

THE COURIER

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OBSERVATIONS.

Rudyard Kipling.

Judging from the reviews and the newspapers, Rudyard Kipling is not the man he was. His books sell just as well, but the critics, less and lesser, profess entire disenchantment. It is said that the English army in India officers and men object to his reports of their conduct and character. Truly, according to Kipling the British in India are a bad lot: the officers, carousing, conceited faithless rouses, the men no better than thieves, when not dead drunk and the wives of officers, men and civilians thoroughly untrustworthy and irresponsible. The English schoolmasters and the alumni of the secondary schools at Eton, Harrow, Rugby, and the military schools deny that the scholars are the disagreeable, brutal prigs of Stalky & Co. Even the beasts of the jungle are holding meetings and have drawn up resolutions repudiating Kipling's portraits of them and distinctly asserting that this man Kipling is unauthorized. The Gloucester fishermen were the first to detect the fishy flavor of the story he wrote about the fishing-fleet off the banks. The naturalists of the Indian jungles are quite willing to accept Kipling as a romantic authority on the British army, the soldiers are willing to believe what he says about the English schools, the Yankee skip

pers, and the animals in the jungle but they disavow his authority and ability to sketch them. As he is not a soldier's soldier, or a sailor's sailor, and as the school-boys whose grown-up name is alumni, and the school teachers are huffy because of the very back eye he has given the English schools, and further as the English poets have always refused their consent to his reputation as a poet, the testimony is conclusive that he is not an universal genius. His stories are like post mortems. They discover diseases that intimates had never suspected and other individuals of the types he portrays protest that he is unjust and undiscriminating. But the stories are interesting if not true and the sale of Kipling stories will not be injured by the wholesale repudiation of Kipling by the soldier as the novelist of the British army, by all women as their dramatist, by the naturalist as a student of animals, and by school-boys as their historian, and by the Gloucester fishermen as a writer on ships and sailors. The Gloucester fishermen were the first to laugh at Kipling's stories of fishing off the Banks. They were not affected by his reputation as a writer. They do not pretend to any knowledge but that of fishing, and literary standards and reputations mean nothing to them.

Such a revision of a man's reputation is unusual during his life. For the continuity of Mr. Kipling's fame, it is perhaps as well that he should be re-rated while he is still producing.

Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico either belongs to the United States or it does not. If it is ours it is a great scandal that must injure the republican party, to defend ourselves against its trade, to apply to its trade with other nations our prohibitive system and then to turn it against the Puerto Ricans themselves. No commerce is strong enough to stand the application of such a hateful principle. It is said that the Sugar Trust has been able to convince congressmen of the wisdom of delay. It is very unfortunate for the country that a few men are able to put such a shame upon it.

Expansion.

Colonization or expansion is the test of a nation's virility. It is a stage of growth and a sign of it. No great nation has ever existed that has not grown to its political boundaries and beyond them. It may be that this experiment in democracy will not succeed. If not we shall fail in the Philippines. Like the gold seekers who printed "Black Hills or bust" on their wagons in the seventies. It is colonization with us now or admit the most indisputable sign of national weakness and prophesy of disintegration. What has happened will happen again and history is the most reliable sibil or oracle that we

can consult. England is colonizing the world. We are sib to her and have inherited the capacity to colonize; a curious national tact which the Latin and Romance nations do not possess. Universal peace is more likely to be accomplished through this persistent English habit than through an international powwow and agreement. England in British America, Australia, Nova Scotia, India, and the smaller islands is as loyal to Great Britain as the English in England. When America and England shall have colonies enough there can be no more fighting.

The government of the United States is just finding out that colonization or expansion is incompatible with a high protective tariff. Colonization is a settlement of a people in a new country, while retaining the institutions and laws of and allegiance to the mother country. Expansion, in the American sense, is adoption, and the imposition of our laws, institutions, customs and conventions upon an alien people separated by water, or another nation from our boundaries. It was expansion, for this last reason, according to the anti-expansionists when we bought Alaska, and it was not expansion when we gathered in Louisiana, Florida and the Northwest Territory. With a part of the United States in the Philippines and another part of it in the Americas the difficulty of maintaining a protective tariff will become apparent, if not to everybody, of necessity to congress when it attempts to reconcile the rights of the people on the islands with our protective system.

A Christian Newspaper.

Doctor Sheldon's strictly censored newspaper containing only the current events that he thinks Christ would want people to have printed is the financial success of the week. Whether such a paper would retain its circulation for a year or more this experiment of a week cannot fairly determine.

Those who believe that the New Testament is a faithful and unexaggerated report of the life and teaching of Christ cannot deny that Doctor Sheldon has authority for claiming to know exactly how Christ would run a newspaper in His year 1900. Christ taught the disciples that His life, more than anything else was an example. Everything expect the rule of love and its unrestricted application, was taught "by them of old time." But the Jews then and we of today learn by concrete examples. The ten commandments do not mean anything to us until one of the sins it forbids tempts us, or we see some one else breaking them. Perhaps the Jews of that time were a trifle harder to teach by precept than we are now. Their language was that of a very primitive people. It was all in

parables and figures. Worship of a spirit, had degenerated into the wearing of phylacteries and amulets, into a very formal and complicated ceremonial. Yet they were an emotional, easily moved people, as the quick acceptance of Christ's radical and revolutionary doctrine demonstrated.

Nevertheless there is not one of us who is willing to take Doctor Sheldon's prescription of news. There are all sorts of things in the Bible. Under another name some library boards would censure it and exclude it from the library over which the board is the guardian. Yet nevertheless old, and new, it is still the rule of morals and manners for the Christian world. In claiming to be able to know just how Jesus would run the business of the modern world, Dr. Sheldon does not exceed biblical instructions while he directs his own movements, but a deliberate attempt to publish a newspaper as though Jesus were the publisher is an exhibition of extraordinary self complacency. Perhaps a better Bible student can find authority in the books for treading in His footsteps and thus becoming another example of what a godlike man can do, but I fail to find such a passage. Fanatics have killed women, children and themselves under the impression that the Bible directed them. Only the sanest, broadest mind can interpret the Bible for others. It is singular that Christ himself refused to give specific rules in specified cases. When implored to rebuke this man or that, He picked up a little child or wrote on the ground, or gazed absent-mindedly past his interrogator. From the reports of Mathew, Mark, Luke, John, and the writer of The Acts it is very certain that if these were the days of His advent He would not edit a newspaper.

The Robins.

That early morning, plaintive iteration, that is so much nearer and so much more human than that other sound of the morning, has begun. More than two weeks ago the robins arrived in this part of Nebraska and the cocks are only a distant echo of winter that sounds in our ears without effect. The great multitude on their way north from the coast stop off by large companies in Nebraska, leaving their comrades, who prefer a still more northern latitude, to keep on their way.

Arizona.

Occasionally a young, very pretty, and frivolous woman who happens to be married to a good, brave, devoted man, underestimates the good fortune, tires of the monotony of goodness and runs away with a villain. To insure a dramatic situation on the stage, a young and beautiful wife is forever fascinated and almost induced to run away with a man who swag-