



"IT IS NOT THE PLOT," said Edward Weeks about Plum's stories, "but the blythe spirit of the telling." However... "I think of P. G. Wode-

house (as)...the only man who can write the same story over and over again...and yet at each writing make it funnier and more appetizing than it was before," so wrote Irvin S. Cobb. "Heaven grant that P. G. never changes the plot!" ###

THE FIRST Annual Gathering of The Wodehouse Society was convened on 16 July, 1982, WCY (authorities on the subject agree that WCY may be used until October 15th, after which WCY + 1, 2, 3, etc., will apply). A constitution of broad, liberal scope was approved by the gatherers and will be submitted to the full membership with the September mailing of PLUM LINES. The agenda concerned general policies, with which all were in agreement, and the meeting ended on a high optimistic note. While only eight members attended the session at Delaware Valley College, the DINNER AT MISSY'S INN was celebrated by a multitude of 13 members and three guests. Excellent chow. Whatever our gathering may have lacked in numbers it compensated for in cordiality. Lady Ethel sent a letter of greeting, which was read to the assembly. Louise Collins, TWS, who had interviewed OM on WBUX several months ago, read Isaac Asimov's foreword to Wodehouse on Crime with verve and consummate skill. David A. Jasen contributed a fine talk on Plum's life and career, very well received. Paul Taylor, WNPV, gave a dynamic reading of "Goodbye to all Cats," a hilarious PGW story, ably assisted by Audrey Ewart, our Delaware Valley Chapter president (who had participated nobly in planning the Gathering). A greeting card for Lady Ethel was selected and signed by the assembly, and it was voted unanimously that flowers should also be sent. All agreed that it had been a successful meeting and dinner. ###

The late George Moore (1852-1933) opined that "The world is naught but ourselves." This, too, was Plum's great message, missed by so many of his critics: That we are like the characters in his stories. Pauline Blanc, TWS, founder and active member of our San Francisco Chapter, never one to mince words, has put it pointedly: They are us. What more thought-provoking message can any author hand us on a silver platter garnished with epigrams than to remind us that we do these zany, irrational things, and that in laughing at Bertie, Honoria, Algy, et al., we are in fact laughing at ourselves? ###

WE RECENTLY RELATED (15 Mar) that two intrepid golfers, inspired by Plum's short story, "The Long Hole," had tee-off for the third consecutive year at the third hole of the Lower Nine at the Farmington Country Club, their target being a Jefferson Cup (filled with tissue restorer) sunk in the lawn at the University of Virginia, about four or five miles distant. Rightly convinced that that which is worth doing is worth doing again and again, these super-golfers will play the FOURTH Annual P. G. Wodehouse Open Golf Classic, teeing-off at 11:00 a.m., 8 August, 1982, WCY. True, little time is left to make your arrangements, but if you call Lem Marshall, TWS,

or Tom Markunis, you will be given full information. Spectating should be good, clean, wholesome fun. We are told that the contents of the Jefferson Cup must be quaffed by The Winner, while... "The Loser will be required to stand about awkwardly while The Winner receives the warm congratulations of the gallery."

One of our primary objectives, the encouraging of young readers to enjoy Plum's stories, is being realized. Two of our members are high school students, while five are college students. True, they were probably reading Plum before they ever heard of TWS, but we can exaggerate and brag just a smidgin, can't we?

Book notes: - Richard Osborne, TWS, comes along with A Wodehouse Companion, a very nice, though thinnish, volume. It is the only book OM has seen which contains narrative resués of Plum's stories, an excellent feature.

Lady Frances Donaldson's P. G. Wodehouse, a Biography, Knopf, NY, \$18.50, was published in June, and your friendly bookseller can order it for you. A handsome volume, as befits a Knopf product, it contains some new material. However, OM found the chapters on Plum's WWII internment drawn out and, on the whole, depressing. After all, Plum was completely cleared of complicity by British Military Intelligence right after V-E Day, and eventually knighted; surely exculpation enough. It is, nevertheless, a must for the FGW admirer, collector, and researcher because of the additional source material, and because it was lovingly written by a close family friend. Plum's music theater career is often overlooked, even by those aficionados who read and collect his books. The Theatre of P. G. Wodehouse, Batsford, London, 1979, is a handsome volume by David A. Jasen, TWS, which is a delightful account of this phase of Plum's career. Replete with playbills, contemporary photographs, casts, dates and data, with fascinating comment sprinkled about judiciously. Did you know, for example, that Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., had his first leading role in 1911 in a Wodehouse play, "A Gentleman of Leisure?" You might as well ask Barry Phelps to pick this up for you, add his pound of flesh for acting as your agent, and send it along. If you are lucky, he'll send his booklist with it. For an enjoyable evening at home, read this while Dave's record, "The Theatre Lyrics of P. G. Wodehouse," Folkways RFS 601 tinkles merrily away in the background.

If you read Ann Wood's essay, "Where is Blandings Castle?" in Jimmy Heine- man's P. G. Wodehouse - a Centenary Celebration - 1881-1981, you will be partially pre- pared for Colonel N. T. P. Murphy's In Search of Blandings, Carshalton, 1981. Send the equivalent of 5.50 pounds, plus liberal postage, to Col. N. T. P. Murphy, TWS, 193 Ban- stead Road, Carshalton, Surrey, UK, and you get back this meaty book. Is it a paperback or a softback? You can't get it anywhere else, and it's a collector's item for sure. If you are interested in Plum's characters, and possible real-life models for them, as well as the stately homes many of them occupied or visited, you will find this absorb- ing. OM renders the good colonel a snappy right-hand salute for his superb literary de- tective work, and for seeming to thoroughly enjoy doing it.

WARNING: LAUGHTER IS HABIT-FORMING.



The Oldest Member