which came out as the Christmas number of the *Civil and Military Gazette*. But after publishing two novels, *The Heart*

of a Maid and *A Pinchbeck Goddess*, courage failed her. There were no more big independent projects, no arc to her career.

It's this break in her life that intrigued me, just as her brother's shift of sympathies had done. Trix's work, though not her name, did become known, eventually, within a particular circle. Acting as a medium, and under the name Mrs Holland, she transcribed messages from the spirit world for the Society for Psychical Research. There her spirit writings are still kept, remembered and honoured.

I'm going to move on now to explain how I went about my research as I tried to get an accurate sense of these lives. When it came to Trix, information on the record was sparse but you could spend years – and I actually did – deep in the libraries and archives, without coming to the end of information about her brother. I began with the most recent biographies, foremost of them Andrew's magnificent book. For when I set out I really had a very sketchy idea of Kipling's experience. At that stage I didn't have a clear object in view, I was just soaking up incident and interaction. I don't think I was even taking notes. Already though I felt I must hang back, not try to pin my ideas down so they came out supporting any particular line.

Most of my research is done in Harvard: it was the most wonderful bonus to find that in Houghton Library there, they hold the actual Letts diary for 1885, that Kipling kept the year he turned twenty. It was completely fresh to me, for I hadn't then come across it in the published form made available by Tom Pinney. When I held those faded covers between my hands, it was as though Kipling had passed it direct to me, instead of the sober fact that he forgot to take it with him when he left Lahore. It wasn't just the almost personal contact via his scribbled notes that excited me – those Letts colonial diaries contained tables for calculating wages for servants at so many rupees per month and other information useful to the British making lives out in India. This I did copy down, in many cases, wanting to steep myself almost blindly in that faraway world.

That diary must have been the first time I came across Kipling writing in his own voice. Later I'd pick up his changing tones and turns of phrase as I read my way into the volumes of *Letters*. Here he's writing about Trix to his cousin Margaret Burne-Jones, also in 1885:

And writing of the Maiden reminds me that her bust is in the Simla Arts Exhibition (*vulgo* "The Wattle and daub show") and she herself is even more admired than the bust and hath Goodness only knows how many new dresses. But I rejoice with an exceeding great joy to think that these trifles disturb her not and she clings healthily to

the inkpot as of yore. You being a mere woman can't understand my intense anxiety about the Maiden and my jealous care lest she should show signs of being "touched in the heart". [September 1885, vol.1, p.94]

It's playfully signed 'The Wop of Asia'. You'll have picked up the rich mix of dialects in that letter – Simla slang, Biblical tones and schoolboy mockery.

Twelve years later, when he's telling the much older and very distinguished Harvard professor, Charles Eliot Norton, of a planned trip to South Africa, Kipling's tone is quite different:

This is to get away from the horrors of an English spring ... two servants, 3 kids; two bicycles, unlimited "perambulators" and 2,000 ton of luggage are a rather large contract to move. The F. Marshall, and Commandress in Chief however continues serenely to face it and I as aide de camp run about and make myself useful. [December 1897, vol.2, p.324]

This one is signed, almost as though from a child, 'Always your affectionate Ruddy'.

The life I was studying had been so well and scrupulously documented, not least by men I'd met in the flesh, Tom, Andrew, Harry Ricketts it was like being shown around, and introduced to a friend of theirs. From the child out in India to the schoolboy and on into manhood, this person, Ruddy, was coming alive to me.

But I also knew I'd have to do some digging on my own account. All along I'd been asking myself questions about South Africa and the Boer War, questions about Kipling's state of mind when he took himself out there, less than a year after Josephine's death. The best way to investigate that, I concluded, was to consider the evidence of the collection, *The Five Nations*, published in 1903. At that point I boldly offered to do the notes for *The Five Nations* for the *New Readers' Guide*.

I learned a lot from working on that collection, though not all of the poems in it had been written since Jo's death. It showed me a before and after and drew my attention to signs of strain, a sense of threat and disaster that I might otherwise have missed. I'm thinking here of a disturbed and disturbing poem like "The Dykes". Writing the notes for those poems told me even more, it highlighted the way his poems had dried up when his child died but had come back when he moved into Bateman's. Some time later, writing an essay for the *NRG* on "Kipling and Dreams", I found another door that opened into his inner world.

As I went on, moments in my own past took on a new relevance, as I believe writers sometimes find: coming on Kipling's poem "Buddha at Kamakura" for instance was a bit of a thrill, since I'd visited that rather out of the way place myself. I'd always known this man lay behind my passion for India and the excitement I felt when I touched down in Delhi for the very first time. The unfamiliar world I found on that visit, from the tree-stump, outside the laboratory in Bangalore, hung with marigolds to honour a sacred snake, to the chants that echoed through the darkness from the temple, all of it was animated for me by Kipling and what he'd woken in me long before. As I wrote deeper into his life, however, I came to think that when he went back to India at sixteen Kipling recovered the vivid sense of life he'd known as a young child; when he began to write about India it was that vivid freshness he was transmitting.

As I went on I began to realise that for years I'd been haunting his steps closer to home. I recalled the visit to Bateman's with my own children, when they were small, and our picnics in the grounds of Wimpole Hall where his surviving daughter Elsie still lived. More recently I'd made a couple of trips to South Africa where I'd met Tanya Barben, keeper of the Kipling Archive at the University of Cape Town. All this before thinking of a book about him. I seemed to be unwittingly on track, instinctively following a scent.

When I came to start writing up my research, I realised I'd have to do it in the form of fiction. I thought I was glimpsing a story with almost mythic power, like a fairytale, and I wanted to light it from the right angle, as it were, so it could be seen more clearly. You might call that story I glimpsed something like "The Babes in the Wood Grow Up". I could have argued about my vision in the abstract but I wanted to be believed, and who can resist the voice of the storyteller? Most of all, I wanted to tell the story of these children from the inside and to see whether their lives did make emotional sense. Only a work of imagination could do that.

Once I'd committed to story telling, I made an extra effort to expose myself to the feel of places, houses and settings that were resonant for Rudyard and Trix. That meant more visits to Bateman's of course, more wandering about the grounds, and standing by that melancholy empty desk more wondering over the Cordoba leather but also trips to Southsea to peer, shuddering, at Lorne Lodge and to Rottingdean, where John was bom and the whole Kipling family, Alice and Lockwood included spent the Christmas of 1897. Finally, I made a stay in Naulakha, the handsome, welcoming house Carrie and Rud built outside Brattleboro. There I slept in their bedroom and, rather shyly, soaked in that bath he was so pleased with.

I've also spent a night in 6 West Coates, the Edinburgh house where Trix lived from the mid-twenties till she died in 1948. Generally, however, just gathering basic information was a great deal more difficult in her case. There's still only one published biography, *Kipling's Forgotten Sister* by Lorna Lee. Until I met Barbara Fisher, when she gave a talk here on the new biography she's preparing, the account I had of Trix's life was pretty broad brush. Barbara was extremely generous in sharing her more detailed knowledge. She gave me sight of an important letter recounting a moment of triumph, when Trix was congratulated by Sir Oliver Lodge, the distinguished scientist, on her work for experimental spiritualism. That incident went straight into my novel! Later, if anyone has questions about events that owe nothing to research, ones that I invented for various reasons, do please ask.

In spite of all my efforts to inform myself, there did remain huge gaps in what I – or anyone else – knew about Trix. That left stretches of years where to create scenes I had to throw myself imaginatively into her life. Very carefully I had to cross-reference Trix's movements and whereabouts with Rud's, once they were no longer living together: that drew my attention to some fascinating moments of reunion, when their changing and developing relationship could be explored.

That led me to thinking about the moment when Rud wrote and published "Baa Baa, Black Sheep" describing the torture he was put through as a child in Southsea. What feelings went through him as he wrote and relived those days? And what happened when his parents read it? Could Trix face telling them how angry she was? Rud was living in Allahabad, with an American couple, Edmonia and Alec Hill, when he was working on this story: we do know from Ted Hill's account that the writing of it made him very angry.

'Won't you have any breakfast at all?' Ted Hill was trying to keep her temper. She was almost beginning to wonder whether she and her husband Alec had been wise to invite Ruddy Kipling to share their home

'Really Rud, that's not very flattering.'

He was taken aback. 'Flattering?'

She gave up. He was standing by the sideboard, drumming his fingers while the lid of the coffeepot jumped erratically in response. Following the direction of his gaze, where he stared unseeing at the wall, she noted that the damp marks which had appeared during the last monsoon seemed to be spreading.

'Do you know where you're planning to ride? Shall I tell the kitchen you'll be -'

A snarl, there was no other word for it, interrupted her.

'I don't know, I tell you. I don't know.'

She heard him clattering down the steps of the bungalow, calling the while, peremptorily, for his horse.

'Splendid,' she thought to herself. 'Spread misery through the household.'

That evening they were all sitting together after a rather silent dinner. Evenings had been like this all week. Coming home after work, Alec had picked up the atmosphere as soon as he entered the house, wordlessly raising his eyebrows, to show he guessed the source of trouble and being careful to say little. They felt like parents at times, though Rud wasn't really much younger than them.

With a jerk he began to apologise.

'I know I'm behaving abominably.'

Fearing that her husband was about to dismiss the matter, Ted spoke first.

'That's so. Is it something you're writing?'

A look of startled gratitude from Rud warmed her.

'I thought it must be something serious. Fever never brings out the beast in you like this.'

He laughed, shamefaced. Alec threw his wife a look. He got to his feet.

'I've not completed the report on my tour of the Satpuras and it's due in very shortly. Forgive me.'

She waited for Alec's retreating footsteps to patter away into silence. Give Rud time.

'Would you feel like reading it to me, what you're working on?'

He so often did but today might easily be different. She braced herself yet there was no rebuff. Instead, Rud sprang up, to return within a few minutes, an untidy sheaf of papers in hand. He took a seat closer to the lamp. Looking up at her before he began, he appeared unusually shy.

'It's about two children, called Punch and Judy. I haven't finished it yet. This is only a draft.'

As she listened, there unfolded a story of two small children who found themselves abandoned among strangers in a foreign land. Cruelty followed, from a woman who spoke of God and from Harry, her well-instructed son. The little boy, who had been lord of an Indian household, now learned what it was to be beaten.

"But I'm not an animal," he had stammered, shocked. But that was not the end of it: Harry entered and stood afar off, eyeing Punch, a dishevelled heap in the corner of the room, with disgust.

"You 're a liar – a young liar, " said Harry, with great unction, "and you 're to have tea down here because you 're not fit to speak to us. And you 're not to speak to Judy again till Mother gives you leave. You'll corrupt her. You 're only fit to associate with the servants. Mother says so."

Having reduced Punch to a second agony of tears, Harry departed upstairs with the news that Punch was still rebellious.'

The sweat stood out on the young man's forehead as he was reading.

'Of course it's me, it's about me. And Trix,' he added, as he laid the last sheet down on top of the others.

Ted knew she needed to be careful.

'My dear,' she began very quietly, 'I think you are a miracle.' He relaxed. He had not withdrawn. She could go on.

'This is an astonishing piece. But I was wondering, your people as you call them, won't they—'

He looked, she noted, not embarrassed by her implied question but genuinely surprised.

'They know what happened to me as a child; it's not new to them. Those arrangements were made by them.'

'Well, yes,' she conceded, objecting silently, 'But can they possibly have faced the bitterness of the adult?' Speaking aloud again, 'Your sister, what does she think about it all now?'

'We don't speak of it. We never have.'

'What, never? Not to each other?'

'Well, in the first year or two, when we were small we used to. We tried to work out why they'd done it, gone away and left us in hell. Then later, when she came back, we were just so glad to see our mother. Later I think we might have been afraid. I don't know. To be honest, until now I haven't wanted to face it and I imagine Trix has felt the same.'

'So the two of you didn't come right out and tell your parents what a dreadful mistake they'd made, the impact - '...'

'What could we say? Face-to-face, it would have been too much.'

It was not clear to her who he'd wanted to spare, whose collapse, whose violence he had been anticipating.

Well, the story duly appeared in the *Week's News*, where it must have been read by his parents, Lockwood and Alice, who were still based in Lahore. All we know for a fact is that in later life Trix claimed they'd been 'very upset.' This is how I imagined the scene:

'Have you seen this week's *News*'? The Christmas number, I mean?' The newspaper was brandished at Lockwood like a weapon.

His first thought was of some undeserved promotion, an acquaintance who had been advanced beyond what she considered his due. But of course not, she surely wouldn't interrupt his morning for that.

'Read it, just read it. I've never been so mortified. I cannot believe that Rud would do this to us. That boy has changed dreadfully over the past year -'

With raised eyebrows, Lockwood took the paper and pushed up his spectacles for a closer look.

'*Baa Baa Black Sheep?* Is that the piece you mean?' As he scanned the first paragraphs, a weight of dread closed down on him. Looking up, 'I think I'd better sit down to concentrate on this. No, not now, no chai' he dismissed the hovering, pleausurably agitated servant.

He forced himself to keep on reading, though as he went on he could hear what seemed the groaning of another man. When it was done he let the paper drop and covered his face.

'Well?' Alice was biting the twin thumbs of her clasped hands. 'Well, Jack, well?'

He slowly raised his head.

'Alice, don't press me. This is almost too much to bear.'

'Don't I know it. Can you imagine, the whole of India will have read this by tomorrow morning. Held up to them by my own son. And how are we to keep it from Trix? Oh, it could ruin her prospects!'

He waved at her impatiently. 'You shock me, Alice. Try to think more clearly. In the first place, do you think this will be news to Trix? She was *with* Ruddy in Southsea, she's in the story herself. See, Judy, the little girl.'

'I'm sure it's all exaggerated beyond recognition, like everything Ruddy writes.'

'I can only pray God that's indeed the case.' Without noticing, he'd fallen back on the language of that Methodist upbringing he had so adamantly rejected. 'If we have been responsible, even through ignorance, for putting them through anything approaching this, I can never again look my children in the eye.'

'You mean you'll tackle Ruddy?'

There was a lengthy silence.

'No, I'll not do that. Nor will you, Alice.' His raised hand preempted a rush of response. 'We are not going to speak of this with Ruddy, not going to discuss it with Trix. We are going to go on as a family, as before.' He saw that this exertion of authority had

succeeded. He would have his way. Alice was subdued. Though she fidgeted under his gaze, she would abide by his decision.

That evening, however, he found he could not prevent himself. When Trix bent over to kiss him, as she entered all fresh in her white muslin before dinner, Jack Fleming's pearls at her throat, Lockwood covered the hand she had laid on his shoulder with his own.

'Trix, lovey, this new story of Ruddy's, about those two little children, it's all made up, isn't it?' he pleaded.

'Oh Papa' she faltered, 'Papa, I don't -'

Alice joined in. 'Come along, daughter of mine. You know what Ruddy's imagination is. Why are you hesitating?'

Transfixed, Trix turned her head from one parent to the other but she made no sound.

At the sight of the single tear which began to glide down his daughter's cheek, Lockwood Kipling rose to put himself between the two women. 'Darling girl, really there's no need for this. No one is angry with you. Just, that story makes us terribly distressed. We'll say no more about it, at present.'

'You must be able to understand that at least,' Alice had softened her tone. 'I find it impossible to make sense of Ruddy's behaviour. He's setting out to hurt us, he must be, to ruin things for us out here, now he's set on leaving India.'

A hiccuping sob burst from Trix.

I'm going to shift gear completely now, move to the relationship that quite literally kept Kipling alive. 'I owe my life to Carrie' Kipling wrote in his wife's diary at the end of 1899, the year of his own near-fatal illness and the death of Josephine. In spite of his many failed shots at finding the right woman, he succeeded at last in making a choice that worked, unlike his sister. Its hard to believe her marriage to Jack Fleming brought happiness.

Who was this American girl Kipling married? I needed to understand her back-story, what had happened to Carrie Balestier before that ceremony on January 18th in 1890, to know what emotional history had formed her. It's not a question that has been much regarded. Yet once raised, a pattern leapt out at me: Carrie Balestier lost her father when she was eight years old, the young woman of twenty-seven who married Rud had recently come from a second deathbed, where in spite of her desperate fight to keep him alive, the brother she loved had died in her arms. I began to imagine how this history might play out afterwards. For instance it might make her likely to be anxious when her

husband went away. Some people did say that in later life she made a fuss when he left.

Because it was only weeks since the death of her brother Wolcott when she married, it's sometimes suggested that the marriage was made on the rebound from Wolcott's death, a kind of compensation for both partners, who took each other in lieu of the dead man. I don't tell the story that way. Not least because I've visited the Rice Library in Marlboro College and seen the scrap of paper that closed probably the last letter Wolcott wrote to his friend. Rud. 'Like the good child she is, Carrie waits for you' it reads. There was clearly an understanding between Carrie and Rud before he went off on what would turn out to be his last visit to India.

He may well have rushed off in the sort of panic that the prospect of commitment seemed to provoke in him as a young man. It's my guess that his reunion with Ayah, which took place on that trip, as he reports in *Something of Myself*, steadied him and gave him confidence. Rediscovering the old intimacy, finding it still vivid, his trust that love could last, so early undermined, was now strengthened and revived; their meeting is a watershed in my novel.

Mrs Kipling hasn't had a good press. (The man in charge of Naulakha told me he refused to stock copies of *The Hated Wife*.) As a wife myself, I found it easy to identify with Carrie's point of view. I was particularly struck by what she said – or was it wrote – that she would 'never advise any girl to marry a literary man as they were so wound up by their work that the rest of the time they just needed you to be dead quiet'. This was a woman who had started out adventurous, had travelled out West with her brother and followed him to London, boldly setting out to help him create a presence in the literary world. She chose Rudyard Kipling and set out on honeymoon with him to explore the world, getting as far as Japan before the failure of their bank cut their trip short. Only motherhood brought her to a halt: as her husband sadly noted in one of his letters, 'Carrie doesn't dance that dance any more.' As I wrote of their lives together I began to imagine what they must have cost, those years of fires dutifully banked in the interests of caring for children, and of supporting a vulnerable and gifted man. Once registered, that sense of her fire stayed with me as I wrote, imagining a trip to the music-hall might have featured in their courtship:

Rud handed over a shilling and they were inside. Deafened at first by the roar of voices, they gasped in air thick with smoke.

'Take my arm,' he ordered 'I'll get us to a seat, just hang on to me.' With a thrill of pleasure she felt the warmth of his arm right

through the sleeve. She shut her eyes wanting for that moment only to be aware of him.

When she looked about her once more, she saw that the audience, men and women mixed, were seated around a central ring. It brought back the trip she'd taken out West, with Wolcott. A boxing match she'd witnessed in a remote lumber camp. Far more women here, of course but the same energy. Something raw that made her tingle.

'A pint of porter comes with those sixpenny tickets. Can I leave you while I collect mine? I don't suppose you -

'But I want to drink beer too. I'm going the whole hog this evening, Rud. Other women are drinking ...'

'So you're going to join the four and elevenpenny bonnets are you? Want "one of them glasses like a lidy"?'

She frowned.

'Is that some kind of criticism? Of these women?'

Under the crude flare of the gas lamps she couldn't be sure but he seemed to flush.

'It's just a way – a way of describing them,' he said lamely.

'I'm sorry, Rud, to me it sounds downright snobbish. Hateful. I didn't think it of you.'

Silence fell between them, louder than the surrounding noise.

* * *

She settled to the show, with its tumbling sequence of acts. Queens of song followed comic vocalists, dancers capered in topboots. And then came a man dressed as a woman – very stylishly – who also warbled. She'd certainly heard of such things but this was the first time of seeing. A new world. But underneath her own pleasure, she knew that beside her there was tension, a waiting.

Then 'That's my fellow, here he is,' Rud exclaimed.

A stocky figure, topped with a soldier's forage cap, had appeared. With a flourish, arms thrown wide, the Master of Ceremonies, in his white tie and tails announced 'The Great and Only Mr. James Fawn, Consort of the Muse.'

'He won't sing mine first, it's not quite so new now,' Rud told her, over the din as the orchestra broke into the Consort's first number. He had the audience in the palm of his hand at once. Just like Rud himself when he talked: he could hold a room spellbound.

He was clutching her wrist to get her attention. The intimacy of it. As though he was sure of her, knew he had a right. A flush was mantling her face, she could feel it: how glad she was to have come.

'Here he goes. This one's mine.'

'At the back of the Knightsbridge Barracks'

The crowd shrieked with joy at the familiar opening.

She would have missed the second line if the singer's timing hadn't been so good. He hung on until he could be heard again.

When the fog was gatherin' dim

The Lifeguard talked to the Under-cook

An 'the girl she talked to 'im.'

The audience, men and women together, yelled the chorus at the top of their voices.

'Don't try for things that are out of your reach

And that's what the girl told the soldier.'

Between verses the singer broke into a little routine, prancing about so that the large brass spurs at his heels jingled. Making fun of the Lifeguard with his fine uniform and his ambitions.

'My idea, that,' Rud called into her ear.

She turned to smile back at him and saw his face was blazing, triumphant...

But the song wasn't over. Again and again, four times in all, she counted, the audience howled out the final chorus. What he'd written had spoken to them. He could reach anyone. It was uncanny.

Dazed, dim, she found herself out on the pavement, at his side. Pale under the streetlights, he appeared equally exhausted.

'I suppose, I mean, should I look for a cab?' he hesitated.

Whatever he could do with words, he was helpless out in the world. Like a much younger brother.

Confident all at once, 'I believe I'd prefer to walk. I know I'm incapable of sitting still,' she replied.

'Really? Would you be happy to walk back to Westminster Yard? Or perhaps Wolcott will have left the office for home. All the way to Neville St. might be rather far for you -'

'Rud, I can see you don't know me. I could walk you off your legs, given half a chance.'

She'd made him laugh.

'But I'll have to keep hold of your arm', she added, daring. 'I'd better look respectable at least, out at this time of night, with a man. I'd better look like a wife.'

The words had passed her lips before she'd had time to think.

'You make a pretty good fist of it,' he said lightly 'though I don't know many wives with your taste for adventure.'

Stepping off into the warm darkness, linked to him, she could face anything.

Have I been taking liberties? It's a question that I've had to face squarely, in the end. Knowing how grimly Kipling guarded his privacy, how at the end of his life he warned us off:

*And for that little, little span
The dead are borne in mind,
Seek not to question other than
The books I leave behind.*

It's pretty unequivocal, you might think. And yet.

You see, I don't believe that I've been questioning so much as accepting with both hands, taking seriously what Kipling himself left on record, through his own letters as well as his writing. Taking into account the evidence of those who knew him and the work of his biographers, in an attempt to bring apparent contradictions together. Not exactly to make them fit neatly but to consider how sense could be made of this man.

It's Kipling's power as a writer, his command of language and his emotional truth that compel us as readers. But what I found, behind the trappings of his extraordinary success, was the evidence of long struggle, a struggle for survival that began too early, just as his sister's animation masked a spirit that was both angry and confused. I still find it remarkable, the courage both of them displayed in making and then getting on with their lives.

RUDYARD-KIPLING@JISCMAIL.AC.UK ALSO KNOWN AS 'THE MAILBASE'

By ALASTAIR WILSON

Since the last report on the contents of the Mailbase, [*Journal* No.347] it has continued to be used by members for a variety of messages. One series which was not mentioned previously is 'Quotations', in which John Radcliffe, our on-line editor, teases us, on a weekly basis, with three quotations from the whole range of Kipling's work. Frequently, the three are linked thematically: in a recent threesome, the quotations were taken from "The Village that Voted the Earth was Flat", "The Vortex" and "My Sunday at Home".

In May this year, there was a report of a four-line version of "If—", from a competition in *The Spectator*.

"If you lead, yet serve,
But make no fuss,
And hold your nerve,
You'll be one of us."

In June, one of our members, Yan Shapiro, asked a question about the 'Map of Adventure' which features at the start of "The Beginning of the Armadilloes", and who the putative artist might have been, and what the letters A.M. after his name might have meant. (The consensus seems to have been that it was 'Artis Magister'.)

July saw an exchange about a photograph of Kipling on the staircase in the London Library, and also a query from our Secretary, answered by Roger Ayers, about a Kipling Society badge, used pre-World War II. We also had a query from Andrew Lycett about the use of the phrase, 'the fishing fleet', referring to the unmarried girls who would come out to India to husband-hunt. (His query related to a review of a recent book with that title – but the Mailbase members could not produce a definitive answer as to when the term first appeared.)

In August, Professor Tim Connell asked for help as follows:

"In a speech given to the Royal Academy in 1906 (see *A Book of Words*) Kipling refers to the following people: 'a tinker in Bedford gaol; if a pamphleteering shopkeeper, pilloried in London; if a muzzy Scot; if a despised German Jew; or a condemned French thief, or an English Admiralty official with a taste for letters'. I can spot Bunyan, Defoe and probably Francois Villon, but who might be

the muzzy Scot, the German Jew and the English Admiralty official with a taste for letters?"

The Mailbase provided him with the answers, citing Leonee Ormond's notes in the New Readers' Guide (can you come up with the answers? – see the end of this article).

And Jane Keskar drew our attention to the following: In his article "Good is the Enemy of Great?" (Evening Standard 2nd August, which has just been brought to my attention) Charles Saatchi quotes the editor of the *San Francisco Examiner* in 1889, who having published one article by Rudyard Kipling, declined to accept any more of the author's work. "I'm sorry, Mr Kipling," he explained "but you just don't know how to use the English language. This isn't a kindergarten for amateur writers". This provoked a lively exchange as to who the editor had been who had rejected a Kipling article.

The next month saw a query about a piece of Kipling verse: as often happens, the enquirer could remember the first line – or something like it – and sought help in identifying it. In this case, it was an uncollected poem, which had first appeared in the *Pioneer*, but was later collected by Andrew Rutherford in *Early Verse*.

In October, there was a flurry of messages, triggered off by John Walker's query, engendered by an enquiry on another website, about 'heroic friendships between men in Victorian literature'. Of course, this produced many Kipling examples – Dan Troop and Harvey Cheyne, and Dravot and Carnehan, to say nothing of examples from many of Kipling's contemporaries. The month ended with an informative note about a proposal from Oregon, to name a rock on the Clackamas River, 'Kipling Rock', in honour of his visit there in 1889.

And finally, in November, we have had more about the progress of the Oregon proposal to name Kipling Rock – it has to go through a number of hoops before it can officially appear on the maps. November also revealed the value of the Mailbase to enquirers – this author enquired about the interpretation of a phrase from 'The Song of the English' (*The Seven Seas*) and had an answer, literally within three minutes.

Just as a reminder the archive of all the messages on the Mailbase can be accessed from a link on the Kipling Mailbase page – it's in the right-hand column, in red, to <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/rudyard-kipling.html>. There you will find the archive filed, month by month, with search buttons on the right-hand side of the page.

[a tinker in Bedford jail – John Bunyan: a pamphleteering shopkeeper – Daniel Defoe: a muzzy Scot – James Boswell: despised German Jew – Heinrich Heine: condemned French thief – Francois Villon: Admiralty official – Samuel Pepys.]

FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY

By RUDYARD KIPLING

[Longman's Magazine, April 1890]

And Mrs. Skittleworth told the tale at a place called the Arts and Crafts, which, when you think of it, was unnecessary; Mrs. Skittleworth herself being all the arts and most of the crafts known to civilization.

She was then practising a few of them on the centre divan opposite the entrance, where the fountain plays and the unhappy little pot-palms live. In the first place it was her sworn duty to keep an evasive eye upon a Miss Dormil, who was to be most strictly deprived of the comfort and society of a gentleman called Evans—Richard Evans—who had specially come to the Arts and Crafts to meet the young lady, who was under the chaperonage of Mrs. Skittleworth, according to the manners and customs of the British, who are barbarians. Now since Mrs. Skittleworth had conveyed Miss Dormil wholly and solely to meet Mr. Evans, and since she had to pretend that she saw neither him nor the girl, nor both together, or something equally logical, and since she uneasily suspected that Mrs. Dormil might at any moment arrive and drive the daughter home, and particularly since neither man nor maid seemed to have any idea of the lapse of time, you will understand that Mrs. Skittleworth's attention was distracted from the door whereat she expected Skittleworth every minute to appear in the company of a man whom she most urgently desired to avoid.

I believe that I had the honour to supply the Missing Link, for on my wandering appearance her face brightened as a general's when reinforcements pour past to battle.

"There is a man," she said, "an Unutterable Man. He will arrive with Tom in ten minutes. I shall immediately introduce you to him with smirks and grins. You will more immediately talk. Talk about anything you understand least, but overwhelm him with your conversation as you value my friendship. Then I shall escape with Tom, catch Miss Dormil, drive the Evans boy into the stained-glass alcove—Good gracious! I hope he hasn't taken the girl there already!—and return to meet, under Providence, the very respectable Mrs. Dormil, who will ask the Unutterable Man to dinner. He is always hungry and ... he has dined there before. Then you must transfer yourself to the Evans boy, and while we are all eating our artful afternoon tea and the craftful crumpet in the lunch-place you must escape with him secretly. There ought to be two ways out of every place of appointment." She poised for breath.

She was used to delivering orders with much clearness, and I gathered from the pucker between her eyebrows that she was in anxiety. Her theory that men do not marry their mothers-in-law, though many mothers-in-law think otherwise, was perpetually leading her into secondhand Comédie-Française embarrassments. All earth and Skittleworth—who at heart is just as bad—could not restrain her from helping forward the most undesirable match ever lighted among her circle of acquaintance. On the Other Side of the World, where I first had the honour of meeting her, this weakness did not alarm; in England—which, it must always be remembered, is the habitation of heathen the worse for being imperfectly converted—she was misunderstood. But all young maidens loved her.

And I said: "I hear and obey—on one condition."

"On no conditions. You want me to tell you something. I refuse beforehand."

"Very well, I shall begin to walk. I shall walk down Regent Street for hours and hours, and into the Mile End Road and when Mrs. Dormil comes to thank you for giving her dear Clara, who is so artistic, such a delightful afternoon, the Evans boy will hang in the background pulling pieces out of his gloves and Mrs. Dormil will not love you any more. Seriously, you went to the Theatre of the Patent Deviltries——"

"No! Inner Sepulchre. Inner Sepulchre!" said Mrs. Skittleworth, with a shudder. "So glad we didn't invite you."

"So am I," I said icily. "You made a box party, and by all accounts you all behaved abominably. You dropped opera-glasses on the heads of the bald, you conducted yourselves in such a manner that the entire house stopped to look at you, and you, overcome by shame, left at the end of the first act—weeping."

"This," said Mrs. Skittleworth pensively, "is the hand of Mrs. Bletchley. She told you that at tea. What else did you learn?"

"The trouble is that I could learn no more. Not one of your guests would speak. Geissler, who can babble about founders' shares by the hour, was dumb. Skittleworth told me that I had better refer to you. I haven't seen Miss Dormil to speak to, and the Evans boy declares that it was a most enjoyable evening, but that you all left because the play was dull. The *Professor's Zoetrope*¹ is not dull. It's the best play in London. What was the catastrophe? Everybody is wanting to talk about it, and no one knows anything. Six people have kept a secret for ten days—surely that's long enough. Tell, and I'll carry the Evans boy off through the roof if I can't smuggle him out any other way."

"Did anyone tell you it was Tom's fault?" began Mrs. Skittleworth cautiously, one eye on the door and another on the ironwork exhibits.

"They said Singleton gave the party—and so——"

"He did not. It was that man Geissler—the Chicago Jew. Ugh! Tom and he cluck like new laid hens over their offensive founders' shares, whatever those may be. Things that grow up in a night out of nothing and are sold by telegraph. I hate Geissler. I could never send him anything at dinner without hoping that the fat, or the drumstick, or the stuffing would choke him, and then I would never send for the doctor. Geissler found a box in the Inner Sepulchre. I know the shameful story now, but it almost reconciled me to the man for the moment. The very best box in the Inner Sepulchre—a five-guinea box that could have seated hordes—positive hordes. Do you know that he got it for twenty-five shillings? That was his ineffable meanness."

"But a Chicago Jew is not always mean," I adventured.

"Then he was a Levantine dragoman. I thank you for that. His father hauled Cook's tourists up and down the Pyramids for pence. And the worst of it is that he doesn't look like a Jew, and he ought to. We provided the dinner—he the box."

"Who came?"

"Mrs. Eva van Agnew and Geissler, both in one cab—two; Tom and I—four; and Miss Dormil and the Evans boy—six. That was all. I never allow a fortuitous concourse of atoms at my table; and, besides, we have no extra leaf in it. I had immense trouble in cajoling Mrs. Dormil to let her daughter go alone. She wished to assist. Heaven knows, I despise her as honourably as I despise most women; but when she strips for festivities, I always think that she should be 'hidden from the wise and prudent and'²—how does it go? She makes me feel very undressed with draughts blowing all over me. And, you know, you can't say: 'Won't you put a counterpane over your shoulders, you dear fat thing?' So they dined, and I was glad, because I knew neither of the young people would remember what they ate—they were in that stage; and Geissler was talking founders' shares to Tom, and Eva van Agnew was trying to talk to me and watch Geissler at the same time. Geissler wouldn't throw a word to her. There must have been a quarrel in the cab."

"But why were you so concerned about Miss Dormil and the Evans boy?"

"Because he had inflicted himself upon me four twilights out of the seven. He would arrive at half-past four and stay till half-past six, telling me that Miss Dormil was an angel and he was a ruffian, and did I think Mrs. Dormil could be brought to overlook his unworthiness? I liked it—I own I liked it immensely, even when he repeated himself for the twentieth time, and used to smash my drawing-room ornaments trying to make clear the intensity of his feelings. Oh, it's a relief to catch a young man devoid of nerves, and the less honourable emotions, who

does not talk cheap French novels, and knows exactly what he wants, and is humble about it. He confessed all his little sins in the past to me, and I know exactly how his future is going to be arranged, and therefore I assist him in the present. And so we dined, and then we bundled off—Tom and I and the children in the brougham, and Eva and the Israelite, whom I will never forgive, in a hansom; and we saw the play and came away early. Isn't that enough for you?"

"You went in the brougham and the hansom—yes. And what happened after that?" I continued, unregarding.

"You won't believe what I tell you."

"You are speaking."

"But even I—consider dear Mother Dormil, and do watch the entrance, please—may tell a fib."

"Never without a motive."

"Yes—that was the horror of it. It was so—without motive. So purposeless—so cruel; and yet there was a brassy vulgarity about it all that I can't explain. Try to understand that I am telling you what happened as accurately as I can. We were late for the farce, of course, and the overture was beginning. Of all horrors, it was the *Bronze Horse* overture."

"That's only tinny—not terrifying, surely."

"Wait! I had arranged things beautifully. Tom and I and Eva and Geissler were to sit in front, and the children at the back, because they were tall and wanted to talk. You know when you are absolutely certain of seeing a thing, you carry the outline of it in your mind's eye so that it looks real, don't you? When we trooped in, I was quite certain that I saw the stage, and so on, because a stage is naturally what you expect to see from the best box in the theatre. We banged the chairs about—they were horribly dusty—and then I heard the Evans boy saying 'Good God!' under his breath. Tom put his hand on my wrist, and drove my pet bracelet into the bone. 'Don't jump or scream,' he said. 'Look!'"

"A headless woman in a vacant chair, or a red dog, or something nice and magaziny. Mrs. Skittleworth, please don't," I whimpered, because Mrs. Skittleworth is much above that sort of entertainment.

"I knew you would," she answered. "And now I'm sorry that I didn't invite you. We looked out of the box at the stage, and at the house, and there was nothing whatever to be seen! Do you understand that?—Nothing whatever to be seen."

"And what was it like?" I said with intense interest.

"It was awful. It was unspeakable. It was Chaos—raving, mad, howling Chaos! Have you ever been under chloroform, and do you know that die-away-and-away darkness when a train goes into a tunnel, through your head, and all the doors are being slammed, just before you

lose consciousness? It was most like that feeling. But it wasn't. The darkness—the absolute blankness was in your head and your eyes, and yet you were staring into it—staring with your soul as well as your eyes. And then, through it all, we heard the rustle of the house, and the music of the *Bronze Horse*. That tune is the most diabolical one in the world."

"Then you could hear?"

"We could hear everything. That was a further horror. We could hear the people getting into their places below, and the crinkle of the fans. You know what a hot house the Inner Sepulchre is. We could hear the rumble of traffic outside sometimes, but we could not see any single thing except ourselves in heaven above, or the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth."

"And what happened?"

"I don't quite remember. I think we must have all waited—I know I did—for the darkness to clear away. I felt as though I had been hit on the head, but would be all right presently if people took no notice and stood off from me, and, above all things, gave me air—plenty of air. Tom's hand on mine prevented me from making an absolute exhibition of myself. You know how Ashdown frizzes my hair for functions—I was frizzed all over my head very prettily, and I friz through my frizzes; and while I was staring and feeling, oh! so deathly sick, I was distinctly conscious that my hair was tightening—Ashdown had frizzed it too well for it to stand on end—tightening and dragging my eyebrows up and up, so that I must have looked like an Aunt Sally at a fair."

Mrs. Skittleworth laughed hysterically, and fluttered her very small hands.

A lean, unshorn, toadstool-collared young gentleman in a blue cloak which would have been useless on horseback or in a high wind, a dead-leaf silk throat-wrap, and a sort of football jersey that was doing duty as a shirt, threw himself down on the divan and curled his legs into esoteric attitudes. Mrs. Skittleworth shook the quaver out of her voice, jumped three notes on the piano, and began as one in the middle of things generally.

"And so, you know, they invented a sort of combination garment for the lower classes—to save washing. It's very effective if it isn't worn too long, especially at the wristbands and round the neck, but then they provide a clout called a belcher¹ to wear there, and you can get them for one and sevenpence halfpenny in Westbourne Grove. And they come here and do a lot of good, and they are called Socialists. Of course the uniform confuses the sexes. If it's a he, for instance, it's wearing its petticoats where it shouldn't, you know, and if it's a she it wouldn't wear a silk hat. But perhaps it's an exhibit, and if we ask it..."

The young gentleman rose and regarded us with unholy eyes from the lunch balcony.

"A woman who cannot be vulgar on occasions does not know the meaning of True Deportment," said Mrs. Skittleworth. "You should hear Mrs. Dormil bullying her governess. And where were we? Oh, yes, in that darkness of terror. I think we must have been there for years and years before we heard the rustle of the curtain and the servants' opening dialogue in the *Zoetrope*. I wanted to scream at the top of my voice, but it occurred to me that I had been standing up for untold ages in the face of the house. So I sat down and Tom began patting my hand in an absent-minded way and saying: 'Poor little woman!' I remembered then that when I was fearfully ill and delirious on the Other Side of the World—no, I won't say how many years ago—Tom used to sit by my bed for days and weeks doing exactly the same thing; and whenever I would half come to life I was conscious of one hand being patted and 'poored.' I knew endearment of that sort was not in place on the box-edge; but I couldn't take my hand away for all the world. I wanted Tom as I have never wanted him in my life—not even when they all thought I was dying. And the dear boy patted my hand—bless him! He was as white as a sheet. Then I began to think of mother, exactly as a Frenchwoman would. I wondered where she was, and if this hideous darkness was her portion in the other world, and I wanted to step into it and find out and drag her in across the edge of the box. I reflected that I should fall on somebody's head in the attempt, and I laughed aloud horribly in the one pathetic scene in the *Zoetrope*, where the Professor tells the little lodging-house servant the story of his life and his broken love-tale, and she cries and mops her face with the duster. And then I jumped, for I knew all the house was looking at me, and that upset the opera-glass, and I heard it fall and hit somebody below, and there was a scuffle, and every eye in everybody's head, I knew, was fixed on our unhappy, unhappy box. That was the incident of laughing and throwing glasses about that Mrs. Bletchley makes so much of. The thing dropped into the dark as a stone into water."

"But why in the world didn't you all get up and run out, or complain or—do something?"

"After the affair of the opera-glass? Mrs. Skittleworth's party romping in a box, dropping glasses, laughing, and then running out like children in a country church when they've tipped hymn-books from the gallery? Never! I may be introduced to the other world against my will, but I know my duty to this, as long as I am in it. I was praying for the first act to end, for I was afraid I could not stand the tension!"

"And the others?"

"You may well ask. I looked round when my own feelings were a little under control. What a blessed thing is a British education! All the Jew that ever cheated in Israel came out in Geissler's face. He was on the right of the box, half standing up in his chair and gripping the edge with both hands till the plush plumped up in red gores between his fingers. He was not looking at the stage, but into the darkness, and I was more than conscious that he must be staring fiendishly at the opposite box. Staring like a maniac. I felt that those stares were returned. Oh, I felt pins and needles all over, so sure I was that we were being watched while we were smitten with blindness! Complain? How could we complain? Can you go to an attendant at a theatre and say, 'We can't see out of this box'—a five-guinea box on the grand tier—the best in the house? If there is one place whence you ought to see all that is to be seen"—Mrs. Skittleworth nearly broke down at this point—"it's a box. I'll never take a box again. Give me stalls, or the gallery, where you are in touch with your neighbour and all see ghosts together."

"Was there a ghost, then?"

"No, no, no—only their country: the room they had just left. Geissler may have seen some. He looked hideous—as though he were being burned alive. His shoulders were cramped up to the back of his head; but I don't think he was afraid. He seemed to be in pain. Thinking of founders' shares possibly. Eva made the most painful exhibition of us all. Promise you won't tell, of course. Her place was empty, and she was down on the floor of the box—mercifully out of sight—her face hidden in a coat thrown over a chair. She had pressed herself into one corner like a frightened rabbit, and was praying. A box isn't a place to pray in. At least, not when the house is full. You know Eva's High Church—extremely so; and even in her agony she was intoning. I stooped down and tried to take one of her hands, and said: 'Hush, dear, hush! think of your dress!' but she only went on bleating, 'Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from they ways l-1-like lost sheep,' over and over again. She was kneeling on that little cheap silk of hers, and nothing in the wide world will ever get the dust out of it again; and she had bundled my heavy white 'cloud' over her head to shut out the dark, and she looked just like a lost sheep. I might as well have spoken to one. I am very sorry for Eva."

"And the others?"

"They had arrived at a most complete understanding, and that nearly made me scream. I felt that I was responsible for everything—Chaos included. Clara was in the Evans boy's arms, totally and completely, at the back of the box to the left; and to this day I cannot tell why all the house didn't see them. They must have fancied it was the Day of Judgment. They were murmuring things that you very seldom hear

from dress coats and evening frocks, and I honestly believe they never saw the darkness after they had explained themselves."

"Poor Mrs. Dormil!"

"It wasn't my fault. I only wished them to improve their acquaintance with each other. Am I responsible if the Powers of darkness are leagued against me to precipitate matters? Yes, they were in each other's arms expecting immediate translation. What I saw and said passed in a flash, though I have been so long telling it. The rest was interminable waiting for the first act to end, Eva praying on the floor, and the house rocking with laughter at the jokes, Geissler glaring into Tophet, Tom patting my hand, the children in another world—bless them!—and I playing propriety for them all. Taking an interest in the play in order to prove that I saw it all, and was as much amused as anybody, clapping when the unseen hosts clapped, and smirking when I felt it was time to smirk. I was almost obsequiously attentive to the *Zoetrope*, and I flatter myself that even the Bletchley woman will admit that I behaved perfectly."

"Mrs. Skittleworth," I said, in a voice broken with emotion, "I have long admired and respected you beyond any human being alive. I now worship you with fear and trembling. Men have won the Victoria Cross for less than that."

Mrs. Skittleworth was graciously pleased to bow her head, always with one eye on the door. She continued:

"Then the curtain went down, and we fled. I have a dim recollection of flying into the cloak-room screaming like a peacock: 'My things! My things! My things!' Eva was close behind me. We fell together into the tire-woman's arms. Luckily she was big, and ready with her blandishments at once. She said: 'There! there! there! Never mind. 'Ere's your cloak, mum'; and I answered, thickly: 'Yes, yes, yes. Of course—of course. Too hot, too cold; very fine weather indeed.' She gave us both the best thing available and on the spot. It proved the existence of a conspiracy. It was brandy-and-soda—strong! You should have seen Eva and me gulping it down like washerwomen, while that dear tall Clara drifted about like a saint in a holy dream, conscious that there might have been something wrong somewhere, but more conscious that things were right.

"We skipped down the passages. We dared not run, but we skipped; and Geissler and Eva went off in separate cabs. I know he volunteered to see her home, for I caught one gesture of hers that would have made the fortune of a tragedy actress. Villain as I am convinced he is, I admire that man for his nerve. Now comes the proof of the conspiracy. Our brougham was on hand when we came out. Generally Jobbins retires to a public-house, and Tom has to prance through the puddles and drag

him out personally. But he was waiting, which was a greater miracle than anything else. I spoke to him about it the next day, complimenting him on his virtue.

"Well, mum,' he said, 'I wouldn't ha' kep' the pore 'orses 'cept that every man of 'em in the theatre, an' the policemen, an' all the lot sez to me that you'd be out at the end of the fust act. And so you was, mum, an' it was a good job I waited 'stead o' savin' the pore 'orses.'

"That is the only approach to an explanation that I have been able to arrive at—that, and the fact that Geissler got the box for twenty-five shillings. The entire theatre staff of the Inner Sepulchre must know all about it, and yet... Can you believe? Do you believe? Try to speak the truth. Geissler has never given any sign of his existence to me since that night. Eva has gone out of town, and Clara and the Evans boy ... you see. Somehow I feel as though I were responsible for everything. You do believe, don't you?"

"Implicitly," I replied. "If you cannot see a thing which is in front of you, who am I to dissent? Of course I believe. You intend to take no further steps?"

"None whatever. I'll never set foot in that theatre again. That's all; and Tom doesn't like me to talk about it. Clara won't speak either, I'm certain. She imagines it was sent from heaven to assist the Evans boy to propose to her."

"Poor Mrs. Dormil!"

"Yes, and here, for my many sins, she comes, without Tom or the other man. Fly! Catch Miss Dormil and walk ostentatiously with her while I lure the old lady to the food-troughs. The Evans boy can escape unseen if he has any sense."

But at that crisis he had not, and they both glowered at me when I found them in the stained-glass alcove; and I had to explain matters apart to the Evans boy, and he left with the air of a baffled conspirator; and though I was dying to ask Miss Dormil twenty thousand questions, she being wrapped up in her own vain imaginings, I could never get any further than:

"What do you think of the Arts and Crafts?"

NOTES

By THE EDITOR

This work was first published in *Longman's Magazine* (April 1890). It was collected in 1928 in *The One Volume Kipling: Authorized* (Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.), but not until 1938 in the U.K. when it appeared in the *Sussex Edition*, Vol.XXIX, *Uncollected Prose, Part 1*.

The text printed above is taken from *The One Volume Kipling: Authorized* where it is one of three stories listed under the heading "HITHERTO UNCOLLECTED". Of the other two, "The Lamentable Comedy of Willow Wood" was printed in *Journal* No.137 for March 1961 under specific permission from Mrs Elsie Bambridge, Kipling's daughter, whilst "The Legs of Sister Ursula" appeared in *Journal* No.321 for March 2007 after the copyright expired.

The story was in fact being written on 15 November 1889 as Kipling recorded in a diary-letter to Mrs Edmonia Hill covering 8-16 November 1889. (*Letters, Vol.1*, ed. T. Pinney, p.366.) In December 1893 however, Kipling was suggesting it for use as an awful warning to Edward Lucan White as an example of a humorous story that did not 'come off'. (*Letters, Vol.2*, ed. T. Pinney, p.115.)

1. A fictional title. A zoetrope was a device that gave the illusion of movement to a series of pictures, viewed through slits in a cylinder.
2. *St. Matthew*, XI, 25
3. *The Bronze Horse (La Cheval de Bronze)* is an opera by Daniel Francois Esprit Auber (1782-1871), first performed at the Opéra-Comique, Paris, in 1835. The action of the plot is located in China, with the composer trying to reflect the setting in the music.
4. A dark-blue neckerchief with white spots named after the boxer Jim Belcher.

A full set of notes to this story has been prepared by John McGivering for the New Readers' Guide, and can now be found on our website.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

GETTING UNDER THE SKIN OF THE OTHER ... IF YOU CAN

From: Mr Chris Bilham, 40 Church Street, Devonport, Auckland 0624, New Zealand.

Sir,

As a former colonial policeman myself (Royal Hong Kong Police), I particularly enjoyed Mr David Marler's review of the stories featuring that redoubtable officer, Strickland.

Evidently Strickland had a counterpart in real life, though I have no idea if Kipling had ever heard of him. John Beames, District Officer of Purnea (in Northern Bengal) in the 1860s, wrote of his District Superintendent, Henry Michael Weatherall, in his *Memoirs of a Bengal Civilian*;

Mike, as he was called, was a man born in India of European parents; so at least he said, but that there was 'black blood' in him from some ancestor or ancestors was undeniable ... He spoke English with a slight accent, but Bengali and Urdu absolutely like a native. With his dusky complexion, when dressed in native clothes, he passed as a Musulman among Musulmans themselves. He was as wily as a fox, and a born detective. Having lived among natives all his life he was intimately acquainted with all their ways and tricks and superstitions and, being absolutely unscrupulous, he was a match for the craftiest criminal.

Yours sincerely
CHRIS BILHAM

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

RANSOME AND "REGULUS"

From: Miss J.M. Lingley, Flat 3, 3Eastcliff Road, Shanklin, Isle of Wight PO37 6AA

Sir,

I am grateful for the interest in my article shown by Cdr Wilson and Prof Brogan in their letters published in the June and September 2012 issues respectively.

Referring firstly to Commander Wilson's comments, the anecdote from Ransome's Autobiography was quoted merely as a preamble to my article. It was intended to illustrate Ransome's knowledge of the Classics, which like Kipling's, was acquired during his schooling. That the anecdote bore comparison with the episode in which Kipling's

fictional character Paddy Vernon features, I have to admit, did not occur to me.

Apropos Professor Brogan's letter, assuming Ransome did have Kipling's "Regulus" in mind when he wrote *The Picts and the Martyrs*, and intended that allusions to Kipling's story should be apparent to the discerning reader, then the story itself must be evidence of this, which is what I attempted to suggest in my article. It is admittedly the case that the very nature of implicit reference of this kind does not lend itself to irrefutable argument.

However, it is not the case that a possible connection between "Regulus" and Ransome's *Missee Lee*, published in 1941, was overlooked. Note 5, appended to the article, commented that the science master Hartopp's view of the Classics could be of relevance to this tenth novel in the Swallows and Amazons Series.

Yours sincerely
JANICE LINGLEY

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