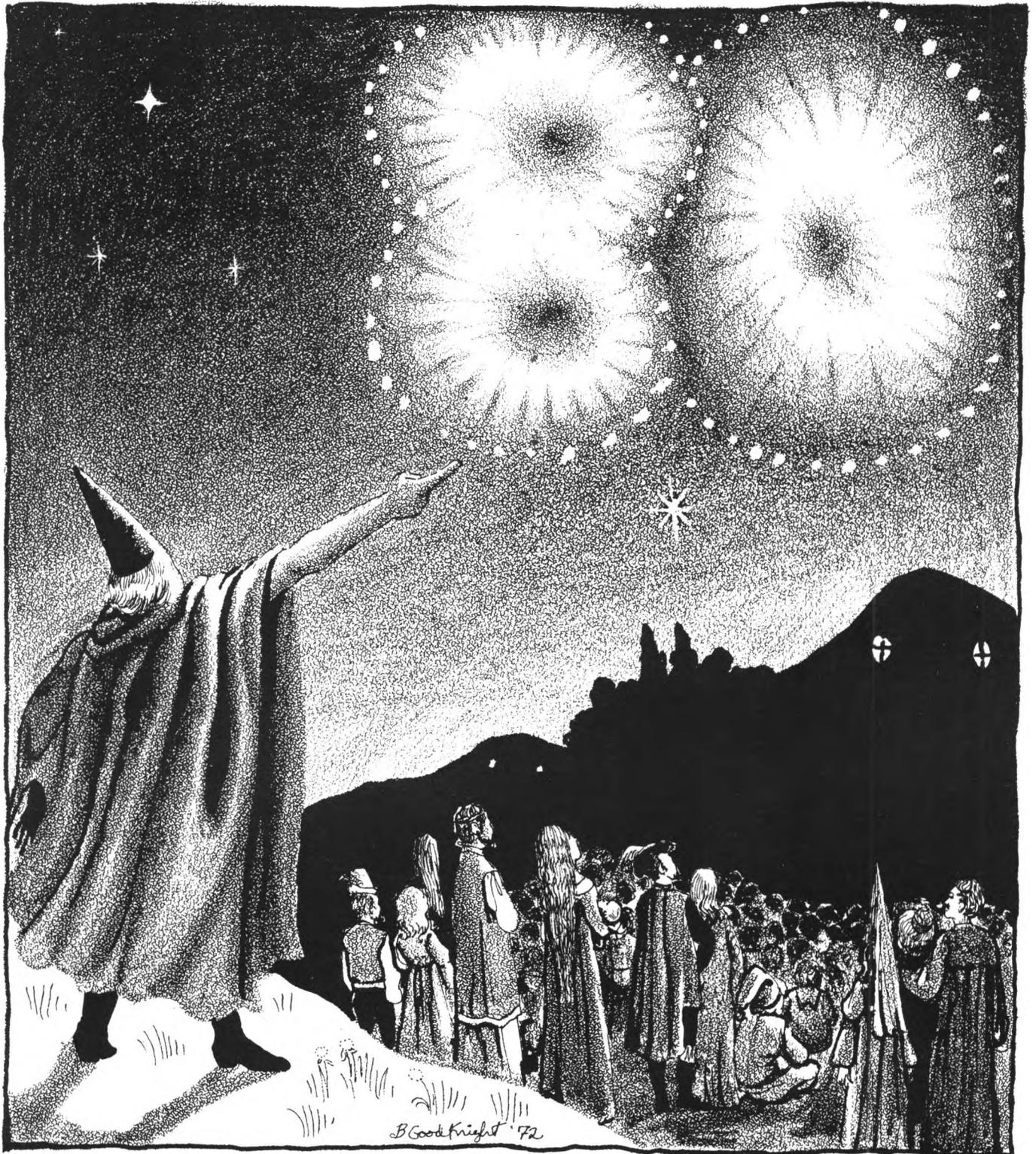
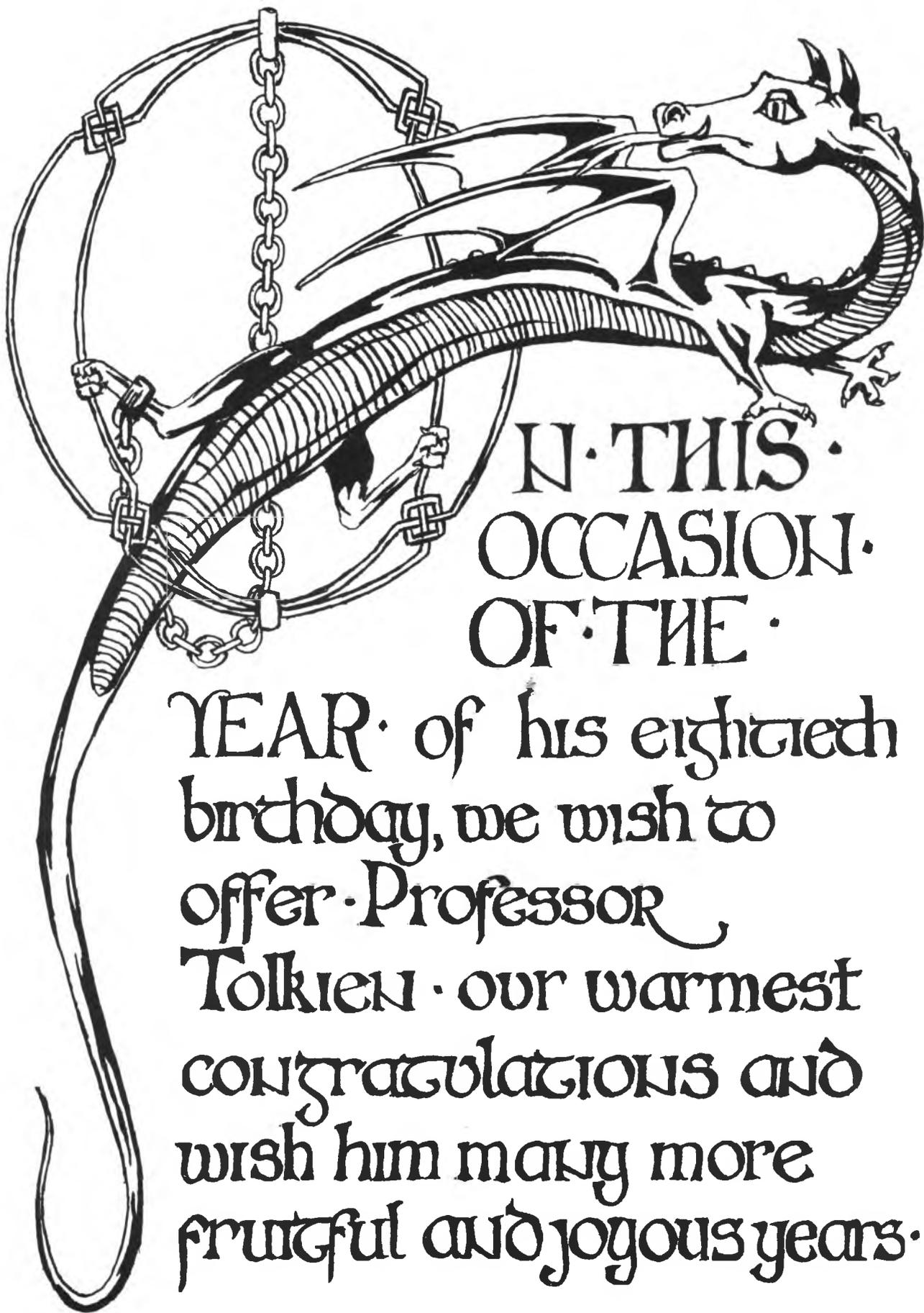


Tolkien Journal

Special Issue in honor of J.R.R. Tolkien's 80th Birthday
SUMMER 1972 NO. 15





N·THIS·
OCCASION·
OF·THE·

YEAR· of his eightieth
birthday, we wish to
offer·Professor
Tolkien· our warmest
CONGRATULATIONS AND
wish him many more
fruitful and joyous years·

A Message From The Thain

by Ed Meskys

On behalf of all the members of the Tolkien Society of America I wish to offer Professor Tolkien our belated congratulations on the occasion of his 80th birthday.

As you probably noticed elsewhere, this is the last issue of Tolkien Journal as such. Starting with the next issue it will be permanently merged with Mythlore.

Professor Tolkien has been widely honored on this occasion. He was one the Queen's New Year's honors list and was awarded the title of C. B. E. (a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire), one of the highest ranks awarded on such occasions. Also, in June, Oxford University is awarding him the degree of Honorary Doctor of Letters, the highest honor they can bestow on anyone.

The mass media is taking a new interest as well in Professor Tolkien. For instance, the Times of London had a special article in their Sunday magazine on the occasion of his birthday, and it had a photograph of the Professor taken by Lord Snowden.

A sign of Professor Tolkien's still growing popularity is the number of non-literary matter being marketed. You all know of the maps and posters issued by Ballantine and Unwin, but there have been others too. I know of at least two other poster-maps of Middle-earth, a photo poster of Professor Tolkien, a poster in Cerech hawking the record, and four posters of Tolkien characters.

And new items are coming. Later this year Ballantine will issue a calendar with drawings by Professor Tolkien, including four never before printed and colored jumbo post cards as well as tea towels with Tolkien-inspired art. At least one publisher is planning to put out a student's guide or trot to LotR. A chain of religious bookstores is planning to put out a Frodo doll. A company put out a game inspired by The Hobbit called "Conquest of the Ring", and the four above-mentioned posters of Tolkien characters, though the name Tolkien or that of any of the names of the characters appear nowhere on these items. I have heard of other tentative plans from Ballantine which I am not yet at liberty to divulge.

I first heard of Tolkien and Lord of the Rings in 1960 when I saw it mentioned in a lot of science fiction fanzines, and that Labor Day weekend I attended the organizational meeting of the "Fellowship of the Ring". I became a charter member even though I didn't get around to reading LotR until several months later. Eventually four issues of the club magazine, I Palantir, appeared and the group faded out of existence.

In late 1963 Al haLevy, a member of the Elves', Gnomes, and Little Men's Science Fiction, Chowder and Marching Society, was instrumental in briefly reviving the club magazine, Rhodomagnetic Digest under his editorship. He had compiled an extensive glossary of every name appearing in LotR and was going to publish it serially in RD, but the magazine folded after only one installment had appeared. I had been planning to make my fanzine, Niekas, Tolkien oriented and asked Al if I could take over publication of the Glossary, and started by reprinting the first installment in Niekas 9.

About this time the late Ed Baker of Los Angeles compiled a concordance to LotR, but only got around to publishing a small part of it in the Spectator Amateur Press Society.

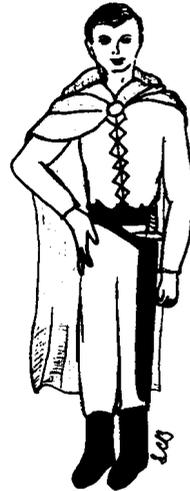
Then came the Ace and Ballantine editions and the whole Tolkien explosion. A high school student in Brooklyn, Dick Plotz, started meeting with friends and others to "talk Tolkien" and then decided to advertise a meeting. The club became the Tolkien Society of America and was a runaway

success. Before he knew it he had 2000 members and a hundred pieces of mail a week. He held quarterly meetings, the last of which drew over 200 attendees.

A friend of Dick's, Bob Foster, compiled a Glossary much like Al haLevy's, only better in that it included translations of the words. About this time Al's interest in the project failed and I arranged with Bob to publish his version instead. I did this until it came out in book form from Mirage Press as A Guide to Middle-Earth.

In September of 1966 Dick Plotz entered Harvard as a Freshman, but the TSA kept him so busy that he had to drop out and start over the following fall. I was faculty adviser to a Science Fiction and Tolkien club at Belknap College and felt that with their help and some decentralization I could manage the TSA and volunteered to take it over. I became the second Thain at a meeting held in a Unitarian church in downtown Brooklyn over the Labor Day weekend of 1967. This step started me on five years of fun, hard work and frustration.

Over the years many people helped me work on various aspects of the TSA. I especially want to thank my wife Nan and my mother-in-law Mrs. Bunny Miles. I also want to thank Brian Burley, Marsha Elkin, Charlie Brown, various members of the New England SF Society and Belknap College SF, Fantasy and Tolkien Society, and last but not least Stanley Miles and Kate Miles. And finally I wish to thank Glen GoodKnight for taking over this whole headache.



I'll take a can of Flit and a broom, please. I'm going to Center Harbor!

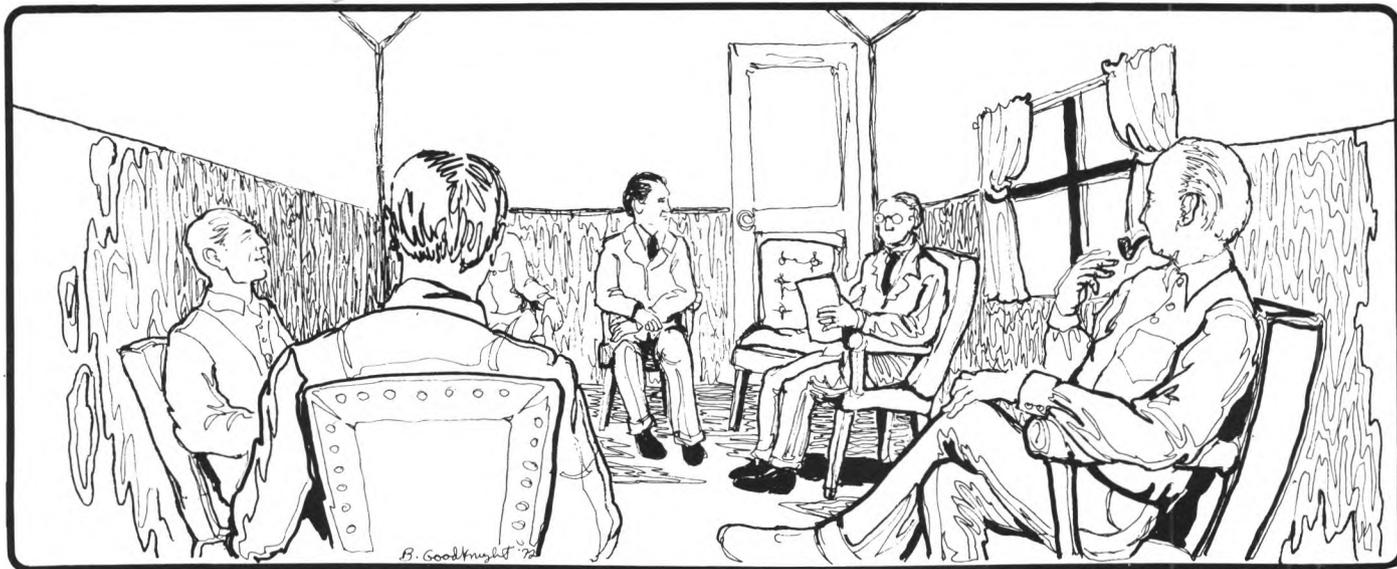
And then there were the flies! Oh, were they ever there! Apparently countless flies had laid their eggs in the unfinished building during the summer and these all hatched the moment the heat was turned on. Flies, mostly dead, were everywhere... in your hair, on the floor, in your coffee, literally everywhere! At the end of one day the janitors swept up a five gallon bucket. Frye Hall was promptly renamed Fly Hall.

And then there was the time I had a half dozen people up for the weekend helping finish up TJ 9. Sheila Elkin found her typewriter too high for comfort so she asked for a phone book to sit on. I handed her the one for the local area, about the size of Reader's Digest, and she threw it at me.

And there are many other memories... the frustrations with slow printers, the help at Yule Moots and convention meetings, the nice note from Professor Tolkien when he learned of my blindness, written despite his own loss of his wife, and many, many others. I had a good time running the TSA and only wish I had done a better job of it.

My loss of sight made things very difficult, but for a time, with tons of help from Nan and Mrs. Miles I did manage to continue. But then I didn't get to mail out until April a Green Dragon I had finished writing in January, and that

(continued on page 31)



WHO WERE THE INKLINGS ?

by Joe R. Christopher

On the eleventh of November, 1939, C. S. Lewis wrote to his brother:

On Thursday we had a meeting of the Inklings--you and Coghill both absent unfortunately. We dined at the East-gate. I have never in my life seen Dyson so exuberant--'A roaring cataract of nonsense'. The bill of fare afterwards, consisted of a section of the new Hobbit from Tolkien, a nativity play from Ch. Williams (unusually intelligible for him, and approved by all), and a chapter out of the book on the Problem of Pain from me. . . . I wished very much that we cd. have had you with us. . . .¹

Four months later, on the third of February, 1940, he wrote his brother again:

We had the usual pleasant party on Thursday evening in College, with the welcome addition of Havard (our doctor) who has been bidden all along but has hitherto been prevented from attending for various reasons. He read us a short paper on his clinical experience of the effects of pain, wh. he had written in order that I might use all or part of it as an appendix to my book. We had an evening almost equally compounded of merriment, piety, and literature. Rum this time again. The Inklings is now really very well provided, with Adam Fox as chaplin, you as army, Barfield as lawyer, Havard as doctor--almost all the estates--except of course anyone who could actually produce a single necessity of life--a loaf, a boot, or a hut. . . .²

Exactly one month later he mentioned the group to his brother again:

A visit from Dyson on Thursday produced a meeting of all the Inklings except yourself and Barfield. Adam Fox read us his latest 'Paradisal' on Blenheim park in winter. The only line I can quote (wh. seems to me very good) is 'Beeches have figures: oaks anatomies' It was in the Troilus stanza and full of his own 'cool, mellow flavour' as the tobacconists say. Dyson . . . was in his usual form and on being told of Williams' Milton lectures on 'the sage

and serious doctrine of virginity', replied, 'The fellow's becoming a common chastitute'. . . .³

After Dunkirk and his brother's return to England, Lewis writes to another friend, a Roman Catholic monk, Dom Bede Griffiths, on the twenty-first of December, 1941:

Williams, Dyson of Reading and my brother (Anglicans) and Tolkien and Havard (our doctor), your Church, are the 'Inklings' to whom my Problem of Pain was dedicated. We meet on Friday evenings in my rooms; theoretically to talk about literature, but in fact nearly always to talk about something better. What I owe to them all is incalculable. Dyson and Tolkien were the immediate human causes of my conversion. Is any pleasure on earth as great as a circle of Christian friends by a good fire?⁴

Thus far I have been setting the stage: the Inklings were a group of men meeting at Oxford University during the years of the Second World War and after. Now for Act I, the establishment of the Inklings. The immediate cause seems to have been the friendship of C. S. Lewis and Charles Williams. Lewis writes:

Until 1939 that friendship had to subsist on occasional meetings, though, even thus, he had already become as dear to all my Oxford friends as he was to me. There were many meetings both in my room at Magdalen College and in Williams' tiny office at Amen House in London. Neither Mr. Dyson nor my brother, Major W. H. Lewis, will forget a certain immortal lunch at Shirreff's in 1938 (Williams gave me a copy of He Came Down From Heaven and we ate kidneys 'enclosed', like the wicked man, 'in their own fat') nor the almost Platonic discussion which followed for about two hours in St. Paul's churchyard. But in 1939 the Oxford University Press, and Williams with it, was evacuated to Oxford. From that time until his death we met one another about twice a week, sometimes more: nearly always on Thursday evenings in my rooms and on Tuesday morning in the best of all public-houses for draught

Happy Birthday J.R.R. Tolkien!

"This book, with the help of maps . . . is good and should appeal to all children between the ages of 5 and 9"

Those words were written back in 1936 by the then 10-year-old Rayner Unwin in the first review of the now renowned THE HOBBIT.

Since then Tolkien fans have expanded into millions of admirers and readers the world over—many much older than 9! We, at Ballantine Books, salute our friend J. R. R. Tolkien on his 80th Birthday and wish him many years more . . . years equal in number to those of Bilbo Baggins!



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cider, whose name it would be madness to reveal.⁵

Thus the making of the fellowship. Before we enter into a catalogue of members, perhaps a description of a gathering would be fitting. Here is how John Wain described the meetings just after the war:

I can see that room so clearly now, the electric fire pumping heat into the dank air, the faded screen that broke some of the keener draughts, the enamel beer-jug on the table, the well-worn sofa and armchairs, and the men drifting in (those from distant colleges would be later), leaving overcoats and hats in any corner and coming over to warm their hands before finding a chair. There was no fixed etiquette, but the rudimentary honours would be done partly by Lewis and partly by his brother, W. H. Lewis, a man who stays in my memory as the most courteous I have ever met--not with mere politeness, but with a genial, self-forgetful considerateness that was as instinctive to him as breathing. Sometimes, when the less vital members of the circle were in a big majority, the evening would fall flat; but the best of them were as good as anything I shall live to see. This was the bleak period following a ruinous war, when every comfort (and some necessities) seemed to have vanished for ever; Lewis had American admirers who sent him parcels, and whenever one of these parcels had arrived the evening would begin with a distribution. His method was to scatter the tins and packets on his bed, cover them with the counterpane, and allow each of us to pick one of the unidentifiable humps; it was no use simply choosing the biggest, which might turn out to be prunes or something equally dreary. Another admirer used to send a succulent ham now and then; this, too, would be shared out. In winter we sat around the electric fire; in summer, often on the steps at the back of the 'New Building', looking on to the deer-haunted grove.⁶

And now for the catalogue of members. I fear that this shall become sometimes a bit tedious, but some of the men are interesting enough. I shall try, at any rate, to avoid simply lists of dates. The place to begin is probably with Charles Williams, whose advent in Oxford began the meetings.⁷ Williams packed into one lifetime an enormous amount of writing and lecturing, plus a full-time job with the Oxford University Press--but of course it is the writing that remains as our one way to see through Williams' eyes today. Most critics believe his Romantic-cum-Metaphysical lyrics about King Arthur are his greatest work, but I suspect that his last two novels--Descent into Hell and All Hallows Eve--will outlast in popularity and appreciation even the verse. At any rate, it is a fascinating universe which Williams perceives: one full of spiritual forces, but none of the good forces imprecise--indeed, the better the character, the clearer headed he is. Ultimately, one assumes, the devil is not only a liar but a fool; God is the Great Mathematician. But tied into the intellectuality is love, for Williams, after all, was a Christian. He writes about saints able to bear other people's burdens--to take fear, or sorrow, or pain, upon themselves and leave the others free to work out their problems without confusion; because Williams wrote about saints, and most of us are not at that level, we call his novels fantasies, but it is reported that C. S. Lewis bore his wife's pain when she was dying of cancer:⁸ we

may underestimate Williams' realism.

The man, like the work, was unique. I should like to give two quotations describing Williams in the Oxford period with which we are concerned. The first is John Wain's description of him lecturing:

His lectures were crowded out. Even I, who chose to be very supercilious about lectures, seldom missed one. Williams, on the platform, enjoyed himself so much that even the most obstinate sceptics in the audience finally capitulated and shared his enjoyment. You could not really laugh at him because he had, ultimately, so little self-importance. He ranted, and threw back his head, and clutched at the shoulders of his gown, and stamped up and down on the platform, but there was always the feeling that he was not doing it to impress us with his own importance, but rather with the importance of the material he was dealing with. His mood never seemed to fall below the level of blazing enthusiasm. Great poetry was something to be revelled in, to be rejoiced over, and Williams revelled and rejoiced up there before our eyes. When he quoted, which he did continually and from memory, he shouted the lines at the top of his voice like an operatic tenor tearing into an aria. . . . it was magnificent.⁹

The second is C. S. Lewis's description of his person:

In appearance he was tall, slim, and straight as a boy, though grey-haired. His face we thought ugly: I am not sure that the word 'monkey' has not been murmured in this context. But the moment he spoke it became as was also said, like the face of an angel--not a feminine angel in the debased tradition of some religious art, but a masculine angel, a spirit burning with intelligence and charity. He was nervous (not shy) to judge by the trembling of his fingers.¹⁰

Lewis goes on to describe Williams' centrality to the meetings of the Inklings:

That face--angel's or monkey's--comes back to me most often through clouds of tobacco smoke and above a pint mug, distorted into helpless laughter at some innocently broad buffoonery or eagerly stretched forward in the cut and parry of prolonged, fierce, masculine argument and 'the rigour of the game'. Such society, unless all its members happen to be of one trade, makes heavy demands on a man's versatility. And we were by no means of one trade. The talk might turn in almost any direction, and certain skipped 'from grave to gay, from lively to severe': but wherever it went, Williams was ready for it. He seemed to have no 'pet subject'. Though he talked copiously one never felt that he had dominated the evening. Nor did one easily remember particular 'good things' that he had said: the importance of his presence was, indeed, chiefly made clear by the gap which was left on the rare occasions when he did not turn up. It then became clear that some principle of liveliness and cohesion had been withdrawn from the whole party: lacking him, we did not completely possess one another. He was (in the Coleridgian language) an 'esemplastic' force.¹¹

However, I had best add that if Lewis thought Williams was the central figure, both J. R. R. and Christopher Tolkien thought Lewis was:¹² thus suggesting the lack of self-centeredness,

at least, in the members of the Inklings.

This note of non-egotism is fitting for the mention here of a few names of Inklings about whom I have not been able to learn much. Charles Moorman, in his most recent book, lists Colin Hardy as one of the Inklings:¹³ I have not found a reference to any such person in any standard reference, so I can only leave his name for others to document.

Another member, Charles L. Wrenn, was a sometimes attendee, but the reason for absences is obvious to anyone checking his career.¹⁴ He was a lecturer in the English language at Oxford from 1930 to 1939, but in that same year as the establishment of the Inklings he became a professor of English language and literature at the University of London. Perhaps his attendance picked up when he returned to Oxford in 1946. At any rate his publications, most of them dealing with Beowulf or other Old English matters, indicated an affinity with J. R. R. Tolkien's professional interests. Lewis refers to a meeting with Wrenn in his letters, just before the Inklings became established by name:

I had a pleasant evening on Thursday with Williams, Tolkien and Wrenn, during which Wrenn expressed almost seriously a strong wish to burn Williams, or at least maintained that conversation with Williams enable him to understand how inquisitors had felt it right to burn people. . . . The occasion was a discussion of the most distressing text in the Bible ('Narrow is the way, and few they be that find it'), and whether one could really believe in a universe where the majority were damned and also in the goodness of God. Wrenn, of course, took the view that it mattered precisely nothing whether it conformed to our ideas of goodness or not, and it was at this stage that the combustible possibilities of Williams revealed themselves to him in an attractive light.¹⁵

Another Inklings who moved away to London, although not so soon, was Adam Fox, a priest in the Church of England, who left in 1942 or '43.¹⁶ I have already quoted Lewis's letter which mentions one of Fox's poems with the line "Beeches have figures: oak anatomies." Checking a bibliography of Fox's writings I find some early books which look like titles of poetry collections, but since the Second World War he has written such non-poetic works as Meet the Greek Testament (1952) and two volumes on Plato. Perhaps the most interesting title is that in 1957: God Is an Artist. One day I hope to investigate that, to see if it has any similarities with The Mind of the Maker, by Dorothy Sayers, a follower of Charles Williams who seems to suggest that God is a writer of detective stories. By the way, the reason Adam Fox is named Adam is that he has a twin sister named Eve--no wonder the Inklings found him writing "Paradisals" about parks.

Owen Barfield also belongs, with a difference, in this group of London Inklings.¹⁷ The difference is that Barfield was in London all the time the Inklings were meeting, being a partner in Barfield and Barfield (solicitors) from 1934 until his retirement in 1960. But he was a close friend of Lewis and got to Oxford for occasional weekends. Lewis writes of him:

There is a sense in which . . . Barfield is the type of every man's . . . Second Friend. The first is the alter ego, man who first reveals to you that you are not alone in the world by turning out (beyond hope) to share all your most secret delights. There is nothing to be overcome in making him your friend; he and you join like rain-drops on a window. But the Second Friend is

the man who disagrees with you about everything. He is not so much the alter ego as the anti-self. Of course he shares your interests; otherwise he would not become your friend at all. But he has approached them all at a different angle. He has read all the right books but has got the wrong thing out of every one. It is as if he spoke your language but mispronounced it. How can he be so nearly right and yet, invariably, just not right? He is as fascinating (and infuriating) as a woman. When you set out to correct his heresies, you find that he forsooth has decided to correct yours! And then you go at it, hammer and tongs, far into the night, night after night, or walking through fine country that neither gives a glance to, each learning the weight of the other's punches, and often more like mutually respectful enemies than friends.¹⁸

One mark of Barfield's anti-Lewisness is that he is an Anthroposophist, a follower of Rudolf Steiner in what Lewis characterizes as a dull, Germanic mysticism.¹⁹ Do you remember the beginning of the third chapter of Lewis's science-fiction novel Perelandra, which describes a group discussion, perhaps of the Inklings?:

On one occasion, someone had been talking about "seeing life" in the popular sense of knocking about in the world and getting to know people, and B. who was present (and who is an Anthroposophist) said something I can't quite remember about "seeing life" in a very different sense. I think he was referring to some system of meditation which claimed to make "the form of Life itself" visible to the inner eye.²⁰

Whatever "the form of Life" may be, the form of Barfield's writings is twofold: the early works--History in English Words in 1926 and Poetic Diction in 1929--were attempts to trace the mental history of mankind through language, while more recently he has embarked on a series of philosophical dialogues--Worlds Apart in 1963 and Unancestral Voice in 1965. The former is something of an argument about the significance of modern science, while the latter begins with a discussion of Lady Chatterley's Lover and ends in a mystical experience. Plato up to date!

Another Inklings who appears in Perelandra is Lewis's doctor, Robert Havard, who is hidden under the name of Dr. Humphrey in the scene at the end of the second chapter. But I must confess that not much personality comes through this fictional sketch, nor from Havard's own, brief note on pain which forms an appendix to Lewis's Problem of Pain, although the latter certainly has an optimistic note, as shown by its conclusion: "Pain provides an opportunity for heroism: the opportunity is seized with surprising frequency." However, except for these touches, I cannot discover much about Dr. Havard--another nearly anonymous Inklings.

Two who are better known, but who were not regular attendees, are Lord David Cecil and Nevill Coghill.²¹ Cecil was perhaps not in full temperamental agreement with the Christian bias of the group--at least, his writing a book on Thomas Hardy in 1943 suggests this, although I admit I have not read the book to see its approach to Hardy--but he also edited The Oxford Book of Christian Verse and in 1946 he was reading a life of Thomas Gray to the Inklings.²² Given world enough and time, I hope to investigate his largely biographical books. Clearer is the reason that Coghill did not attend regularly.²³ Although a fellow of Exeter College, a friend of Lewis since their undergraduate days, and an authority on Chaucer, Langland, and Shakespeare--perhaps best known for his translation of The

Canterbury Tales for Penguin Books--Coghill has also been a senior member of the Oxford Dramatic Society since 1934 and has directed and produced a large number of plays both in London and in Oxford. Perhaps you remember reading about his 1966 production of Dr. Faustus at Oxford when Richard Burton came back to act under his former tutor's direction, and the current Mrs. Burton had a walk-on part as Helen of Troy, whose lips "launched a thousand ships and burnt the topless towers of Ilium". Obviously no one so involved in drama as Coghill has been could have the time to appear at every Thursday evening meeting.

Before leaving him, however, I should like to quote Lewis's description of his personality in their student days:

I soon had the shock of discovering that he--clearly the most intelligent and best-informed man in that class--was a Christian and a thoroughgoing supernaturalist. There were other traits that I liked but found (for I was still very much a modern) oddly archaic; chivalry, honour, courtesy, "freedom", and "gentillesse". One could imagine him fighting a duel. He spoke much "ribaldry" but never "villeinry".²⁴

And John Wain, in his autobiography, refers to acting in Measure for Measure under Coghill's direction--under which direction the play became "a romantic Christian melodrama".²⁵ So Coghill's affinities with the Inklings are clear enough.

I notice that I have fallen into the practice of referring to C. S. Lewis simply as "Lewis"--but, of course, his brother, W. H. Lewis, was also a member. Warren Lewis was a professional soldier, ultimately a major, and also the author of four books about seventeenth-century France, the best known being Splendid Century: Life in the France of Louis XIV. C. S. Lewis writes of the meetings of the Inklings:

My brother's lifelong interest in the reign of Louis XIV was a bond between Charles Williams and him which no one had foreseen when they first met. Those two, and Mr. H. V. D. Dyson of Merton College, could often be heard in a corner talking about Versailles, indendants, and the maison du roy, in a fashion with which the rest of us could not compete.²⁶

Also historical are the interests of another Inklings. Fr. Gervase Mathewisa Dominican monk, who has written two books about Byzantine art and aesthetics as well as having made archaeological surveys in Africa and the Near East.²⁷ He has lectured at Oxford on Greek Patristics, on Byzantine art and archaeology, on the medieval social theory, and, since 1945, on fourteenth-century English literature. Altogether, a man of formidable learning.

H. V. D. Dyson was mentioned above in a quotation as a discussor of seventeenth-century France. And this is how he is introduced in Lewis's correspondence, in a 1931 letter to Warren Lewis:

The weekend before last I went to spend a night at Reading College with a man called Hugo Dyson--now that I come to think of it, you heard all about him before you left. . . . You would enjoy Dyson very much, for his special period is the late 17th century; he was much intrigued by your library when he was last in our room. He is a most fastidious bookman . . . but as far from being a dilettante as anyone can be; a burly man, both in mind and body, with the stamp of the war on him, which begins to be a pleasing rarity, at any rate in civilian life. Lest anything should be lacking, he is a Christian and a lover of cats. The Dyson cat is called Mirralls, and is a Viscount. . . .²⁸

You will recall from earlier quotations that Dyson helped in Lewis's conversion to Christianity, and that he had an uncommon sense of humor, as the pun about the "common chastitute" indicates.

At this point I have mentioned eleven of the early Inklings. Probably this makes the group seem larger and more organized than it was--usually there were around six men present in Lewis's rooms for their discussions.²⁹ But two of them who were basic members I have not yet formally listed: C. S. Lewis himself and J. R. R. Tolkien. Lewis was an odd mixture of rationalist and romantic.³⁰ His tutorials, as his former students have testified, tended to become arguing matches which either sharpened the wits of the young man or left him utterly terrified of saying anything. Privately, however, Lewis was a romantic, moved by a feeling of joy, of Sehnsucht, which called to him from literature and from nature--a call which he ultimately believed came to him through these means from God. And also privately, Lewis was a convivial man--Wain has written,

Contrasting as we were, Lewis and I had one thing in common: we both loved innocent conviviality. A tobacco-clouded room, the unhampered talk and laughter of men who trusted each other, and a jug of beer on the table-- that was all that Lewis needed to make him happy, and I was the same.³¹

Of Lewis's writing, I believe the best by far to be his last novel, Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold, but I suspect that the members of the Tolkien Society are more familiar with his Ransom trilogy--Out of the Silent Planet, Perelandra, and That Hideous Strength, the latter with its reference (in 1945) to Tolkien's Numeror.³² And still another group of readers--children--are familiar with a sequence of seven books which create and destroy the imaginary kingdom of Narnia: an accomplishment more complete, if less satisfying, and more openly moral than Tolkien's creation of Middle Earth.

And with that reference to Middle Earth we come to J. R. R. Tolkien, who is presently (we hope) sitting in his garage study near the Oxford soccer field, writing on one of his three Middle-earth narratives yet to come.³³ During the days of the Inklings, he was, of course, lecturing on Anglo-Saxon and Middle English at Oxford--W. H. Auden has told how Tolkien's reading of Beowulf suddenly changed philology into poetry. But Tolkien's relationship with the Inklings is less documented--he does not seem to have been directly influenced by them, for C. S. Lewis has written in a letter:

No one ever influenced Tolkien--you might as well try to influence a bandersnatch. We listened to his work, but could affect it only by encouragement. He has only two reactions to criticism; either he begins the whole work over again from the beginning or else takes no notice at all.³⁴

But perhaps even more revealing, in several ways, is a lengthy passage from Wain's autobiography: he is temperamentally separated from the Inklings although he was a member of the group just after the war. Because of his emotional distancing, he sees clearly, even though from the opposite side:

. . . I shall give a quite false picture of Lewis and his friends if I represent them as merely reactionary, putting all their energies into being against things. Far from it; this was a circle of instigators, almost of incendiaries, meeting to urge one another on in the task of redirecting the whole current of contemporary art and life. Now that Williams was dead, the two most active members were Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien. While Lewis attacked on a wide front,

with broadcasts, popular-theological books, children's stories, romances, and controversial literary criticism, Tolkien concentrated on the writings of his colossal 'Lord of the Rings' trilogy. His readings of each successive instalment were eagerly received, for 'romance' was a pillar of this whole structure. The literary household gods were George MacDonald, William Morris (selectively), and an almost forgotten writer named E. R. Eddison, whose work seemed to me to consist of a meaningless proliferation of fantastic incident. All these writers had one thing in common: they invented. Lewis considered 'fine fabling' an essential part of literature, and never lost a chance to push any author, from Spenser to Rider Haggard, who could be called a romancer. Once, unable to keep silence at what seemed to me a monstrous partiality, I attacked the whole basis of this view; a writer's task, I maintained, was to lay bare the human heart, and this could not be done if he were continually taking refuge in the spinning of fanciful webs. Lewis retorted with a theory that, since the Creator had seen fit to build a universe and set it in motion, it was the duty of the human artist to create as lavishly as possible in his turn. The romancer, who invents a whole world, is worshipping God more effectively than the mere realist who analyses that which lies about him. Looking back across fourteen years, I can hardly believe that Lewis said anything so manifestly absurd as this, and perhaps I misunderstood him; but that, at any rate, is how my memory reports the incident.⁵⁵

Lewis, of course, was paraphrasing to Wain what Tolkien had written in his essay "On Fairy-Stories" about Sub-creation: that the story-teller creates a self-consistent Secondary World, which has only an analogical relationship with the Primary (or real) World, as (for example) in the happy ending of the Fairy Story which parallels the Christian message in that both worlds have an "eucatastrophe", a good turning. The basic idea which Lewis and Tolkien develop here is at least suggested by Sir Philip Sidney in his Defence of Poesy, when he derives the word poet from the Greek for to make, suggesting that the poet has thus some affinity to the Maker of the Universe, and then adds:

Only the poet /among those learned in the various arts and sciences/, lifted up with the vigour of his own invention, doth grow, in effect, into another nature, in making things either better than nature bringeth forth, or, quite anew, forms such as never were in nature, as the heroes, demi-gods, cyclops, chimeras, furies and such like; so as he goeth hand in hand with Nature, not enclosed within the narrow warrant of her gifts, but freely ranging only within the zodiac of his own wit. Nature never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry as divers poets have done; neither with pleasant rivers, fruitful trees, sweet-smelling flowers, nor whatsoever else may make the too-much-loved earth more lovely; her world is brazen, the poets only deliver a golden.

When he wrote these words, Sidney was probably thinking of his own Arcadia, but when we read them, we think of Middle Earth.

But Wain, of course, was by temperament a novelist, not a romancer, and it is not surprising that he ultimately left Oxford and teaching, to

write fiction which caused him, to his own chagrin, to be classified by reviewers as one of Britain's "angry young men" of some ten or fifteen years ago. And this mention of Wain brings us to the post-war Inklings. Of the three names I have down, the first is that of Christopher Tolkien, the son of J. R. R. Tolkien. He once wrote to William Ready:

I was in the R.A.F. during the war, a pilot, and spent 18 months in South Africa learning to fly (1944-45). . . . My father used to send me parts of The Lord of the Rings to read while I was in South Africa (simply because I read it as it was written, and so he sent it to me while I was away). I don't think a very great deal can have been sent this way, but it's over 20 years ago, and I don't remember very clearly.⁵⁶

To this I can add three things: first, the maps which accompanied The Lord of the Rings are initialed C. J. R. T., and are by Christopher Tolkien: second, he has collaborated with Nevill Coghill in editing Chaucer's Pardoner's Tale (1958) and Nun's Priest's Tale (1959); and third, he read much of "the new Hobbit" to the Inklings after the war when his father missed meetings. About John Wain you have probably heard enough through my excerpts of his autobiography, but let me add a passage from W. H. Lewis which includes both Wain and the last of the Inklings, Roy Campbell:

To indicate the content of those evenings, let me look forward to 1946, a vintage year. At most of the meetings during that year we had a chapter from Tolkien's 'new Hobbit', as we called it--the great work later published as The Lord of the Rings. My diary records in October of that year 'a long argument on the ethics of cannibalism'; in November, that 'Roy Campbell read us his translation of a couple of Spanish poems', and 'John Wain won an outstanding bet by reading a chapter of Irene Idlesleigh without a smile'; and of the next meeting, that 'David (Cecil) read a chapter of his forthcoming book on Gray'. In February 1949 we talked of red-brick universities; from where the talk drifted by channels which I have forgotten, to 'torture, Tertullian, bores, the contractual theory of mediaeval kingship, and odd place-names'.⁵⁷

I have selected more that I needed just for Wain and Campbell, but since we are nearly through with the members I thought a final description of their meetings justified. Roy Campbell was an unlikely member of the Inklings, although his Roman Catholicism and translations of the poems of St. John of the Cross indicate some ties. He was born in South Africa (like Tolkien), fought in the Spanish Civil War on Franco's side--on the side of Christianity, he thought, against Communism--and later fought in the Second World War on the Allied side against Fascism. His books of poetry, including such interesting titles as The Flaming Terrapin and Flowering Rifle, tend to be either satiric in the tradition of Dryden or romantic in the tradition of the French Symbolists. And, by the way, in C. S. Lewis's Poems you will find two poems to Campbell--one written before Lewis met Campbell, one after, but both disagreeing with him and correcting him.⁵⁸ I suspect that Campbell's brief year or so at Oxford did nothing to tame that bullfighter, but that during his stay he added much color to the Inklings meetings.

So much then for the catalogue of membership. Perhaps I should add a last act, to pick up my earlier metaphor, about the death of the Inklings. The Tuesday noon meetings continued into the

Word Figures

by Steve Wolvin

GREY
HAVENS

SHELOB

SARUM

GANDALF

MOUNT
DUM

DARKLORD

OF

MOR
DOR

1960's (and perhaps still continue as a social get-together), but the Thursday evening discussions died out earlier. John Wain writes:

Though I did not realize it at the time, I can now see that the group had begun to spiral downwards from the time Williams died; one after another, people fell away (one of the founding members introduced a notorious bore into the circle and then stayed away on the grounds that the meetings were boring), and finally C. S. Lewis accepted a post at Cambridge, the famous rooms on staircase 3 passed into other hands, and all was over.³⁹

He adds:

. . . the story is over now and belongs to history. Lewis and his friends did not conquer the world. . . . But they left considerable marks of struggle behind them. Tolkien's 'ring' series /which was dedicated to the Inklings, among others/ has become a best-seller. . . ; Lewis's works, too, have their devotees, and so do those of Williams; even Williams's poetry is not quite forgotten. The group has broken up, but the work is still there, and will go on exerting an influence sporadically and in unexpected ways for some time yet.⁴⁰

Perhaps it is fitting to close with T. S. Eliot's reminder that in battles such as these one fights not in hope of winning but in hope of keeping the battle from being completely lost.

Addendum (1972):

The above paper was written for the First Tolkien Conference, at Belknap College, Center Harbor, New Hampshire, on October 18-20, 1968. Since it was intended for reading (although I was not ultimately able to attend), the style is deliberately colloquial. And in the four years since then, enough things have happened that I feel called upon to add a few factual notes.

The most important addition to the information about the founding of the Inklings is contained in a letter by J. R. R. Tolkien, printed as Appendix 5 to William Luther White's The Image of Man in C. S. Lewis (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969), pp. 221-222. Tolkien recalls that the name was first used for a literary club started by an undergraduate at University College, Oxford, named Tange-Lean; after that club died (in the mid-1930's), Lewis (who, like Tolkien, was one of the members) transferred the name to the meetings of friends in Lewis's rooms. The other treatment of the Inklings is (like mine) based on secondary sources: "The Social History of the Inklings, J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams, 1939-1945", by Glen GoodKnight, published in Mythlore, 2:1/5 (Winter, 1970), combined with the Tolkien Journal, 12, pp. 7-9. The emphasis here is on Charles Williams' centrality to the group; Bonnie Bergstrom contributes two drawings of "The Eagle and Child", the pub in which the Inklings met on Tuesdays. GoodKnight (on p. 7) says that Dorothy L. Sayers was a rare attendee of the meetings, but I have found no evidence of this; she was, however, a friend of both Williams and Lewis.

Several books have appeared on Tolkien's works but nothing of importance (which I have seen) on his life; although I understand he has moved from the garage study in which I described him in the essay to a new home at an undisclosed address. The most important addition to the material in Footnote 33 is Richard C. West's Tolkien Criticism: An Annotated Checklist (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1970) and its Supplement in Orcrest, 5 (1970-71), combined with the Tolkien Journal, 4:3/14, pp. 14-31; the other

new material may be traced through this work.

A large amount of biographical material on C. S. Lewis has appeared, mainly in the introductions by Walter Hooper to various collections of his works. But the important addition to Footnote 30 is yet to come: a biography of Lewis by Roger Lancelyn Green and Walter Hooper has been announced as forthcoming in the immediate future. (Joan K. Ostling and I have a bibliography of writings about Lewis and his works in process, hoping to do for Lewis what West has done for Tolkien, which is tentatively scheduled by Kent State University Press for publication in the fall of 1973; with luck, with luck.)

Two final notes may be added on other Inklings. In Footnote 17, I mention a doctoral dissertation; this has recently appeared in book form: R. J. Reilly's Romantic Religion: A Study of Barfield, Lewis, Williams, and Tolkien (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1971). This volume still contains the most important study of Owen Barfield's words, and it has been brought up to date in this new publication. Second, about "Colin Hardy" (so Moorman spells his last name), about whom I confessed I could find no information. In Patterns of Love and Courtesy: Essays in Memory of C. S. Lewis, edited by John Lawlor (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966), Colin Hardie contributes "Dante and the Tradition of Courtly Love", pp. 26-44; two references to other publications of his on Dante appear in the footnotes.

The acute reader will notice that, from the dates, I should have made the association between Colin Hardie's 1966 essay and Colin Hardy's membership in the Inklings before I wrote my 1968 essay; quite true! And I can only leave to other equally acute readers to point out for future writers what other points I have missed. The more I write, the more I come to realize that my hopes to be definitive are futile.

FOOTNOTES

1. Letters of C. S. Lewis, edited by W. H. Lewis (London: Geoffrey Bles, Ltd., 1966), pp. 170-171.
2. Ibid., p. 176.
3. Ibid., p. 178.
4. Ibid., p. 197.
5. C. S. Lewis, "Preface" to Essays Presented to Charles Williams (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1966--first published by Oxford University Press in 1947), pp. viii-ix.
6. John Wain, Sprightly Running: Part of an Autobiography (London: Macmillan and Company Ltd., 1962), pp. 184-185. I wish to thank Dr. William B. Martin of Tarleton State College, Stephenville, Texas, for first calling my attention to this book.
7. The basic biographic and bibliographic information about Williams can be found in A. M. Hadfield's An Introduction to Charles Williams (London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1959), although the author makes herself sound cloyingly possessive about her subject; in the "Introduction" to Anne Ridler's collection of Williams' essays, The Image of the City (London: Oxford University Press, 1958); and in John Heath-Stubbs' Charles Williams (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1955), in the "Writers and Their Work" series, No. 63. Also see Mary McDermott Shideler's The Theology of Romantic Love: A Study in the Writings of Charles Williams (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962). Standard source: Who Was Who, 1941-1950.
8. Nevill Coghill, "The Approach to English," in Light on C. S. Lewis, edited by Jocelyn Gibb (London: Geoffrey Bles, Ltd., 1965), p. 63.
9. Wain, p. 149.

10. Lewis, "Preface", p. ix.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. x-xi.
12. See Charles Moorman, The Precincts of Felicity: The Augustinian City of the Oxford Christians (Gainesville: The University of Florida Press, 1966), p. 29. Moorman's second chapter, "Towers and Spires" (pp. 17-20), is a description of the Inklings as a literary group, filled with important, otherwise unavailable information.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
14. Standard source: Who's Who, 1967-1968.
15. Lewis, Letters, pp. 169-170.
16. Standard sources: Who's Who, 1967-1968; Contemporary Authors 13/14.
17. I have normally avoided doctoral dissertations in my footnotes to this paper, assuming professional scholars would know about them and no one else would be interested, but the only study of Barfield (of which I know) is in Robert J. Reilly's Michigan-State-University dissertation, Romantic Religion in the Work of Owen Barfield, C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams and J. R. R. Tolkien (1960); it is, of course, available (for a price) from University Microfilms. Standard source: Contemporary Authors 7/8.
18. C. S. Lewis, Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life (London: Geoffrey Bles, Ltd., 1955), p. 189. One also notices the dedication of Barfield's Poetic Diction to Lewis with the motto, "Opposition is true friendship." (Lewis's Allegory of Love is dedicated to Barfield.)
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 194-195.
20. One gathers from this passage and its context in the novel that Ransom, Lewis's philologist-hero, is himself a member of the Inklings!
21. All information about rate of attendance is from Moorman's Precincts of Felicity, pp. 17-18.
22. Standard source: Who's Who, 1967-1968. I assume that the life of Gray appeared in Two Quiet Lives (1948). My apologies if my guess about the significance of Hardy, the Novelist is awry.
23. Standard sources: Who's Who, 1967-1968; Contemporary Authors 13/14.
24. Lewis, Surprised by Joy, p. 201.
25. Wain, p. 145.
26. Lewis, "Preface," pp. v-vi.
27. Standard sources: Who's Who, 1967-1968; Contemporary Authors 11/12. Charles Williams' Arthurian poems also show an interest in Byzantium.
28. Lewis, Letters, p. 145. Checking Books in Print, U.S.A., I find that somebody named Henry V. D. Dyson has written Emergence of Shakespeare's Tragedy and edited Alexander Pope's works. Whether he is the same man as Lewis's Hugo V. D. Dyson I do not know. By the way, the reader of Inklings materials will also find reference to "H. V. V. Dyson", which I assume is a misprint in Lewis's autobiography (p. 204) and which Clyde S. Kilby repeats in The Christian World of C. S. Lewis (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), p. 18. Lewis uses the other initial in his "Preface" to Essays Presented to Charles Williams, p. vi.
29. Moorman, p. 22.
30. The basic lives are his autobiography, Surprised by Joy (cited above), and his brother's "Memoir of C. S. Lewis," which introduces the Letters of C. S. Lewis; also see C. S. Lewis's Pilgrim's Regress (London: Geoffrey Bles, Ltd., 1943; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1958--these both are the third edition, with its clarifications), which allegorizes his life. The best supplement to these for biographical and bibliographical matters is Light on C. S. Lewis, edited by Jocelyn Gibb (cited above). Standard source:
- Current Biography, 1944, obit 1964.
31. Wain, p. 184.
32. See the "Preface". Lewis dedicated The Screwtape Letters (1942) to Tolkien.
33. There is little personal information about Tolkien available--perhaps the most informative is Philip Norman's "The Prevalence of Hobbits," The New York Times Magazine, January 15, 1967, pp. 30-31, 97, 100, 102. The recent, unauthorized book, William Ready's The Tolkien Relation (Chicago: Henry Regency Co., 1968), adds a few details. Standard sources: Who's Who, 1967-1968; Contemporary Authors 17/18; Current Biography 1967. (By the way, Robert Reilly has suggested that Dr. Dimble in Lewis's That Hideous Strength may be based on Tolkien /see Romantic Religion in the work of Owen Barfield, C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams and J. R. R. Tolkien (Michigan State University doctoral dissertation, 1960), p. 234 n7.)
34. Lewis, Letters, p. 287.
35. Wain, pp. 181-182.
36. William Ready, The Tolkien Relation: A Personal Inquiry (Chicago: Henry Regency Company, 1968), pp. 58-59.
37. W. H. Lewis, "Memoir of C. S. Lewis," in Letters of C. S. Lewis, p. 14. For John Wain, besides his autobiography (cited above), see the standard source: Who's Who, 1967-1968.
38. C. S. Lewis, Poems, ed. by Walter Hooper (London: Geoffrey Bles, Ltd., 1964), pp. 65 ("To the Author of Flowering Rifle") and 66 ("To Roy Campbell"). Campbell wrote two autobiographies, but I have not read them; my general information comes from David Wright's Roy Campbell (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1961) in the "Writers and Their Work" Series, No. 137. Standard source: Who Was Who 1951-1960.
39. Wain, p. 185. See also Moorman, p. 28.
40. Wain, p. 183.

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THE HOBBIT HABIT in the Critics' Eye

by Dainis Bisenieks

FOREWORD

This essay, on its previous appearance in TJ was printed with so many errors as to seriously mar its argument. Whole lines were omitted, some subsequent additions to the essay were not incorporated in it, and there were typographical errors of which "readers experience" for "renders experience" will have been the most baffling. (We would like to hear from any reader who was able to make the correction for himself.)

We print a corrected and revised version here and offer our apologies to the author, who had not been given the chance to read and correct proofs of his essay. Readers and bibliographers will please consign the earlier version to oblivion.

Middle-earth is not our private preserve any more. Posters, lapel buttons, and travel books of a sort now advertise it to *hoi polloi*--as some may think, feeling as much dismay as they would at an invasion of orcs. Tolkien's work has been read by SF fans over since *LotR* appeared (and there are even some veteran *Hobbit* fans) but now it has captured at one stroke the readership of Kahlil Gibran, J. D. Salinger, and *Mad* magazine, to say nothing of the Harvard and National *Lampoons*. Critics and commentators, from the anonymous pundits of *Time* upward, have put in a word, not always very polite, about work and readers both. No wonder some of us dislike this publicity, even though it brings money to Tolkien and the British tax authorities. (Having made as much money, I surmise, as one Beagle, he has now been awarded the appropriate honors.) We like to think that our interest in *The Lord of the Rings* is both individual and judicious: the critics will not acknowledge this, preferring to think of us as conforming to a type... different for each critic, of course.

But I don't think that a private delight has been spoiled for me, and I have found the criticism--even the worst of it--instructive and even entertaining. If some of it has been unfair comment, it offers the chance to temper our reactions and learn something about the nature of such. S-F and fantasy have for some time been my Number One problem in criticism. What is literature for, and how can it be relevant to life even when it is fantastic? Thanks to the controversy over *The Lord of the Rings*, I have entered my profession with at least the beginnings of an answer to this question.

A point that I will not yield is that this is an important, complex, and enigmatic work. As much so as, let us say, *Moby Dick*. But there's a difference. The readers of Melville's work do not make themselves noticed, though they may be no less numerous. If ever they did, we might see more of the kind of criticism that Tolkien's work receives today: it is praised (or damned) not only for itself but for its supposed effect on its readers. But readers are of many kinds, and such generalizations simply will not stand. The Bible, e.g., should not be judged by the Spanish Inquisition. But since those who deplore the hobbit habit have been most categorical with their remarks, I wish to make some remarks about them.

A theory of literature is at the same time a theory of the ways in which literature is read. If critics ignore this, no wonder they are so often at loggerheads. They fail to treat a book as one element in a relationship, or rather as an element in many and varied relationships. To deal with only one element is clearly insufficient. We all form our theories of art on the basis of our likes and dislikes, and we should be careful not to elevate them into universal principles. Within a certain range they may serve us well. But if a work of art falls outside that range, we should be prepared to admit that there are readers different from us. I know, then, that I can only write for a certain kind of

reader. I don't think I can, by any argument, change the views of those who were so deeply dissatisfied with *The Lord of the Rings*, but I would like to look at their doctrines and ask whether they fit my experience as a reader and my knowledge of other readers and of stories.

Edmund Wilson has seen fit to reprint his notorious blast at *The Lord of the Rings*.¹ There are some, even today, who think it has a place in the corpus of Tolkien criticism as a statement that should be answered by reference to Tolkien's book. This I deny. As its title reveals, it is an expression not of reason but of feeling. Its operative words are "children's book", "juvenile", and possibly "drama of life." These are what is left after we have passed by the innuendoes and expressions of personal dislike. How Mr. Wilson defines himself as a reader must be read between the lines of his critical work - a task I do not need to undertake here. I assume, however, that he would differ with many points of "On Fairy-stories" or C. S. Lewis's "On Three Ways of Writing for Children."² This is the ground on which the argument belongs. He considers the children's book (he classes *LotR* as one) to be an inferior category; Tolkien and Lewis do not. The point can not be rationally argued; we can only agree to differ.

It is difficult to keep one's cool about Joseph Mathewson.³ The editorial policy of the magazine he writes for seems to prescribe making statements by implication and innuendo. He flatters his readers by suggesting, with a word or a phrase, a shared sophistication: You and I know what's important. So, after misquoting the title of Tolkien's *Beowulf* essay, he says that it is "said to be well thought of by people who think about such things." Comment is superfluous. And though he seems to have read "On Fairy-stories"--for he quotes from it--he uses the words "fairy tale" ("nothing more than...") and "escape" (+ "ism") as if he had never given a moment's thought to the meanings Tolkien gives to these words--if only to refute them. We have met his like before: indignation would be wasted on him. I only wonder how much we can be harmed by those who are willing to be flattered by him. Having read his article, they know what to think of people who enjoy Tolkien's work.

Of Paul West we can see that he is baffled--and he loses his cool and resorts to irrelevancies, nonsense, and name-calling.⁴ Matthew Hodgart, while acknowledging Tolkien's skill in using the material of epic and saga, charges that "he brings everything down to the black-and-white of the fairy tales."⁵ We need not accept the word "down." "John Malcolm" [Peter Dickinson] says:

But still it is a children's book: the one thing it does not rely on for its effects is an adult experience of the world, the reader's recognition that the writer is portraying an emotional truth about humanity.⁶

All these critics evidently believe that a story should be as much like life (with all its complexities and ambiguities) as possible, and that where it is not, it deceives. But can they be right in this? What would such a doctrine not condemn? If Mr. Mathewson finds the outcome no more in doubt than "in a classic Western", the appeal to form should strengthen my argument rather than his. For I believe that form is necessary to a story, is perfectly natural, and does not deceive. Compare "On Fairy-stories", Note H:

The verbal ending... 'and they lived happily ever after' is an artificial device. It does not deceive anybody. End-phrases of this kind are to be compared to the margins and frames of pictures, and are no more to be thought of as the real end of any particular fragment of the seamless Web of Story than the frame is of the visionary scene, or the casement of the Outer World.

A comedy ends, according to the old adage, in a wedding, and a tragedy in a funeral. A eucatastrophic tale ends in

joy: the Field of Cormallen: "And all my wishes have come true!" It is not unaware of the sorrow that may come, but "The New Shadow" lies outside the frame of the story.

When we begin to read a book, we generally know what kind of a story it is--and therefore, what its conventions are. An exception might be the modern novel. A certain critic (who has not, to my knowledge, dealt with Tolkien) has offered the viewpoint that the novel "renders experience."⁷ It is, so to speak, about Everyman. But is this rendering of experience or portrayal of emotional truths sufficient purpose for the writer? I think he deceives himself if he believes so. There must be some meaning, some purpose, and to show human behavior without showing its consequences is to leave the job unfinished. So, for example, the people in D. H. Lawrence's novels habitually indulge in "games" as defined for us by Dr. Eric Berne. They seem to say, "I won't promise you anything because I don't know how I might feel about you tomorrow." Any writer who does not show this to be wrong is as much in error as the writer of adventure stories who sustains his plot by the blunders of his hero, without seeing that they are blunders. (The "idiot plot".)

It has also been said, to the same effect, that the modern novel has no convention. But this notion about "experience" begs the question. Whose experience? Experience cannot be generalized. What any story-teller offers us is an interaction of character and fortune. What interests us is what the hero does with his fortune. I mean by this term everything in the story which we must treat as axiomatic, i.e., not to be analyzed or questioned: everything that is given at the beginning of the story in order to have a beginning. Every story begins, in effect, "There was a man who..." What follows may be as fantastic or improbable as we like (or as we can stand). As long as all the cards are on the table. Lear's daughters Goneril and Regan are wicked: we need not ask why; that is his fortune. What matters is the fate of Lear, that terrible-tempered old man, with such friends and enemies as he has. Now no story written today and pretending to be about the real world would follow its fairy-tale pattern. We cannot believe in a perfect hero whose motives are "pure", nor in a perfect villain who cannot understand good faith and has to be eliminated by force. History has taught us - is still teaching us - that we must understand the "enemy's" point of view. But if a 20th century writer cannot give human form or origins to perfect villains or heroes, he can enter the realms of fantasy.

I must qualify that statement about heroes. With a few exceptions such as Prince Zorn in The Thirteen Clocks, we have heroes who learn to choose the good; e.g., Ged in A Wizard of Earthsea: which is why the story is told. Such is its form. So, Tolkien has given his hobbits real enemies (who, by definition, do not understand good faith) and real allies (who, by definition, have no credibility gap). To do so is not to pretend that such exist on earth: see, in the preface to the revised edition of LotR, Tolkien's remarks on what his story would have been if it had paralleled the course of events of World War II. It would have been, in brief, a story without form, without an actual or foreseeable ending. In the story as written, a real, demonic enemy--Sauron--is completely defeated, although--"Other evils there are that may come...Yet it is not our part to master all the tides of the world..." (III, 190, Ballantine, 1965). It reminds to wrap up the loose ends of the story, and the author may properly write "The End."

When Mr. West speaks of "a virtue that triumphs untested or an evil that dies uninvestigated" (and other critics have made the same charge) I think he is mistaken on the first point, and the second is largely irrelevant. The hobbits, with whom we are mainly concerned, certainly are tested. I do not think Aragorn presents a problem here: his basic education is over, and we can put him among the "allies" (defined above). Can we dispute that, with all their aid, it was yet a close thing? That is what makes it an exciting story. The evil of Sauron or of the orcs does not need to be investigated, and that of Saruman and Gollum has been. The orcs, certainly, can be considered soulless: we note that our heroes kill them without compunction. It has been hinted, and the Silmarillion ought to show us, that Sauron was not always evil. But it's been a long time; in our story he is sufficiently corrupt to need no examination. There remain only the human allies of Sauron and Saruman,

spear-carriers all; difficult to focus on their decisions without a dilution of effect. To do justice to their point of view would need a story very much like The Worm Ouroboros, a tale of quite another kind.

A point that may be disputed is whether all of Tolkien's cards are on the table. Has he dealt out his heroes' fortunes quite openly? Their great good fortune is, of course, to have such allies as Gandalf and Aragorn. But why are Frodo and his friends chosen? We are told that the Hobbits of the Shire "were...sheltered, but they had ceased to remember it...Nonetheless, ease and peace had left this people still curiously tough. They were, if it came to it, difficult to daunt or to kill; and they were, perhaps, so unwearingly fond of good things not least because they could, when put to it, do without them..." (I, 25). We know Gandalf's good opinion of our heroes: they are the most adventuresome and curious hobbits of the Shire. Subtle advantages, these: the fate of Fredegar Bolger comes closer to the average of "experience." So it is possible that Tolkien has somewhat stacked the cards in favor of his heroes, making their world more idyllic than it has a right to be. Perhaps the book does indeed owe some of its appeal to this.

John Boardman's criticism on this score is the most judicious that I have heard.⁸ He has pointed out medievalist and reactionary elements in The Lord of the Rings: the Shire, quite impossibly, has no sanitation or public health problems (only a plague in the distant past is mentioned), and there are no sympathetic portraits of people who like machinery. He has said it so well that I cannot doubt that these features of the book affect readers. And do I, for all my fascination with gadgets, share that anti-machine bias?

I think there can be no common meeting ground for those who call in question the entire conception or structure of this work and those who do not. The future of Tolkien criticism (as distinct from hobbyism) lies in the exploration of such questions as those I have touched on above. I might note that Tolkien's opinion of machinery can be learned from "On Fairy-stories", and it is by no means one-sided. Nor is the medievalist element, I think, the most important in his work, or the chief cause of its wide appeal. If it were, more people might be reading the prose romances of William Morris. I believe the current revival of his work is largely a commercial byproduct of the interest in fantasy sparked by Tolkien. It will be noted that the books without elements of fantasy, like The Sundering Flood, have not found a place in Ballantine's publishing program. And why is the work of Morris of so little interest? Mostly, I think, because his heroes are rather uninteresting, their decisions of little moment. (His style is difficult for today's readers, but that is beside the point.) What the Hobbits do with their fortune is, after all, what gives shape and direction to the story (no matter what other virtues it has). I think its portrayal of decisiveness and courage is not at all improbable. Not the idyll, but the deeds of elves, dwarves, men, and hobbits make it the exciting and moving story that it is.

NOTES

1. Edmund Wilson, "Oo, Those Awful Orcs" in The Bit Between My Teeth (New York: Farrar, Straus, 1965), pp 326-332.
2. C. S. Lewis, Of Other Worlds (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1967), pp. 22-34.
3. Joseph Mathewson, "The Hobbit Habit", Esquire, Sep. 1966, p. 130.
4. Paul West, "Nondiwasty Snep-vungthangil?", Book Week, Feb. 26, 1967, p. 1.
5. Matthew Hodgart, "Kicking the Hobbit," New York Review of Books, May 4, 1967, pp. 10-11.
6. Punch, Nov. 16, 1966, p. 755.
7. Alan Friedman, The Turn of the Novel (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966). See especially the preface.
8. "Forward to the Middle Ages With Tolkien," delivered at the Tolkien Society meeting in New York, Dec. 29, 1967.

Note on "The Peril of the World": we regret that we don't have the author's name for this article. After it had been typed up and planned for inclusion in the issue, we noticed that no name was on the original manuscript. We felt that it was worth including, nevertheless, and have printed it. If you know who the author is, please let us know, and we will make special note of it in the next issue. — Editor.

The PERIL of the WORLD



Tolkien's Rings are generally discussed as symbols of power, with the Great Ring functioning additionally as a sort of formal device enabling the critic to pinpoint moral turpitude, to distinguish relative heroes from relative villains. The symbolization of power precisely in the form of magic talismans (of whatever type) is ascribed to the fairy tale aspect of the work, with little additional significance.¹ In effect, the customary mode of operation is to relegate the Rings as rings to the periphery, of interest chiefly to those who care to investigate Germanic antecedents. Also meriting consideration, however, is the basis for the success of these Rings in representing power, or how the magic ring functions as a variety of archetype.

Any survey of the literature of witchcraft and (especially) that of the fairy story will indicate that magical or logically inexplicable powers are attributed somewhere to almost any type of object. With respect to the fairy tale, in Andrew Lang's popular anthologies, for example, which contain fairy and other kinds of tales having a number of cultural origins, credited with special powers are items as diverse as cloaks and combs, fire and fingers, tables and telescopes. The inventory is quite large, but when frequency of occurrence is considered, most of the items on the list actually appear in very few tales. The most outstanding exception is the magic ring, which figures prominently throughout the anthology. Magical jewelry other than rings is rare.

Magic rings also occupy a prominent position in the tradition of witchcraft. There are attestations of rings of varying composition, some plain and others set with stones, inscribed, or otherwise decorated. The powers ascribed to various types of rings in different sources are quite exhaustive. Therapeutic abilities and power over or protection from evil spirits appear most often,² but there are other types of abilities attested as well, such as those of the Malay rings which, when combined with shorn hair in a coconut shell, promote the growth of trees.³ One very instructive manuscript contains a formula for the construction of a ring to be made of either gold or silver, set with a red jacinth, and engraved with the image of a nude girl riding on a lion and surrounded by six worshipers. This ring also is not either therapeutic or a protective amulet. If made at Sunday noon, with the moon "in the tenth degree," it would confer power over others: "People shall bow down before the owner of such a ring, and no man shall be able to withstand him."⁴ The powers of this ring are reminiscent of those attached to the Ruling Ring, when operated by a keeper possessing sufficient power of his own.

The importance of magic rings is usually ascribed to the position of even ordinary rings as symbols of power, due to their circularity, the significance of which is related either to the shape of the sun or to the status of the circle as a perfect figure. The former view is expressed by E. A. Wallis Budge in his study of ring talismans: "They [early men] probably associated the ring with the solar disk and believed that it therefore possessed strength and power and continuity and wore it as an amulet--the ideas of divinity, strength, power, and protection were associated with the ring in very early times."⁵ And further: "As the

ring has been from a very early period the symbol of sovereignty and authority we have Royal-Rings, Coronation-Rings, Arch-episcopal and Episcopal-Rings, Investiture-Rings, Serjeants-Rings, etc."⁶ The theory of the circle as a perfect figure is adopted by Cavendish in *The Black Arts*: "The circle has been considered powerful in magic from time immemorial....Perhaps it is a perfect figure because every point on the circumference is equidistant from the centre."⁷

The circle is undoubtedly potent as a traditional symbol of extensive power and magic, whether manifested in the form of the barrier which protects the Western magician from the power of the demon he has conjured, C. G. Jung's Indian mandalas, or the circle of fire used in ancient Chinese rainmaking ceremonies.⁸ It is therefore not improbable that the ascription of power to the ring is in some way related to the aura surrounding the circle. But it is scarcely the only factor. The beauty and value of the metals or stones of which rings are often constructed probably do not play a significant role, considering the relative paucity of other types of magical jewelry (as opposed to unset magical precious and unprecious stones and to non-magical jewelry, with which fairy literature is well supplied), and the fact that beauty and power do not necessarily co-occur in magic talismans.⁹ Definitely important, on the other hand, is the sense of the marvelous involved, the "quality of strangeness and wonder."¹⁰ This is not merely a question of the attraction of the numinous. There is something inherently incredible about a ring as an instrument of power, so small and innocent-appearing an object as it is--totally unlike any magical or non-magical sword, for instance. This is a part of the charisma attached to all magic rings, including Tolkien's:

"Ah! The ring!" said Boromir, his eyes lighting.

Is it not a strange fate that we should suffer so much fear and doubt for so small a thing? So small a thing!"

(Ball. I, 514)

So very small a thing, "the least of rings, the trifle that Sauron fancies" (I, 318). The sense of the marvelous is also evident in the connotations present in one of the more common of the Ring's many appellations, the One Ring, or simply the One ("He only needs the One; for he made that Ring himself, it is his, and he let a great part of his own former power pass into it, so that he could rule all the others" (I, 82)).

But most significant for the connection between rings and power is the close association of rings with the hand. As a species, humans are hand-oriented; the hand is the instrument of human mastery over the world, and a primary symbol of power. Its evolution provided an unprecedented control of the environment.¹¹ The ring thus derives its attribute of power and its position as an archetype from the hand on which it is worn.¹² So deeply is the magic ring embedded as a motif, as it appears in witchcraft and in fairy literature, that the circle may well be as dependent on the ring for its magical reputation as the ring is on the circle.

It should be noted that the ring is not the only object to have acquired an ambiance of power from being associated with the hand; there are others, such as the traditional

staff of the wizard or necromancer. But nowhere is it as predominant, or the association so close and inevitable, as in the case of the ring.

The Rings of Power draw heavily on the mystique surrounding the magic ring for their effect; they permeate Middle Earth. But in any case few traditional talismans are as well developed as the Great Ring (its apparent Germanic antecedent, for one, is rather flabby by comparison). It is the credibility of the ring as Ruling Ring that makes it so successful as a thing of evil, the "peril of the world" (I, 318). Saruman deprived of power is merely a nuisance, though "he could do some mischief still in a small mean way" (III, 325). The Ring apparently confers absolute power over all the inhabitants of Middle Earth to any keeper strong enough to use it, but any good intended or accomplished with it, or any seeming good connected with it, is turned to evil. To a lesser custodian, it offers invisibility, which seems useful enough, and not inherently evil, but this is tainted by heightened visibility to the Eye and the Nazgul, the risk of fading permanently into the wraith world, and the threat of treachery, as in the Ring's acquisition of the title of Isildur's Bane. It provides sharpened hearing and understanding of tongues, to Sam at least, but it dims sight. It provides immortality, but immortality coupled with stagnation. It offers some protection in the form of its keeper being better able to detect imminent danger (Frodo is the first to sense the evil of the ringwraiths (I, 105) and to become aware of Gollum following (I, 406); he is able to sense Shelob's thought (II, 421). Of the Hobbits, only Frodo has prophetic dreams (I, 154, 177, 187). But as a counterbalance, the Ring attracts danger, drawing the Nazgul after it and attracting the attention of other evil such as Caradhras and the Watcher in the Water, which "seized on Frodo first among all the Company" (I, 405). There is more at work here than the will of Sauron, or the fact that the Ring is "fraught with all his malice" (I, 333). The Ring has a will and purpose of its own, a sentience which is a burlesque of true life, just as orcs and trolls have been twisted by Sauron into burlesques of elves and ents. It "looks after itself" (I, 87) and it is "trying to get back to its master" (I, 88).

In her interesting and imaginative essay, "Everything is Alive," Gracia Fay Ellwood discusses the magical power or "virtue" (which may be good or evil) of various things and places in Middle Earth as a manifestation of their possession of a low level of "aliveness" and ability to interact with various persons (p. 30).¹³ Places associated with the Elves, such as Rivendell or Hollin, have a good virtue, while the virtue of Mirkwood and Minas Morgul is evil. With respect to objects showing "a semi-human kind of responsiveness" (p. 31) there are, among others, the Elf-made rope which retrieves itself at Sam's wish, the horn of Rohan which Merry receives from Eowyn, and the door leading into Moria. Also included by Mrs. Ellwood in this category is the One Ring, which "possesses virtue exceeding that of any other 'inanimate' object in Middle Earth" (p. 33), having much initiative, although "there is a certain automatic quality about its evil" (p. 35). However, there are fundamental differences between the Ring and other "virtuous" objects. A very common characteristic or tendency of magical objects is that the powers possessed by a given talisman are an extension of the powers possessed by ordinary objects of the same type. Thus a plausible magic sword is one which helps its fortunate owner to perform more slaughter with greater efficiency. Under ordinary circumstances one would not expect a magic sword to provide lavish banquets. That is the function of the magic table, which in its turn would be unlikely to invade the rightful province of the magic mirror or reflecting pool. The Mirror of Galadriel does, as Mrs. Ellwood points out, have a limited amount of initiative at its disposal, but this initiative is confined to selecting the images to be presented, when it is left free to do so. The Mirror provides visions. It lacks other powers. Most magical objects are also limited to one or a few functions--the palantiri, for example, are restricted to providing visions and communicating thought. (Magic places are rather passive. They give protection, without actually providing any powers to anyone; the same is true of a number of talismans.) Some objects, such as rings, have little function in particular attached to them; the powers which can be plausibly attributed to them are therefore not

similarly restricted. The Ruling Ring is versatile, powerful, and active. Far from being automatic, it exhibits a good deal of creativity and ingenuity in the powers and temptations offered to various victims--power in accordance with stature. It is a fully competent entity. The virtuous objects in Middle Earth are simply not in its class.

The virtue possessed by magical objects is frequently something which has been tacked on by a spell or some other means to a preexisting object; hence the magic of the Elves is imposed on a place, and the swords obtained by the Hobbits from the barrow derive their magic from spells applied to them. But the Ring and its powers are inseparable. It has been created whole. By the same token a magical object (not usually a place, at least in Middle Earth) can often be detoxified. If a virtue of "finding and returning" (II, 385) has been set by spell upon the lebethron staffs given by Faramir to Frodo and Sam, perhaps it can be taken off again. The Ring, on the other hand, must be completely destroyed.

It is difficult to know how to assess the effect on the work had Tolkien ultimately chosen some object other than the ring to serve as primary talisman of power, but it is somewhat questionable whether so many people would be quite so excited over the Great Brooch. The Rings are essential to Middle Earth.

NOTES

1. Selecting a couple of favorites, aspects of the Rings as symbols of power are discussed by Alexis Levitin in "Power in The Lord of the Rings" (*Orcrest* 1:4/TJ IV:3), and by Donald L. Reinken in "J. R. R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings: A Christian Refounding of the Political Order" (*Christian Perspectives: An Ecumenical Quarterly* [Winter, 1966], reprinted in TJ II:3, 1966, pps. 16-23. An analysis which attempts to go further, though in another direction (and with results which are unfortunate in the extreme), appears in Hugh T. Keenan's "The Appeal of The Lord of the Rings: A Struggle for Life" in Isaacs and Zimbaro, *Tolkien and the Critics* (Notre Dame, 1968). Here, the Ring is approached as a "female symbol" (p. 69).
2. See E. A. W. Budge's survey of ring amulets in *Amulets and Talismans* (New York, 1961), pps. 291-306.
3. Walter Skeat, *Malay Magic* (London, 1900), pps. 353-355.
4. Rollo Ahmed, *The Black Art* (London, 1936), p. 161.
5. Budge, p. 291.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 300.
7. Richard Cavendish, *The Black Arts* (London, 1967), p. 236.
8. See Edward H. Schaefer, "Ritual Exposure in Ancient China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* XIV (1951), pps. 130-184.
9. So, for example, in a Chinese tale, "Why Cats and Dogs are Enemies" (Lim Sian-tek, *More Chinese Fairy Tales* [New York, 1948], pps. 23-27, the lucky ring which brings wealth, rather like Tolkien's dwarf rings, is described as old and rusty. Another noteworthy example which, however, is not a ring, is the nondescript magic coin, easily mistaken for ordinary, which appears in Edward McMaken Eager's wonderful *Half Magic*. Another attribute of this regrettably somewhat neglected book is an attractively drawn Merlin.
10. J. R. R. Tolkien in "On Fairy Stories," *Essays Presented to Charles Williams*, reprinted in *The Tolkien Reader* (New York, 1966), p. 47.
11. Bernard Campbell, *Human Evolution* (Chicago, 1966), p. 165. For an interesting discussion of the difference in orientation (hand versus teeth) between two presumed intelligent species, see John Cunningham Lilly's otherwise truly execrable *The Mind of the Dolphin: A Nonhuman Intelligence* (New York, 1967), p. 170.
12. In *A Dictionary of Symbols* (New York, 1962), J. E. Cirlot states that the necklace acquires some of its symbolism from the part of the body on which it is worn (p. 216). But the ring is only discussed in terms of circle symbolism (p. 261). It seems odd that, having granted the existence of this kind of sympathetic magic to jewelry in the form of the necklace, he should deny it to jewelry in the form of the ring.
13. Gracia Fay Ellwood, *Good News From Tolkien's Middle Earth* (Grand Rapids, 1970), pps. 13-83.

The Shire Post

"Ad Valar Defendendi"

-- David Ring

This letter is in reference to Burt Randolph's article in the Wedmath issue of 1968. I was quite disappointed by this article and find myself unable to remain silent about it. I have criticisms in four categories.

First of all, some one has mixed up the page references quite thoroughly. As an example I quote, "Morgoth assails (!) Valinor (I,317; I,328; I,347), poisons the two Trees, steals the silmarilli and flees (?) back across the Sea to Thangorodrim where he mounts the jewels in his iron crown." (Page 12, column 2 of TJ). I looked up these pages in the Ballantine paperback edition (tenth printing, March, 1967), and found nothing at all about Morgoth, Valinor, the two Trees, the silmarilli, Thangorodrim, or the iron crown on these pages.

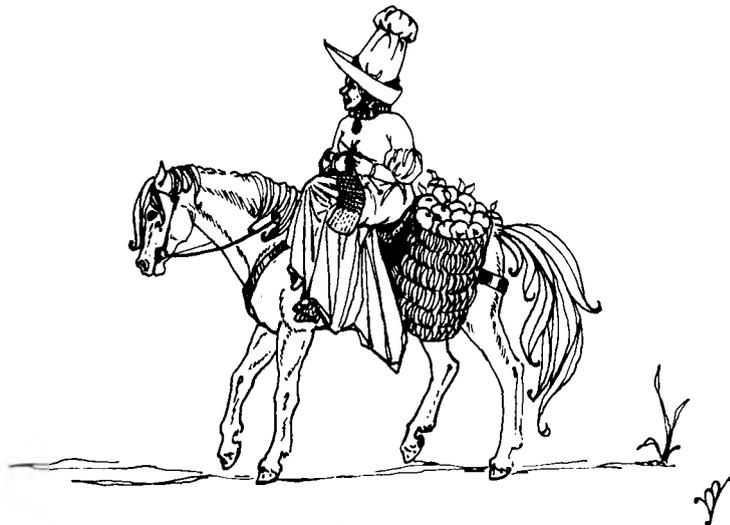
My second complaint regards certain statements and conclusions made by Randolph which do not seem to have adequate basis in what is available to me of Tolkien's works (everything except for the scholarly papers). For instance, he assumes that the Valar tore Elenya and sunk the Great Armament, whereas Tolkien states only that the Valar called upon the One (laying down their guardianship) and these things were accomplished (III, 392; Ballantine paperback edition). Again, I can find no evidence that Morgoth created Ungoliant and the dragons or sank Beleriand.

The third difficulty I find is the paragraph on the four speaking peoples of Middle-earth. (It would be better to call them the four free peoples, since there are obviously more than four speaking peoples--orcs and trolls would have to be included.) I do not see how Randolph can exclude the Ents, unless he is indeed attempting to pass them off as part of the vegetation of Middle-earth. From the conversation of Fangorn with Merry and Pippin (II, 84-85) it is obvious that there are five free speaking peoples. In the Elder Days, the Hobbits, being inconspicuous, were neglected and in later ages, the Ents suffered the same fate, giving rise to a common notion of only four free races.

My final objection is that while Randolph's paper admirably supports his conclusion, that the Valar failed in their guardianship, I feel that the evidence he presents is based on a serious misinterpretation of the purpose and nature of that guardianship. It is my opinion, at least, that he has failed to grasp the spirit of Tolkien's writing concerning the Valar. I wish to emphasize that the view I will present, as a single counter-example to Randolph's, is based largely on my own feelings and my own interpretations of Tolkien and C. S. Lewis. To understand the actions of the Valar I have had to make as best I could some assumptions about Professor Tolkien's thinking. If these are offensive to him or to any of his other readers, they have my sincere apologies.

That with which I basically disagree in Randolph's view is the idea that the duty of the Valar was at all times to preserve the peoples of Middle-earth from any sort of evil. I agree that this is commonly the task of a guardian, but it is the task of a guardian of property or cattle, not of children, and the peoples of Middle-earth are the children of Eru, siblings of the Valar.¹ I now wish to continue my argument on the basis of a triple correspondence between the terms of Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, and Christianity. Thus I say that the One (Eru), Maleldil, and God are the same Person; the Valar, the Oyeresu (and/or the Eldila, who may by the way give a clue to the nature of the "people of the Valar"), and probably the Christian angels are beings of the same or very similar sort; and the children of God (Eru'sen) are like to the Hnau and the race of Adam.

Having drawn these connections of character, I will go so far as to suppose certain similarities of role and especially, I will assume that the problem of free will, granted to the children of God and the Valar, plays as great a role in Middle-earth as the same gift plays in our world and the Field of Arbol. In other words, I believe that the actions of the peoples and Valar of Middle-earth can best be interpreted on the basis of an underlying layer of



Christian concepts that I find in Tolkien's writing, the supposition of which is supported by his friendships and non-fiction works.

What do we see when we view the history of Middle-earth along Christian lines? The Valar, servants of Eru, build Middle-earth. The free peoples, yet unfallen, awake in its dawn of time and one of them, the elves, come to Valinor where they freely live with the Valar. In Middle-earth, great kingdoms of elf and dwarf arise, and the first houses of men are founded. Then evil comes to Middle-earth through an evil Vala (or Bent Oyarsa or fallen angel) Morgoth. He builds a power of evil in Angband, steals the silmarilli and poisons the Two Trees.

Have the Valar failed as guardians? No! As in Earth, as in Thulcandra, Perelandra, and Malacandra, the first actions of evil must be allowed, for they are the temptations of the children of God, the necessary test of the exercise of their free will. And the Valar, like the Eldila, may not interfere, for that would be to take from the children the gift of free will that their Creator had given them.

The story of Morgoth is the story of the Fall--of the elves. By rebelling against the Valar and assailing Morgoth in vengeance, they succumbed to the sin of pride. All the later evil that came from Sauron and Morgoth was a result of their rebellion. And if they had not rebelled? Who can say what the One in his wisdom might have decreed?

Of the fall of man and the other non-Elvish races Tolkien does not speak so directly (unless the Fall of man takes place in Numenor). However, the story of Earendil tells us that at that time men were not fallen in Middle-earth, or at least they had not deserved to bear the evil of Morgoth. Thus, the Valar were able to give aid when requested by a mortal, though they could not or would not help the elves. Sauron they did not destroy, because (again this is only my own opinion) he was an evil within the ability of men and elves to subdue (at least if they had not wasted strength against Morgoth). Finally, the Fall of Numenor may have marked the Fall of man and certainly must have followed it. Man, also, rejected the Valar, and since it was no longer safe to leave immortality within his reach, and since he would no longer endure his guardians, the Valar removed themselves and Valinor from the circles of man's world.

In summary, the Valar never failed in their charge. They had to allow evil into Middle-earth. It was their own charges, the Free Peoples, that were responsible for the evil taking root. The Valar, then, could only preserve as much as possible from evil the races which had not yet fallen from grace, and when all of the races had at last refused their protection, their function was ended and they withdrew.

Randolph's final question--why Tolkien chose this kind of performance for his Guardians of the World--is easily answered. Tolkien's choice is made on the basis of realism. Whether there are guardians of our world or whether the One Himself watches over us, we have ever been an abundant source of similar "failures" to them or Him. A world without evil or one in which the workings of evil were effectually restrained might be a laudable and desirable

(continued on page 22)



Who Is Eldest?

by Kirk L. Thompson

Tolkien Journal readers may recall a letter of Joan Biella (TJ, vol. II, no. 2, p. 14f) raising this question, and (if my memory serves me correctly) it was also voiced at Secondary Universe II. We shall here attempt to arrive at some answer, as well as to determine the order of genesis of the peoples of Middle-earth, by first reviewing the evidence in favor of the three candidates for 'eldest': Tom Bombadil, Treebeard, and the Elves. All LotR references are to the Ballantine edition.

Tom Bombadil:

I. 'Eldest, that's what I am. Mark my words, my friends: Tom was here before the river and the trees; Tom remembers the first raindrop and the first acorn. He made paths before the Big People, and saw the little People arriving. He was here before the kings and the graves and the Barrow-wights. When the Elves passed westward, Tom was here already before the seas were bent. He knew the dark under the stars when it was fearless-- before the Dark Lord came from Outside.'

(I, 182)

II. 'But I had forgotten Bombadil, if indeed this is still the same that walked the woods and hills long ago, and even then was older than the old. That was not then his name. Iarwain Ben-adar we called him, oldest and fatherless. But many another name he has since been given by other folk: Forn by the Dwarves, Orald by Northern Men, and other names beside. He is a strange creature....'

(I, 347)

Treebeard:

I. 'Ah! now you are asking much,' said Gandalf. '...Treebeard is Fangorn, the guardian of the forest; he is the oldest of the Ents, the oldest living thing that still walks beneath the Sun upon this Middle-earth....'

(II, 131)

II. 'It is not wizardry, but a power far older,' said Gandalf: 'a power that walked the earth, ere elf sang or hammer rang.'

Ere iron was found or tree was hewn,
When young was mountain under moon;
Ere ring was made, or wrought was woe,
It walked the forests long ago.'

(II, 189)

III. Gandalf laughed. '...When you see Treebeard, you will learn much. For Treebeard is Fangorn, and the eldest and chief of the Ents, and when you speak with him you will hear the speech of the oldest of all living things.'

(II, 209)

IV. And Celeborn said: 'I do not know, Eldest.'

(III, 321)

The Elves:

I. 'Yes, you saw him for a moment as he is upon the other side: one of the mighty of the First-born....'

(I, 294)

II. 'Never again shall there be any league of Elves and Men; for Men multiply and the First-born decrease, and the two kindreds are estranged....'

(I, 320)

III. 'Elrond says that the two are akin, the last strongholds of the mighty woods of the Elder days, in which the First-born roamed while Men still slept....'

(II, 55)

IV. 'Learn now the lore of Living Creatures!

First name the four, the free peoples:
Eldest of all, the elf-children;
Dwarf the delver, dark are his houses;
Ent the earthborn, old as mountains;
Man the mortal, master of horses:'

(II, 84)

There can be no disputing Bombadil's assertion, supported by Elrond, that he is eldest; however, how do we contend with the other claimants? This is the reason for exploring the order of genesis of the peoples of Middle-earth. We may start by further defining what is meant by 'eldest' when referring to the two remaining contenders: the elves are the eldest of all the free peoples, paraphrasing the Ents' old list; and Treebeard, I propose, is eldest of the Ents, only.

There is little problem supporting the ancient list of the Ents with regards to the primacy of the elves, as note the references to the First-born above. My supposition about Treebeard, however, is something else. Assuming that the arrangement of the Ents' list is chronological, at least for the enumeration of 'the free peoples,' the Ents place themselves third of four. Celeborn's statement probably indicates that the Ent is the oldest of those present on this occasion, surely older than the men, hobbits, and Gandalf, and perhaps (there being no supporting evidence) older than Celeborn, Galadriel, and Elrond. Two of Gandalf's statements (II, 131 and 209) support my interpretation of Treebeard's elderliness, that is, oldest of those living, but the third (II, 189) is a distinct stumbling block.

'A power that walked the earth, ere elf sang and hammer rang...' implies that Ents were around before elves and dwarves and is in direct conflict with Treebeard's ancient list. There is, however, a tentative solution to the problem.

This solution involves a reconstruction of the genesis of the Ents, and some interpretations of Gandalf's statement. Treebeard told Merry and Pippin (II, 90): "'Elves began it, of course, waking trees up and teaching them to speak and learning their tree-talk,'" and he also talked of trees still waking up and of Ents falling asleep (II, 88ff). This may well indicate that the elves woke the Ents from slumber and would account, among other reasons, for Treebeard's respectful attitude toward them (II, 95). As for the Gandalf citation, there are three possible explanations: there may have been a temporary slip of memory, perhaps the result of his fight with the Balrog, as suggested by (II, 125); or he may have glossed over some facts in order to impress on Theoden the ancientness of the personage he was going to meet, a not unknown trait of Gandalf's; or he may be referring to the type of experience the hobbits had with the Old Forest (I, 156f) when the trees attacked the High Hay, that is, the trees moving about under their own power. None of the three is satisfactory in explaining the entire quotation.

Finally, the hobbits have not been left out since, during the Entmoot, they were included in the Ents' list (II, 244):

'Ents the earthborn, old as mountains,
the wide-walkers, water drinking;
and hungary as hunters, the Hobbit children,
the laughing-folk, the little people,

and considering the order when compared with the old list, this possibly means that hobbits were around longer than Men, although their origins have been lost (I, 20f).

We may, then, say that the genesis of the races in Middle-earth occurred in the following order: Tom Bombadil, who is unique as well as eldest; then, following the revised list of the Ents: Elves, Dwarves, Ents, Hobbits, and Men.

(My thanks to Ardythe Packer for some very helpful suggestions.)

Tolkien's Dwarves & the Eddas

by Patrick J. Callahan

J. R. R. Tolkien's presentation of his dwarves in his *The Lord of the Rings* is largely taken from the Old Norse *Eddas*. In an appendix to *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien offers a genealogy of thirty-one dwarf names, beginning with Durin the Deathless, legendary patriarch of the dwarves, and extending to Gimli Gloin, who figures prominently as a character in the trilogy.¹ Duplications excepted (Durin I, Durin II), the genealogy contains twenty different names. Of these, eight are taken unaltered from a genealogy of dwarves in the section of the *Elder Edda* entitled "Voluspa": Durin, Nain, Thrain, Thorin, Dain, Thror, Fili, and Kili.² Many of Tolkien's other dwarf names are invented to rhyme with dwarf names from the *Edda*. For example, Tolkien incorporates the *Edda's* Thror into his genealogy, then supplies him two brothers, Fror and Gror. Oddly enough, the name "Gandalf," given to Tolkien's Merlin-like wizard in *The Lord of the Rings*, appears in the *Edda's* genealogy of dwarves.

Perhaps the most interesting name in Tolkien's genealogy of dwarves, in light of the *Eddas*, is that of Gimli Gloin. Gimli is the only dwarf in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* to figure as a major character, and perhaps for this reason his name has more etymological significance than the names of the others. The name "Gloin" is probably an adaptation of "Gloi," a name of one of the *Edda* dwarves. "Gimli" is not the name of a dwarf in the *Eddas* at all, but is rather the most beautiful homestead of the gods.³ Why did Tolkien choose such a name for a dwarf?

It is likely that his choice depended upon the Old Norse meanings of the names. "Gimli" is derived from the Norse *gimsteinn*, which means "a gem." The name "Gloin" means "the glowing," from the Norse verb *gloa*, "to glow." Thus the name Gimli Gloin means "glowing gem," a name which is most appropriate for a dwarf since it suggests the love of precious stones characteristic of dwarves in Tolkien's "Middle Earth."

A similar play upon names from the *Eddas* appears in the name of "Grima," also called "Wormtongue," who appears as a false counselor to King Theoden in *The Lord of the Rings*.⁴ The name is probably a play upon "Grimar," an Old Norse name which means "night." Grima serves the forces of night as symbolized in the person of the "Dark Lord," by bringing weakness and despair to King Theoden.



It is surprising that so little scholarship has been done in exploring Tolkien's Old English and Old Norse sources, which echo in the work's poetry of four-stress alliterative lines and in such obviously Teutonic names as that of Theoden's stronghold, "Meduseld." Examination of Tolkien's genealogy of dwarves indicates that he not only borrowed directly from Germanic literature, but reflected in his adaptation of Germanic names his very considerable philological knowledge.

NOTES

¹*The Lord of the Rings* (New York, 1965), III, 450.

²Benjamin Thorpe and I. A. Blackwell, trans., *The Elder and Younger Eddas* (New York, 1907), pp. 2-3.

³*Elder and Younger Eddas*, p. 274.

⁴*Lord of the Rings*, II, 151-158.

TOLKIEN CONFERENCE III / MYTHCON I PROCEEDINGS

This Proceedings of the result of the conference of the same name held on the Labor Day weekend of 1970. Its 60 pages contain 17 papers, which include: "Tolkien, Lewis, and Williams" by C. S. Kilby / "The Structure and Aesthetic of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*" by Randel Helms / "On the nature and Histories of the Great Rings" by Virginia Dabney / "Farewell to Shadowlands: C. S. Lewis on Death" by Kathryn Lindskoog / "Three Good Mothers: Galadriel, Psyche and Sybil Coningsby" by Laura Ruskin / "Archetypes of the Mother in the Fantasies of George MacDonald" by Nancy-Lou Patterson / "The Lure of the Ring" by Alexis Levitin / "Surprising Joy: C. S. Lewis' Deep Space Trilogy" by Ethel Wallis / "A High and Lonely Destiny" by Gracia Fay Ellwood / "The Impact of Charles Williams' Death on C. S. Lewis" by Roland Kawano / "Beyond the Fields We Know: An Appreciation of Lord Dunsany" by Lois Newman / "The Two-Headed Beast: Notes toward a definition of Allegory" by Nan Braude / "The Language of J. R. R. Tolkien in *The Lord of the Rings*" by Judy Winn Bell / "Considering *The Great Divorce*" Parts I & II by J. R. Christopher / "The Hnau Creatures of C. S. Lewis" by Ellen Rothberg / "Sindarin and Quenya Phonology" by Robert Foster / "The White Tree" by Glen GoodKnight / and "Mythcon Report" by Alpajpuri and Bernie Zuber.

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THE STATUS OF TOLKIEN SCHOLARSHIP

by Richard West

There are now numerous fanzines devoted wholly or in part to articles on Tolkien's fiction, many essays on his work have appeared in various journals, and there have even been several books on the subject from university presses. Bob Foster has now given us a glossary, bibliographies are available, and some work on a variorum edition has been done. A conference or two is held almost every year. I don't know whether it is true, as some suggest, that "the Tolkien craze" has abated (at any rate, articles entitled "The Hobbit Habit" no longer appear very frequently in the popular press), but the hobbits seem still to have devoted friends, both within and without the groves of academe, whom we can expect to add to this already large body of writing.

The old charge that LORD OF THE RINGS is "escapist trash" can still be heard occasionally, but is no longer so common. The scattered attempts to answer it were never thorough enough to be satisfactory, and for years now it has simply been ignored by critics who not only take Middle-earth very seriously but take it for granted that they can. Sometimes, "escapism" is even used as praise. The people whom David M. Miller called neo-Goths are still with us, still reveling in the *sturm und drang* of a heroic age. They produce some pleasant enough gush, but no real criticism (i.e., no appreciation of the aesthetic experience provided by LOTR beyond pointing to the thrill, with no analysis of the art behind even that). I am describing their position, not quarreling with them: they have their reward. But other rewarding responses can be had in addition.

One possible response, much exploited in the fanzines, is to pretend that the subcreated world is the primary one, and examine its geography, geology, systems of coinage, and so on. This is not criticism, either, for it does nothing to enrich our appreciation of the text; nor is it scholarship, since it does not provide relevant background information. But it is a game that provides fun for many people. My own interest, however, is in actual criticism and its Siamese twin, scholarship.

Most of the attempts (*essais*) to criticize Tolkien's art take a rather limited number of approaches. Myth criticism seems to be far the most popular. It is used to examine sources and narrative patterns for LOTR, as well as to explain Tolkien's widespread vogue by reference to his offering a mythic wholeness and resonance that deeply satisfies our fragmented and symbol-starved society. It is a very fruitful approach, though it has tended so far to concentrate too exclusively on northern European sources (I confess with a sigh, being myself fascinated by "the Northernness") to the neglect of other areas (especially Greek and Eastern, though even the Celtic has been largely slighted). Many of the myth critics focus on Christian associations--another valid and valuable tack. But they do sometimes tend to forget that the Third Age was intended to be pre-Christian and that Christianity has much in common with other mythologies and religions. Then there are the genre critics (and nearly everyone has had a go at defining the genre of LOTR), who have also stuck to those genres making most use of the stuff of myth: epic, romance, saga, fairy tale, heroic fantasy. I think myself that the reason there has been no agreement in this regard is that LOTR is one of those masterworks that creates its own genre, utilizing many types.

Another common approach is to place LOTR in what I like to call the "twentieth-century medieval renaissance" and consider its adaptation of much medieval material for a modern audience. A good deal of my own critical efforts takes this line, so plainly I find it revealing. But again I must point out its limitations: Tolkien also drew inspiration from earlier periods than the Middle Ages; nothing is so typically medieval that it is exclusively medieval; we must not forget that medieval art held a great deal of variety, not only fantasy; and LOTR is, in the final analysis, a contemporary book.

The criticism of Tolkien's fiction has been largely favorable, even adulatory. Where it is seriously adverse, it has usually been due, in my opinion, to bewilderment at the teeming variety of Middle-earth. Some critics will

focus on one strand of the story (e.g., the struggle of Frodo and Sam to reach Orodruin), not just to discuss one important aspect at length, but because they take everything else for mere trimming. Mutterings about LOTR as an "Establishment" book are sometimes heard from the Left, but usually on so simplistic a level that I am tempted to write a "radical" interpretation myself just to show them how it could be done (Mordor as military-industrial complex, the scouring of the Shire as a people's war of liberation from foreign imperialist colonialist aggressors, etc.). Of late, accusations of racism, sexism, and glorification of war have been leveled with some show of cogency (though frankly I think them wrong-headed) and will no doubt prompt replies.

I can't claim to be very happy with the present state of Tolkien criticism. The approaches taken are good ones, by and large, but often shallow and often couched in turgid prose. Nor has LOTR escaped the penchant of our age for politicizing everything. Sturgeon's Law wins again. Yet work has been done that does enrich our reading, and Tolkien's fiction is so popular with large numbers of people of very different outlooks that there is likely to be a continuing audience for scholarly investigation of it. Where LOTR can kindle enthusiasm even in pedants like me, there is every hope that not all future scholarship will be stillborn.



LEVELS OF INTERPRETATION

by Bob Foster

Source-hunting in Lord of the Rings is an interesting and rewarding pastime. On any page one can discover new correspondences--between the Eldarin and Sanskrit seasons, the months of the King's Reckoning and the French Revolutionary Calendar, the rings of Sauron and the Nibelungs--and all of these contribute to an appreciation of the demi-urgic labors of Professor Tolkien's scholarship. Yet to pursue this too far is to lose sight of the work as a whole. The mood of Professor Tolkien's Middle-earth writings, and the ethos which underlies it, is not merely a product of these specific borrowings, yet does in its own way relate to the primary world.

To digress for a moment, the four senses of interpretation of medieval criticism (a system which states that literature, especially the Bible, can be explained on four levels--the literal, the secularly allegorical, the moral or personal and the anagogical or spiritually allegorical) is an overly mechanical system, but it is motivated by a sensitive and vital conception of the nature of literature and the world. To the medieval mind, no event or phenomenon was isolated or meaningless, since the universe was created and controlled by an Absolute moral force. The measure of the accuracy of man's perception was the degree to which he saw that the perceived phenomenon or concept followed the laws of the cosmos, and it follows from this that one mark of excellence in literature was the conformity of literature to these laws. This attitude should not be confused with "realism", since the laws of the medieval mind were more than the "laws of nature", nor should it be assumed that medieval men implicitly believed everything they said; their orientation involved an appreciation of the significance of correspondences more than a concern with the correspondences themselves. Medieval etymologies are so absurd because their inventors could not imagine an important place or person whose name did not reflect, even foreshadow, that importance; however, what is absurd linguistically can be seen more sympathetically, and more profitably, as a serious religious or historical statement. To take a more literary example, the confusion between the love lyric and the religious lyric which produced the bulk of the literature of Mariolatry was not merely a conflation or confusion of forms and images, but rather grew out of a realization that the yearning towards God can be effectively described in sexual terms, and conversely that sexual passion and love are similar to religious desire--on a lower level, but the same process nonetheless. That this equation is still artistically effective may be seen from George Harrison's "My Sweet Lord."

This typically medieval orientation reveals itself in a number of ways in Professor Tolkien's work. Events in Middle-earth are often cyclical, and always significant. To an extent, they are allegorical in the medieval sense; the Fellowship represents (both literally and symbolically) the Free Peoples, just as in medieval writing Jerusalem is both a city and the Church. Even Sam realizes that his use of the Phial of Galadriel places him in a position with respect to Elbereth and the fate of Middle-earth similar to (although lesser than) that of Earendil. The three ages of Middle-earth end with the same wars (between Feanor and Morgoth, Gil-galad and Sauron with the Ring and Elrond, Aragorn and Denethor and Sauron without the Ring), except that each time the Elves become less noble and evil less powerful. Against this reiteration of the moral order, we see the rise of the Edain, a history which is mirrored in Elda-Adan marriages. The inherent goodness of Hador, Barahir and Beren are refined into nobility by the births of Dior, Earendil and Elwing. The Elvish and Mannish traits are sundered to an extent by the decisions of the Peredhil, but the marriage of Aragorn and Arwen reunites them and preserves Eldarin moral and esthetic virtues into the Dominion of Men. It is useful to note that for Tolkien blood is an important and real factor for the individual; Legolas perceives of Imrahil "that here indeed was one who had elven-blood in his veins."

Certain features such as this, as well as many turns of plot in Lord of the Rings, are often called "unrealistic" or

"implausible", but to react to them in this way is to deny the existence of a higher Order which arranges coincidences (and meaningfully employs the laws of causality and nature) so as to provide significant alternatives. In a morally ordered cosmos, a highly motivated and morally worthy hero cannot at the time of the ultimate confrontation between good and evil be denied a part in the battle (although he may have to struggle to obtain it), and he should not be denied a fighting chance of winning. Leaving aside the Istari, whose entire function is to further these principles, it is obvious that Seventh Cavalry rescues such as the arrival of the Rohirrim, and later of Aragorn's fleet, at the Pelennor Fields happen all too seldom in the "real" world. But they cannot be scoffed at in Middle-earth, for the recovery of Theoden Ednew, the tardy oath-filling of the Dead and the fortitude of the defenders of Minas Tirith indicate the superiority of the Free Peoples, a moral advantage which is significant in a moral universe. The implication for our world seems to combine the themes of Boethius and such works as the alliterative Morte Arthur: hope (which in these contexts means trust in God or Eru to reward virtue) strengthening fortitude--if necessary, fortitude even without hope--is the best stance for the individual confronted by death or evil.

If we can grant that a literary work does not have to realistically resemble the world it describes in order to make a point about it, it becomes easier to discover the relevance of Professor Tolkien's creation to the primary world. As a Christian, he no doubt intends the moral determinism of Middle-earth to apply to the general human condition, but his linking of the moral and heroic codes, as well as the superficial cultural borrowings, suggest to me that Lord of the Rings is also an exposition of the world-view of that most Christian of periods, the Middle Ages. In Middle-earth the links between men and God are tangible (the Istari and Valar) rather than purely spiritual, but we find the same moral ordering, including the danger of a powerful, ever-threatening but inferior and vanquishable Devil. Perhaps the most important correspondence is that, despite the mechanical differences, the position and ideal behavior of Man is the same in both worlds; seen in this way, as a statement of the medieval ideal, Lord of the Rings is more realistic than a history book, and almost as beautiful as the stars. I would like to thank Professor Tolkien on his eightieth birthday for this contribution to the literature of hope and for communicating so well and so beautifully his conception of the medieval world; I think I am not alone in being better able to understand Middle-earth and the modern world for having journeyed into Middle-earth:

Ripple in still water

When there is no pebble tossed nor wind to blow

Reach out your hand if your cup be empty

If your cup is full may it be again

Let it be known there is a fountain

That was not made by the hands of men.

-- The Grateful Dead



The Shire Post (continued from page 18)

thing, but to a man of Earth it would make very boring reading. As Tolkien himself has said:

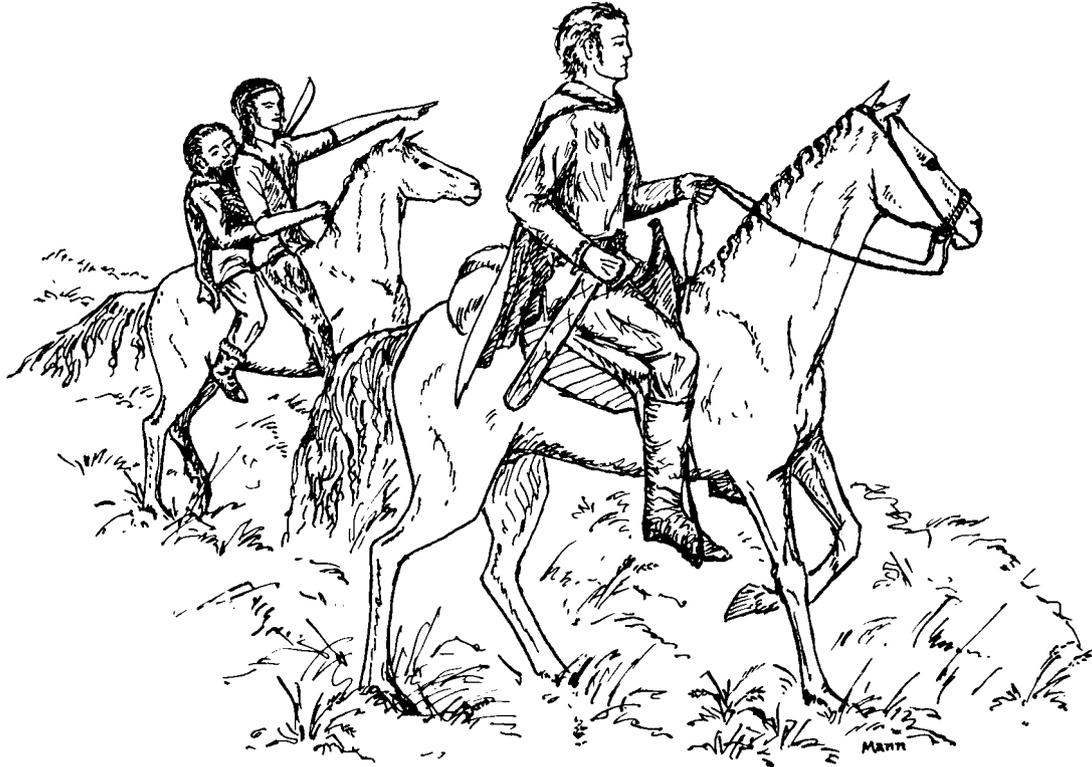
Now it is a strange thing, but things that are good to have and days that are good to spend are soon told about, and not much to listen to; while things that are uncomfortable, palpitating, and even gruesome, may make a good tale, and take a deal of telling anyway.²

¹The Road Goes Ever On. 1967 Houghton Mifflin hardback edition, p. 66.

²The Hobbit. Houghton Mifflin nineteenth printing, pp. 61-62.

WAR AND PACIFISM IN THE LORD OF THE RINGS

by Nan C. Scott



J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* has provoked curiously polarized reactions to its treatment of war and peace. Emotionally highly charged at any time, the military and the pacifistic responses to the needs and problems of our Middle-earth have rarely been so hotly contested and strongly defended as in these present dark times. Thus, the divergent views of Tolkien's creation are particularly intensely held ones.

There are those who find in *The Lord of the Rings* a glorification of war and weaponry, a focusing upon the romantic and heroic elements of military conflict, and who, according to their prejudices, admire or dislike the book for this reason, or who, finding it attractive for other qualities, uneasily hedge their affections against their consciences. At the opposite extreme are those who have made almost a cult-symbol of Frodo Baggins, mostly the young who, dissatisfied with an increasingly impersonal industrial society and disillusioned and outraged by the war in Viet Nam, see a kind of pastoral paradise in the Shire of the Hobbits, and a glowing ideal in Frodo's ultimate pacifism after his return from Mordor.

To me neither of these interpretations seems wholly adequate. Tolkien has given the reader no easy answers, no pat solutions, to the ills of Middle-earth. Neither does he place much faith in armed might as a means of cleansing the world, nor does he rely upon a simplistic pacifism. Though he has not had Gandalf's or Elrond's long overview of the ages of war and intervals of Watchful Peace and war once again in Middle-earth, he has nevertheless seen in the experience of his own Twentieth Century lifetime a striking paradigm for the sad histories of earlier ages. Thus, his views of both war and pacifism, at least as he has expressed them in *The Lord of the Rings*, are of a challenging and thorny complexity. Eventually, in "The Scouring of the Shire," he leads the reader to an extremely painful moral dilemma. Tolkien's own solution--to the extent that he offers one--is, characteristically, religious in nature, yet heartbreaking in its implications.

The complexities of Tolkien's vision are illustrated by his very act of creating the Hobbits and plunging them into

the midst of a great war. For they are a remarkably pacifistic little people, apparently lacking the fundamental taint of man's nature. "At no time," we are told, "had Hobbits of any kind been warlike, and they had never fought among themselves."¹ Before the Battle of Bywater, Frodo asserts that "No Hobbit has ever killed another on purpose in the Shire, and it is not to begin now."² Indeed, the only act of aggression committed by one Hobbit against another throughout the history of the little people seems to have been the murder of Deagol by Smeagol-Gollum, under the corruptive spell of the Ring, and Smeagol is no more than an Ur-Hobbit in any case.

Hobbits, "slow to quarrel, and for sport killing nothing that lived,"³ steadily demonstrate humanity and kindness as their signal traits. Little wonder then that the Shire is a demi-Eden, whose inhabitants, "generous and not greedy, but contented and moderate,"⁴ live in a kind of Golden Age of pastoral poetry.

Though, as Tolkien assures us, Hobbits "In olden days...had, of course, been often obliged to fight to maintain themselves in a hard world,"⁵ no longer are they accustomed to warfare, even in self-defense. Frodo, Sam, Merry, and Pippin, despite their awesome burden, the disturbing absence of Gandalf, and the pursuit of the Black Riders, are so overwhelmingly innocent that they actually set out for Rivendell unarmed. When Tom Bombadil supplies them with daggers from the barrow-hoard, the four Hobbits are surprised and uncomfortable:

Their new weapons they hung on their leather belts under their jackets, feeling them very awkward, and wondering if they would be of any use. Fighting had not before occurred to any of them as one of the adventures in which their flight would land them.⁶

Earlier, in *The Hobbit*, Bilbo shows his peaceable impulses from the start. Like his young kinsmen and Sam, he is ill at ease with military gear and dislikes the thought of battle. When Thorin and his twelve companions strike up a victorious version of their dragon song in Erebor, "Bilbo's heart fell...; they sounded much too warlike";⁷ and though secretly impressed by his beautiful

mithril coat, Mr. Baggins realizes that to the sensible everyday eyes of the Shire, he would look "rather absurd. How they would laugh on the Hill at home!"⁸

So eager, indeed, is Bilbo to avoid war that he attempts to bargain with the Arkenstone, being willing to give up his entire share of the dwarves' magnificent treasure hoard for the sake of peace. Despite his lack of success in preventing conflict, after the Battle of Five Armies the dying Thorin Oakenshield, "wounded with many wounds," praises Bilbo's attitude:

There is more in you of good than you know, child of the kindly West. Some courage and some wisdom blended in measure. If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world. But sad or merry, I must leave it now. Farewell!⁹

Nearly all of Bilbo's impulses, from his crucial act of mercy towards Gollum, of which I will say more later, to his kindly replacement of the keys he had stolen from the guard in the wood-elves' dungeon, illustrate the Hobbit character at its generous and sunny-natured best. His values are typical of a people who "love peace and quiet and good tilled earth,"¹⁰ but Bilbo (and later Frodo, Sam, Merry, and Pippin) is also able to grow spiritually, to appreciate things beyond the ken of most Shire Hobbits.

Decidedly then, the Hobbits are a peaceful, if for the most part a somewhat limited people; and their years of unambitious peace and plenty in the Shire suggest that, had they, rather than the Edain, been granted "a land to dwell in, removed from the dangers of Middle-earth,"¹¹ the Halflings would have made proper use of the gift and the Isle of Elenya might never have sunk into the Sea.

However, the Shire, bright garden that it is, lies not upon a protected westerly island but in the wilds of Eriador. Paradoxically, only through the constant vigilance of men at arms, Rangers of the North, are the Shirefolk permitted to pursue their carefree seasonal round of growth, abundance, and harvest. The presence of the Dúnedain alone protects the peace-loving Hobbits from Orcs...and worse. As Aragorn tells Boromir at Rivendell:

Peace and freedom, do you say? The North would have known them little but for us. Fear would have destroyed them. But when dark things come from the houseless hills, or creep from sunless woods, they fly from us. What roads would any dare to tread, what safety would there be in quiet lands, or in the homes of simple men at night, if the Dúnedain were asleep, or were all gone into the grave?¹²

Outside the garden wall, creatures of the Darkness are prowling and multiplying, and as Gildor Inglorion warns Frodo, "The wide world is all about you: you can fence yourselves in, but you cannot forever fence it out."¹³

Thus, once they are no longer defended by the Rangers, the innocent Shire and the peace-loving Bree-land are soon in desperate trouble. The Shire is occupied by half-Orcs, greedy Men, and a fallen Wizard; "And," according to old Butterbur, who, in common with many of the big people of Bree, seems more like a Hobbit than a typical Man, "there was trouble right here in Bree, bad trouble. Why, we had a real set-to, and there were folk killed, killed dead! If you'll believe me!...It's like a bit of the bad old times tales tell of, I say...You see, we're not used to such troubles: and the Rangers have all gone away, folk tell me. I don't think we've rightly understood till now what they did for us."¹⁴

Butterbur accordingly has learned at least one part of one truth: to survive in Middle-earth, ceaseless vigilance and some means of defense are necessary. For make no mistake: Middle-earth, beautiful, poignant, mortal, is also deadly dangerous. Not all Men are trusty, and other races there are besides Hobbits and Men.

Apparently, it has always been thus, to one degree or another, even in the deeps of time. In the Elder Days, Morgoth, to whom the terrible Sauron himself was no more than a servant, held at least the northern lands in an icy grip, guarding the stolen Silmarils in Angband. So cataclysmic was the warfare which eventually broke his great fortress of Thangorodrim that the Elven lands of Beleriand were themselves shattered and drowned in the upheaval, leaving only Lindon as a sad remnant of once-great realms. "And now," sings old Treebeard, "all those lands lie under the wave,"¹⁵ a high price to pay indeed, for though "the Elves deemed that evil was ended for ever,...it was not so."¹⁶

Far from it. Throughout the Dark Years that followed, Sauron held sway in Middle-earth, ruling tyrannically over those lesser men who remained there. Still capable of assuming a deceptively attractive form, he was able to seduce the Elvensmiths of Eregion to his purposes. When Celebrimbor eventually perceived the designs of Sauron, war once more was kindled, Hollin was laid waste, Moria was besieged behind closed dwarf doors, and Elrond retreated to the North to found the refuge of Imladris, from its very beginnings a bastion against the world's evils.

After Elendil's and his sons' return to Middle-earth from the downfall of Númenor, the pattern continued: wars and cycles of Watchful Peace, failures of vigilance, and once again wars, in Elrond's words, "many defeats and many fruitless victories."¹⁷ After the dubious triumph of the Last Alliance, Arnor, beset by internal strife which foolishly divided the realm into petty kingdoms, fell into decay as the Dúnedain dwindled in number and as wars with Angmar continued to drain away the lives of young men. Gondor survived both attacks from outside and kinstrife within amongst the Númenorean lords, but it too declined in strength, weakened by a long age of skirmishes and small border wars. A time of failed watchfulness after plagues had gravely diminished its population led to the loss of Minas Ithil, Gondor's Tower of the Moon. A new defensive posture transformed the Tower of the Sun into Minas Tirith, a fortress-city ever on guard.

So common is armed conflict in Middle-earth's long history that the Battle of Five Armies, which little Bilbo finds so terrible, which leaves even such a formidable warrior as Gandalf wounded, and which takes the lives of "many men and many dwarves and many a fair elf that should have lived yet long ages merrily in the wood,"¹⁸ would, according to Tolkien, "scarcely have concerned later history, or earned more than a note in the long annals of the Third Age,"¹⁹ but for Bilbo's finding of the Ring. In the longer overview of history, bloodshed and violence are merely the order of the day, business as usual, and one fearful battle seems not very significant.

Whether Morgoth's power is still active in Middle-earth during the War of the Ring, we are not told; but some mighty evil force remains unconquered and, perhaps, unconquerable. For the new age to dawn after the Ring's destruction will not, even in its first morning, be free of taint or shadow. To Théoden's fear that "much that was fair and wonderful shall pass for ever out of Middle-earth," Gandalf must sorrowfully concede that "It mav...The evil of Sauron cannot be wholly cured, nor made as if it had not been. But to such days we are doomed."²⁰ And the wizard warns his companions in Gondor:

Other evils there are that may come; for Sauron is himself but a servant or emissary. Yet it is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succour of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till. What weather they shall have is not ours to rule.²¹

From the perspective of time we can, I think, conclude that the weather will again become stormy. Tolkien reminds us in the Preface to the first edition that "those darker things which lurked only on the borders of the earlier tale...have troubled Middle-earth in all its history."²²

Some of "those darker things" lurking are wholly the creatures of a powerful evil being or spirit, be it Sauron or Morgoth; for it is the fate of Middle-earth that "Always after a defeat and a respite, the Shadow takes another shape and grows again."²³ Whatever the origin of this evil in Middle-earth its presence and its puppets are a permanent fact of life. Whether the Dark Tower's powers are substantial enough for it to have created Trolls and Orcs, as Treebeard asserts,²⁴ or whether, unable truly to make, the Dark Lord has only corrupted previously existing creatures to his uses, as Frodo apparently believes,²⁵ perhaps by selective breeding, these wicked beings are cruel and pitiless enemies for whom no one, not even Gandalf or Frodo, has a word of mercy. Though Orcs have some use of language, they are never numbered amongst the free "speaking peoples" by Gandalf or Treebeard. I would guess that they lack souls, for Tolkien's most humane characters clearly regard the hewing of Orc-necks as a very different thing from the killing of Men. While the latter is undertaken at need with some sorrow or reluctance,

Orc-slaying is almost sport, exhilarating not least to the Hobbits, who are not hunters even of beasts for pleasure. Legolas is a Wood-elf, one of a people so noble and kindly that Gollum escapes through their humanity, yet he and Gimli the Dwarf bring an equally zesty enthusiasm to a game of who can kill the most Orcs during the Battle of the Hornburg. Whatever is done to an Orc is, apparently, fair enough; and even Gandalf, great apostle of mercy, swings a mighty sword whenever Goblins cross his path.

War against Men, even in self-defense, is viewed more uneasily, however. Though Frodo has blessed the archers of Ithilien in their ambush of the Men of Harad, a close-up of the actual fighting is a shock to Hobbit-nature:

It was Sam's first view of a battle of Men against Men, and he did not like it much. He was glad that he could not see the dead face. He wondered what the man's name was and where he came from; and if he was really evil of heart, or what lies or threats had led him on the long march from his home; and if he would not really rather have stayed there in peace....²⁶

Not only the pacifistic little Halflings but Men, at least the more noble ones, share this attitude. Though the Rohirrim take a primitive delight in battle and war gear, and though some of the Men of Gondor have declined to such a degree that Boromir, Denethor's heir, seemed to Eomer "More like to the swift sons of Eorl than to the grave men of Gondor,"²⁷ Númenorean blood, when it runs true, still pulses to loftier ideals than those of military glory. Faramir, "whom no Rider of the Mark would outmatch in battle,"²⁸ should the need to defend himself or his men arise, is by preference a man of peace with so great a reverence for life that his bowmen spare Gollum, who flickers through the woods of Ithilien like a little animal, because of their leader's policy: they are not to "slay wild beasts for no purpose."²⁹

Self-defense and defense of the weak and innocent against Sauron and his creatures, and even against those Men who have elected to follow the banner of the Eye, would seem from all historical evidence to be a necessity of survival in Middle-earth. As Eowyn tells the Warden of the Houses of Healing:

It needs but one foe to breed a war, not two, Master Warden...And those who have not swords can still die upon them. Would you have the folk of Gondor gather you herbs only, when the Dark Lord gathers armies?³⁰

Whether one raises a sword eagerly, like Boromir, or regretfully, like Faramir, it would appear that raise it he must or die.

However, Tolkien has not allowed the reader the comfort of excusing Middle-earth's bloody history solely on the fairly acceptable grounds of self-defense. Hobbits, maybe, would live, forever in peace and harmony were it safe to let all swords rust; from the example their life in the Shire provides, one might be inclined to hope so. Sadly, the same cannot be said of Men. For if Middle-earth is faulty and somehow tainted with evil, so is Man's very nature equally imperfect.

Given the chance to dwell in an idealized world where no necessity for self-defense could arise, Men created their own evil, indeed travelled back to Middle-earth in quest of it. The chronicles of earlier times tell us that the Valar "As a reward for their sufferings in the cause against Morgoth...granted to the Edain a land to dwell in, removed from the dangers of Middle-earth [italics mine]."³¹ Here, within distant sight of Eressëa itself, was an island kingdom free of Orcs, Wargs, and Trolls, unstained by the presence of Morgoth or Sauron, surely unassailable by any of the lesser men of Middle-earth who might worship the Dark Lord, and here the Númenoreans could have lived in peace forever, it would seem.

Man's only enemy in Númenor was his own nature, greedy of power, ambitious, and proud. Naval expeditions to Middle-earth, at first peaceful in aim but perhaps even then the sign of a kind of spiritual arrogance, became in time warlike armadas, subjecting the coastlands to Númenorean rule and levying tribute. Having chosen to venture back to these hazardous lands, the Men of Westemnesse were reckless in their pride. And confident of their ability to deal with Evil Incarnate and remain unscathed, they imported the serpent to the Eden they had been offered, brought to Númenor, which itself had been "removed from the dangers of Middle-earth," Middle-earth's deadliest danger, Sauron

himself.

From Númenor's tragic downfall we must conclude that Tolkien's view of the prospects for a permanent peace in Middle-earth or in any other mortal land is pessimistic in the extreme. Even were Middle-earth to be somehow cleansed of all Sauron's works and influences, even if all need were removed for Men of good will to defend themselves and their friends the Hobbits, even could a pleasant and prosperous society with enough for everyone be built, Men would sooner or later pull it down upon themselves, out of ambition, boredom, sheer perversity, perhaps original sin.

If, as it would appear, Tolkien believes war amongst Men to be inevitable, the reader can hardly expect to find in The Lord of the Rings an impassioned anti-war polemic. In any case such was not Tolkien's goal: his "prime motive," as he himself says, "was the desire of a tale-teller to try his hand at a really long story that would hold the attention of readers, amuse them, delight them, and at times maybe excite them or deeply move them."³² However, neither would one expect to find any account of warfare and killing to be an entirely cool and objective one, nor should it be. Moral judgments, implied or explicit, will naturally be expressed in one way or another. What the author chooses to present or withhold, and the sentiments he places in the mouths of his characters, both those he approves and those he despises, will in summation express a moral position. If only because a few critics have charged Tolkien with glorifying war, it is worthwhile to examine his presentation of the War of the Ring and to analyze how romantic or how ugly he decides to make it for us.

That some scenes of battle are exhilarating and thrilling cannot reasonably be denied. This is particularly true of the exploits of the Rohirrim, especially the Battle of the Hornburg, and the great charge at cockcrow to the rescue of Gondor. At least a part of this glamour, however, relies upon the dissimilarity of the struggle to modern warfare. Galloping steeds are bound to be romantic to us in a way that tanks and jeeps are not, at least until Snowmane, pierced with an arrow, falls upon Théoden and crushes the life out of him. And phrases straight out of Anglo-Saxon poetry, "the stricken field," "the shield wall," remove smoke, blood, and noise to such a comfortable historical distance from our own world that the explosion of gunpowder, "Devilry of Saruman!...the fire of Orthanc,"³³ comes as a shocking intrusion, unfair tactics on the part of the Orcs. The sonorous Anglo-Saxon battle poetry Tolkien offers us may stir the reader to a desire for violent action, may delete heat and pain from its images; but Tolkien is fully aware of the discrepancy between war transformed into heroic verse and the reality of the dead and wounded. Thus, he counters the effect of the one on our imaginations by juxtaposing with it the bitter prose of the other, a grim reminder. A singer of the Mark exalts the dead:

Neither Hirluin the Fair to the hills by the sea,
nor Forlong the old to the flowering vales
ever to Arnach, to his own country
returned in triumph; nor the tall bowmen
Derufin and Duilin, to their dark waters,
meres of Morthond under mountain-shadows.
Death in the morning and at day's ending
lords took and lowly....³⁴

Very moving, but next to this song Tolkien places an account that reminds the reader that such bardic sentiments are predicated upon a mound of real corpses.

...many others were hurt or maimed or dead upon the field. The axes hewed Forlong as he fought alone and unhorsed; and both Duilin of Morthond and his brother were trampled to death when they assailed the mumakil, leading their bowmen close to shoot at the eyes of the monsters.³⁵

The Riders of the Mark do begin the Battle of the Pelennor Fields with a fiery enthusiasm: "...they sang as they slew, for the joy of battle was on them, and the sound of their singing that was fair and terrible came even to the City."³⁶ But even their savage delight falters after the fall of Théoden King. Eomer, newly hailed as King of the Mark, calls the host back to the conflict:

But the Rohirrim sang no more. Death they cried with one voice loud and terrible, and gathering speed like a great tide their battle swept about their fallen king and passed....³⁷

In any case, lest we align ourselves too readily with the ardent military spirits of the Horse-lords, we are

BIRTHDAY LETTERS

J. R. R. Tolkien is one of those few true creators whose work has added to the dimensions of our humanity, and I wish him the happiest of birthdays, along with my gratitude and deepest appreciation.

— Lloyd Alexander

Much will be written here about how deeply readers are in Professor Tolkien's debt for his splendid works; and this will all be true, of course. But I would like to point out an additional cause for gratitude. The deserved success of these books has encouraged publishers to embark on a rather large-scale revival of the entire genre of heroic fantasy. Granted, not all of the resulting stories, or even a majority, are in any way worthy of that example. However, enough are — at least to the extent of offering entertainment of a kind unobtainable elsewhere — that readers who enjoy them, and writers who enjoy the writing of them, owe special thanks to this great artist.

— Poul Anderson

Professor Tolkien has written some absorbing books with an even more absorbing background. However, he's done more than just that. At the same time he has forged a Ring of Power that functions independently of its creator, and which has had considerable effect on Beryl's and my lives. Without going into details, a chain of events can be traced from my original acceptance of the British agency for the TSA to our move to Cornwall — a chain which is presumably still continuing.

— Archie Mercer

1972 is proclaimed a year of Octogennial Celebration in the Mythopoeic Society. We call upon all admirers of the Professor to write letters of appreciation to Mythprint, sharing passages from his works that express the quality of 'joy' to them personally.

— Glen GoodKnight

Heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Tolkien on the occasion of the year of his 80th birthday.

— The New York
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reminded that they are not the most superior Men upon whom to model ourselves. Faramir classifies Men as "the High, or Men of the West, which were Nûmenóreans; and the Middle Peoples, Men of the Twilight, such as are the Rohirrim and their kin that dwell still far in the North; and the Wild, the Men of Darkness. Yet now...We are become Middle Men, of the Twilight, but with memory of other things. For as the Rohirrim do, we now love war and valour as things good in themselves, both a sport and an end; and though we still hold that a warrior should have more skills and knowledge than only the craft of weapons and slaying, we esteem a warrior, nonetheless, above men of other crafts."³⁸

Faramir's account of the decline of the Men of Gondor is not universally applicable, however. The values he himself earlier expresses would do credit to the House of Elendil in any age:

I would see the White Tree in flower again in the courts of the kings, and the Silver Crown return, and Minas Tirith in peace: Minas Anor again as of old, full of light, high and fair, beautiful as a queen among other queens: not a mistress of many slaves, nay, not even a kind mistress of willing slaves. War must be, while we defend our lives against a destroyer who would devour all; but I do not love the bright sword for its sharpness, nor the arrow for its swiftness, nor the warrior for his glory.³⁹

The reader is bidden to admire the Men of Gondor above the Rohirrim, and to see the most peaceful of them as also the strongest. Boromir, the man of arms, falls rapidly to the spell of Isildur's Bane, dreams of power, and attempts to seize the Ring from Frodo. Faramir, the younger and physically weaker, the man of lore and the reluctant soldier, emerges as the moral superior of his brother, sending Frodo and Sam freely on their way and sparing the life of Gollum. He even converts the fiery shieldmaiden Éowyn. For love of the young Steward she alters her whole vision of life and says, "I will be a shieldmaiden no longer, nor vie with the great Riders, nor take joy only in the songs of slaying. I will be a healer, and love all things that grow and are not barren...No longer do I desire to be a queen."³⁹

At times even the Hobbits are not proof against the insidious charms of military trappings, but again Tolkien strikes a balance. Merry and Pippin delight in their roles as squires and later knights of Gondor and the Mark, and even gentle little Bilbo is seduced into feeling that "It was rather splendid to be wearing a blade made in Gondolin for the goblin-wars of which so many songs had sung."⁴⁰ Too, Bilbo's hatred for the reality of the Battle of Five Armies is afterwards mellowed by time into the experience "he was most proud of, and most fond of recalling long afterwards."⁴¹ On the other hand Sam, for all his love of tales and songs, recognizes that "Things done and over and made into part of the great tales are different,"⁴² that art transforms the dreary reality of being hungry and cold, sleepy and afraid, and having to listen to Gollum's hissing voice going on and on.

Though both Merry and Pippin, who "can't live long on the heights,"⁴³ continue to enjoy their shields and armor after the return to the Shire, Frodo and Sam go back to their simple grey elven cloaks. Frodo, indeed, rejects the way of the sword altogether, a fact I will return to later.

In juxtaposition to armed charges that quicken the reader's blood, Tolkien places scenes that remind him of the hardships and misfortunes of ordinary folk in wartime. In Gondor, in Minas Tirith, even as the troops of the Outlands march bravely in, the wains roll off to "bear away to refuge the aged, the children, and the women that must go with them...Few, maybe, of those now sundered will meet again."⁴⁴ Similarly, in Rohan, as the Riders gallop to the Hornburg and battle, the approaching Orcs "bring fire...and they are burning as they come, rick, cot, and tree. This was a rich vale and had many homesteads."⁴⁵

Although Tolkien is fully aware that warfare is more than sunlight upon flashing swords, or white horse upon green enamel shield, and although he frequently makes sure that the reader will not forget this, one should not expect to find in *The Lord of the Rings* graphic descriptions of the horrors of war. In the first place Tolkien is not a naturalist in style; were he to shift to naturalism in battle scenes to assure the reader's revulsion at bloodshed, the tone of the book would be seriously damaged. More consistent and appropriate in context are the austere formulae of the Anglo-Saxons: "wounded with many wounds,"

pierced with many black-feathered arrows," though these may cushion the reader's sensibilities from war's realities.

Partly too it is a question of taste, I think. Pippin, recounting to Aragorn, Gimli, and Legolas the events of the Orc-march across Rohan, says, "I am not going into details: the whips and the filth and stench and all that; it does not bear remembering."⁴⁶ Tolkien would, on the whole, share this sentiment of restraint, I believe, and it would be no more reasonable to expect the gruesome images of some of the current anti-war poets in *The Lord of the Rings* than to hope to spy on the bedchamber of Aragorn and Arwen.

However, Tolkien is not indifferent to the horrors of war; though his taste generally leads him to show us a character "wounded with many wounds" rather than to furnish police-blotter statistics on the location and depth of each stab, occasionally he reminds us tersely but chillingly what really happens in battle. A tall handsome Ent named Beechbone goes up on "liquid fire"⁴⁷ at Isengard, and the Orcs and Men outside the gates of Gondor try to break the fighting spirits of the soldiers within by breaking their hearts:

Then among the greater casts there fell another hail, less ruinous but more horrible. All about the streets and lanes behind the Gate it tumbled down, small round shot that did not burn. But when men ran to learn what it might be, they cried aloud or wept. For the enemy was flinging into the City all the heads of those who had fallen fighting at Osgiliath, or on the Rammas, or in the fields. They were grim to look on; for though some were crushed and shapeless, and some had been cruelly hewn, yet many had features that could be told, and it seemed that they had died in pain; and all were branded with the foul token of the Lidless Eye. But marred and dishonoured as they were, it often chanced that thus a man would see again the face of someone that he had known, who had walked proudly once in arms, or tilled the fields, or ridden in upon a holiday from the green vales in the hills.⁴⁸

Here, indeed, is the ugliness of war, stripped of any glamour or romance.

Ugliness does not extend to more personal images, however. Only three characters whom the reader has been permitted to know will die, if Gandalf's fall and return from the dead is excepted: Thorin, regretting his greed; Théoden, in the midst of brave deeds and more than ripe in years; and Boromir, who, though pierced with many arrows, is a figure of beauty in his funeral boat. Nor are any of the books' major characters maimed in ugly, unromantic ways; the reader is not required to accommodate the horrid picture of a blind or crippled Hobbit or Elf. The arm in a sling, the bloodstained bandage about the brow--the archetypal injuries of the hero of a western film--more attractive than otherwise are the hurts of our heroes. A weakness? A squeamish reluctance to bring home to the reader the horrors of war? I wonder. As I reviewed the casualties sustained by the members of the fellowship and their close associates, I thought so at first. But upon reflection, it occurs to me that to present the maiming of a character whom the reader has come to know and love would have an effect other than disgusting him deeply with war. To focus upon the atrocities of the Orcs would be to invite that all too natural human response, revenge, rather than peace. Would Frodo's ultimate pacifism be given a fair hearing by the reader, would his message of peace and mercy even be noticed, if, on the return to the Shire, a crippled Sam or a sightless Meriadoc rode by his side?

As Tolkien balances before us the attractions and the ugliness of war, he also eloquently illustrates for us the contradictions and paradoxes of warfare and pacifism in Middle-earth through the use of two larger-than-life figures, Galadriel and, especially, Gandalf the Grey. Both members of the Wise, with roots in the Uttermost West, they must bridge the Great Sea which lies between the Undying Lands and Middle-earth, must minister to the needs of a mortal world while representing immortal values.

Galadriel it was who called the White Council, who preferred to trust Gandalf rather than Saruman, and who rejects the enormous temptation of the Ring when it is freely offered to her. Her realm, the Golden Wood of Lothlórien, though regarded with distrust and suspicion by the declining races of Men outside, seems, even more than the Shire, to be an Eden, a hidden pocket of immortality in

a tarnished mortal world: "On the land of Lórien there was no stain," and to Frodo it appears "timeless."⁴⁹ Sam tries to express the wholeness and perfection he perceives with "I've never heard of a better land than this. It's like being at home and on a holiday at the same time..."⁵⁰ and Aragorn warns Boromir to "Speak no evil of the Lady Galadriel!...There is in her and in this land no evil, unless a man bring it hither himself."⁵¹

Yet Galadriel herself has incurred the displeasure of the Valar for her part in the Noldorin revolt and their defiant assault on Morgoth, and a ban lies on her return to the West.⁵² She must deal with the reality of Middle-earth, where the shadowy spires of Dol Guldur rise through the forest roof of Mirkwood, across the river from Lórien. Her recognition of her ambivalent position is reflected in her parting gifts to the Fellowship: a sheath for Aragorn's famous sword, a bow and arrows for Legolas, but also a box of earth and a mallorn seed for Sam. She is east of the Great Sea, and thus she must expect war as well as peace, must provide weapons as well as the means of renewal, rebirth, and growth.

Even more ambiguous and complex is the figure of Gandalf. Strategist, warrior, preacher of mercy, inspiration from beyond the Sea and the grave, he must play many roles and fulfill many needs. We meet him first in *The Hobbit*, accompanying the Dwarves, as the appendices of *The Lord of the Rings* later explain, for the purpose of ridding the North of Smaug and deflecting the threat of Dol Guldur to the South away from Rivendell.⁵³ Against the creatures of darkness, he can be as warlike as any Man or Dwarf: he traps the three trolls into their petrified destiny; kills several Goblins with a lightning flash from his staff; strikes down the Great Goblin and continues to wield Glamdring lustily against the pursuers in the Orc-mines; and sets blazing the coats of the wild Wargs. Allaying himself with the Elvenking's besieging troops outside Erebor, he eventually fights more wolves and Orcs during the Battle of Five Armies, in which he is wounded.

In *The Lord of the Rings* Gandalf again bears a sword, but Tolkien presents him far oftener as an inspiration than as a slayer of Men. Significantly, those battles in which we are permitted to view him in close-up, as it were, are against such creatures as Orcs, the Balrog, and one of the Ringwraiths, not Men. Outside the walls of Minas Tirith his mere presence as the White Rider helps to rally the retreating Men of Gondor and to dismay the servants of the Enemy without the necessity of his brandishing steel against Southron and Easterling. During the Battle of the Hornburg he gallops off on Shadowfax to gather the Westfold-men rather than lingering to kill men of Dunland. In the final conflict at the Black Gate of Mordor, his concern is more for the rescue of Frodo and Sam than for the battle at hand.

While Gandalf readily helps Men, Elves, Dwarves, and Hobbits to organize and marshal their military forces in self-defense, indeed, even urges action in the case of Théoden, more frequently he is the eloquent spokesman for mercy. Before Frodo's quest has really begun, the wizard warns him that killing should not be lightly undertaken:

Pity? It was Pity that stayed [Bilbo's] hand.
Pity, and Mercy: not to strike without need.
And he has been well rewarded, Frodo. Be sure that he took so little hurt from the evil, and escaped in the end, because he began his ownership of the Ring so. With Pity...Deserves [death]!
I dare say [Gollum] does. Many that live deserve death. And some that die deserve life. Can you give it to them? Then do not be too eager to deal out death in judgement. For even the very wise cannot see all ends....the pity of Bilbo may rule the fate of many--yours not least.⁵⁴

Similarly, he counsels Théoden to be merciful to Grima Wormtongue:

...here is a snake! With safety you cannot take it with you, nor can you leave it behind. To slay it would be just. But it was not always as it now is.

Once it was a man and did you service in its fashion.⁵⁵ Justice, the death a traitor deserves; even prudence, the real dangers of letting such an one go free--these are less vital to Gandalf than the virtue of pity. The latter quality he displays even to Saruman, to whom he offers freedom and forgiveness in exchange for his staff and the Key of Orthanc. When Saruman remains unregenerate, Gandalf breaks

his staff and casts him from the order and from the White Council, but he does not undertake this punishment gladly. "I grieve," he tells Pippin, "that so much that was good now festers in the tower."⁵⁶

Observing Gandalf and Denethor together in Minas Tirith, Pippin puzzles over the nature of the wizard. He "perceived that Gandalf had the greater power and the deeper wisdom, and a majesty that was veiled. And he was older, far older....What was Gandalf? In what far time and place did he come into the world, and when would he leave it?"⁵⁷

What is Gandalf? To Denethor he characterizes himself as also "a steward," caring for "all worthy things that are in peril as the world now stands," attempting to preserve through the coming darkness "anything...that can still grow fair or bear fruit or flower again in days to come."⁵⁸ To Faramir he is more than just a lore-master of many names and identities, and to Treebeard he is, like all wizards, a worrier about the future. He is a commander of the last defenses to the Men of Gondor, as Denethor sinks into madness and Faramir sleeps in fever. Frodo brings together many of the wizard's roles in his verses written in Lórien:

A deadly sword, a healing hand,
a back that bent beneath its load;
a trumpet-voice, a burning brand,
a weary pilgrim on the road.⁵⁹

He has been sent on his pilgrimage from the Uttermost West, apparently, though whether by the Valar or by High-Elves Tolkien does not say. The appendices, speculating on the nature and purposes of the wizards or *Istari*, state that:

It was afterwards said that they came out of the Far West and were messengers sent to contest the power of Sauron, and to unite all those who had the will to resist him; but they were forbidden to match his power with power, or to seek to dominate Elves or Men by force or fear. They came therefore in the shape of Men, though they were never young and aged only slowly, and they had many powers of mind and hand. The two highest of this order (of whom it is said there were five) were called...Saruman and Gandalf. Cirdan later surrendered his ring to Mithrandir [Gandalf]..., knowing whence he came and whither he would return,⁶⁰

Gandalf himself at times refers to his origins and his task in Middle-earth: "I am a servant of the Secret Fire, wielder of the flame of Anor,"⁶¹ he warns the Balrog in Moria; and among his many names, he tells Faramir, "Olorin I was in my youth in the West that is forgotten."⁶² After his return from the dead, he tells Aragorn, Gimli, and Legolas, "Naked I was sent back--for a brief time, until my task is done,"⁶³ and later, leaving the Hobbits on the borders of Bombadil's country, he asks, "Do you not yet understand? My time is over: it is no longer my task to set things to rights, nor to help folk to do so."⁶⁴

It is not surprising that Gandalf is concerned with pity and mercy; as a messenger from the Undying Lands he might be expected to present peaceful rather than martial values. Yet is it not an ironic comment on the nature of Middle-earth that even a being of Gandalf's powers, able to return from the abyss to life again, must often turn to war after preaching peace? "I am not coming to the Shire," he tells the Hobbits. "You must settle its affairs yourself; that is what you have been trained for."⁶⁵ What they have been chiefly trained for is to defend themselves by the sword, if necessary, and Gandalf ends his mission in Middle-earth knowing that war and killing have not ended there. Both he and Galadriel, the ban against her lifted at last, will depart Middle-earth for a more perfect existence, but they have not been able to alter the nature of Mortal Lands.

The nature of one small mortal, one Hobbit, has been altered, however, and it is not to swordplay that his experiences have educated him. Frodo, who begins by wishing that Bilbo had killed Gollum, and who, even in Moria, brings a fair degree of enthusiasm to fighting Orcs, is gradually transformed into a complete pacifist. At the Field of Cormallen he wears Bilbo's old sword Sting with reluctance, even for purely ceremonial purposes.⁶⁶

The change and growth wrought in Frodo by his long burden and his sufferings become apparent first when he meets with Gollum in the Eryn Muil. His own and Gandalf's words return to him from the past, and aloud he answers his thought: "Very well....But still I am afraid. And yet,

as you see, I will not touch the creature. For now that I see him, I do pity him."⁶⁷

After his poisoning by Shelob, his awareness of pain and imperfection becomes even more intensified, and he understands a little of the alteration in himself. He gives Sting to Sam, saying, "I do not think it will be my part to strike any blow again."⁶⁸

Arwen Evenstar anticipates the pain Frodo will experience when the discrepancies between his own changed character and the unchanged demands of life in Middle-earth become more apparent to him, and she offers him an alternative:

If you hurts grieve you still and the memory of your burden is heavy, then you may pass into the West, until all your wounds and weariness are healed...⁶⁹

Both the pain and the demands come sooner than anyone except perhaps Gandalf might expect; at Rivendell, Frodo no longer finds every desire satisfied: the Sea, the infinite, is missing. And while to Merry, the adventures of the past months seem "almost like a dream that has slowly faded," to Frodo "it feels more like falling asleep again"⁷⁰ to go back to the Shire.

Action is required of the four Hobbits as soon as they reach the Buckland gate; for agents of Saruman, both half-Orcs and base Men, have occupied their little land. Merry, Pippin, and Sam, confident of their ability to deal with the ruffians, are amused by the Shirriffs, but "Frodo, however, was silent and looked rather sad and thoughtful."⁷¹ When one of the men insults Frodo, the other three Hobbits draw their swords, but Frodo does not move or reach for a weapon.

His strongest feelings are pity (for Lotho) and a passionate wish that the Shire not be stained with bloodshed:

...remember: there is to be no slaying of hobbits, not even if they have gone over to the other side...No hobbit has ever killed another on purpose in the Shire, and it is not to begin now. And nobody is to be killed at all, if it can be helped...I wish for no killing; not even of the ruffians, unless it must be done, to prevent them from hurting hobbits.⁷²

He himself cannot kill even in such defense; in the Battle of By-water, he does not draw a sword; his chief activity is to prevent angry Hobbits from killing those ruffians who have surrendered.

Even for Saruman he feels pity, much to the fallen wizard's annoyance, and he tried to prevent an inevitable murder. Saruman recognizes that Frodo has grown; he also senses that he will have neither health nor long life, perhaps because of that growth.

In friendly but firm opposition to Frodo's pacifism, Merry expresses the practical view of Middle-earth: ...if there are many of these ruffians,...it will certainly mean fighting. You won't rescue Lotho, or the Shire, just by being shocked and sad, my dear Frodo.⁷³

and here we are come to the thin edge of the wedge. Here, in explicit juxtaposition, are two kinds of wisdom. Here is the pacifist's ultimate dilemma.

If evil exists in the world, the weak must be defended against it, or die. Just being shocked and sorry won't save the Shire. Nor would any of the Jews of Europe have survived had all men of good will refused to hear arms in World War II. Merry's position has a good deal of practical wisdom to recommend it; if one values Middle-earth, the temporal, at all, and most of us do, he will think the Shire is worth saving.

Yet the superior spiritual values of the Uttermost West cannot be denied. Through his long travail Frodo's understanding and compassion have lifted him above and beyond the compromises of Middle-earth. No longer can he deal with the finite on its own imperfect terms. But he is no narrow Medieval saint, able to contemplate mortal suffering with smug equanimity just because it is temporal. Like many pacifists he feels an increased love and pity for all living creatures; unable to act in their defense by slaying even one of them, he can only move from agony to agony in a world so flawed.

Or he can leave it, as he must. If Tolkien is pessimistic about any hopes for a permanent peace in mortal lands, he is no more optimistic about the lot of the pacifist. One who loves his fellow creatures too keenly, one who has grown more than is usual in our limiting

Middle-earth, can never find rest in this strained world. Frodo is no longer fitted for life in Middle-earth; he can only pass into the Uttermost West over Great Sea to find peace and rest from pain. Though he would not see himself in such exalted terms, he might justly echo Shaw's Saint Joan: "O God that madest this beautiful earth, when will it be ready to receive thy saints? How long, O Lord, how long?"⁷⁴

And yet. And yet as necessary as arms have seemed on Middle-earth, as essential to survival as the sword has appeared to be, the overthrow of Sauron has been accomplished not by using weapons but, ultimately, by withholding the sword. But for four separate acts of mercy all of the defenses of sword, shield, and tower would have been altogether futile, each victory utterly in vain. First little Bilbo, filled with "A sudden understanding, a pity mixed with horror,"⁷⁵ has spared Gollum, and his pity does indeed come to rule many destinies. In the Eryn Muil, Frodo, although still afraid, responds with pity too. Later in Ithilien Faramir, his own peaceful nature moved by Frodo's pleas, allows Gollum to live. Finally, and most crucial, on the slopes of Mount Doom itself, even Sam, the comman man, "with drawn blade ready for battle," wavers in pity for Gollum. Although "It would be just to slay this treacherous, murderous creature, just and many times deserved;" and although every value of prudence and necessity would show it "the only safe thing to do,...deep in his heart there was something that restrained him: he could not strike this thing lying in the dust, forlorn, ruinous, utterly wretched."⁷⁶ It is these four rejections of violence and killing, each at a time when expedience would have cried out for the sword, these four acts of mercy, that save what can be saved through yet another night in Middle-earth. Since to Middle-earth and mortal lands we are doomed, let us take what comfort we can in this.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Fellowship of the Ring (Second Edition, Revised; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967), p. 14.
2. The Return of the King (Second Edition, Revised; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967), p. 285.
3. Fellowship, p. 15.
4. Ibid., p. 18.
5. Ibid., p. 14.
6. Ibid., p. 157.
7. The Hobbit (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, n.d.), p. 274.
8. Ibid., p. 251.
9. Ibid., p. 298.
10. Fellowship, p. 10.
11. Return, p. 315.
12. Fellowship, p. 261.
13. Ibid., p. 93.
14. Return, pp. 271, 272.
15. The Two Towers (Second Edition, Revised; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967), p. 72.
16. Fellowship, p. 256.
17. Ibid.
18. Hobbit, p. 295.
19. Fellowship, p. 20.
20. Towers, p. 155.
21. Return, p. 155.
22. The Fellowship of the Ring (First Edition; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1954), p. 7.
23. Fellowship (Second Edition, Revised), p. 60.
24. Towers, p. 89.
25. Return, p. 190.
26. Towers, p. 269.
27. Ibid., p. 38.
28. Return, p. 237.
29. Towers, p. 283.
30. Return, p. 236.
31. Ibid., p. 315.
32. Fellowship, p. 6.
33. Towers, p. 142.
34. Return, p. 125.
35. Ibid., p. 124.
36. Ibid., p. 113.
37. Ibid., p. 119.
38. Towers, p. 287.
39. Return, p. 243.

REVIEWS

The Applicability of The Lord of the Rings

-- Edward Fitzgerald

Ellwood, Gracia Fay. Good News from Tolkien's Middle Earth. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. Grand Rapids, Michigan. 160 pp. photographs. \$3.25 indexed. paperback.

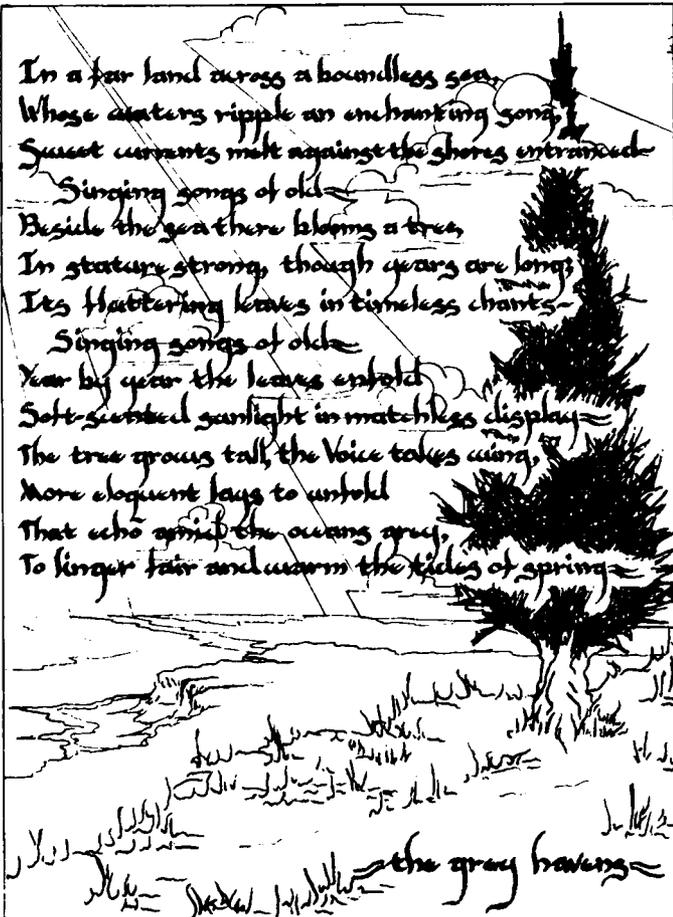
Each of the various books published that concern themselves with J. R. R. Tolkien and his created Universe of Middle Earth have tried to relate The Lord of the Rings, his master work, to the real world. Ready takes on the burden of analysing the man, Tolkien, and fails miserably, tumbling to the ground under the crushing weight of the author's personality. Carter attempts to relate Tolkien's work to the literary genre Fantasy, discussing the influence that it has had upon Tolkien, and the way that he will influence it. Carter also goes the way of Tinkler, building a relationship between the words and names in LotR and those of the Primary world. Essayists represented in Tolkien and the Critics all attempt to analyse LotR in terms of our world, some succeeding, some failing. And so, of course, it is not surprising that the newest book on the scene is subtitled "Two Essays on the 'Applicability' of The Lord of the Rings."

The book is Good News from Tolkien's Middle Earth, authored by Gracia Fay Ellwood. What is most surprising about this book is the first of the two essays "Everything is Alive: An Essay on Magic in Middle Earth and Elsewhere." This essay presents what is perhaps the freshest approach to the exploration of LotR in terms of our Primary world. What Mrs. Ellwood attempts to do is to show that we are very much like Shirefolk when we think (if we ever do) about things which she describes as "paranormal;" clairvoyance, clairaudience, precognition, retrocognition, to name some examples. The Shirefolk's knowledge of the world extended past their borders only in order to include Bree in their sphere. In fact, each farthing or section of the Shire thought the inhabitants of the other areas of the Shire to be queer or not quite normal. We are the same way in the limits that we impose upon reality. In fact, says the author, we can only appreciate the "aliveness" of everything in reality by throwing away (for the moment) our usual objective-analytic minds, and using the facilities of our myth-making-unconscious. And what better way to do this than to compare aspects of the "paranormal" in our world with the degrees of aliveness in Middle Earth. When the author has done just that, we have learned more about our own world than about Middle Earth, but we have found another way in which Middle Earth and LotR can be related, "Applied", to our own reality, however unreal that may be.

In her second essay, "The Good Guys: A Study in Christ-Imagery", the first part of which appeared in the Tolkien Journal in a slightly altered form as "The Good Guys and the Bad Guys" (TJ 10, pp. 9-11), the author falls back on more well-trodden ground. Many essayists have attempted analyses of LotR as a Christian document. Some have called the trilogy allegory, while others point out that the basic morality of the book is Christian. In this essay, however, the author shies away from allegory (she points out, as have many, that Tolkien dislikes it himself, but like Reilly she admits that the critic must discuss not intentions, but what the author has actually created) and expresses instead the symbolism of LotR. Thus, she examines Tom Bombadil, Gandalf, Frodo and Aragorn, and finds in each of the last three some traces of the different aspects of Christ. Frodo, for instance, has the meekness and humility of Christ, while Aragorn is Christ the King and Gandalf Christ the Miracle Worker. All three undergo adventures which can be taken as being symbolic of the Fall and Ascension of Christ, and Aragorn's coming into his Kingship telescopes both the Ascension and the Second Coming. In Tom Bombadil, the author finds aspects of the unfallen Adam (but not an Eve in Goldberry), and uses her analysis of him as a point of comparison between the three heroes of the Ring tale.

Mrs. Ellwood has admirably presented what she announces that she will, two essays on the applicability of LotR. In these two well written, easily read discourses she has both reinforced many ideas concerning Professor Tolkien's magnificent trilogy, and presented some exciting new ones concerning the Primary "multi-verse" in which we (and everything else) live.

40. Hobbit, p. 81.
41. Ibid., p. 293.
42. Towers, p. 322.
43. Return, p. 146.
44. Ibid., p. 36.
45. Towers, p. 135.
46. Ibid., pp. 168, 169.
47. Ibid., p. 173.
48. Return, p. 96.
49. Fellowship, p. 365.
50. Ibid., p. 376.
51. Ibid., p. 373.
52. "Notes and Translations," The Road Goes Ever On (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967), p. 60.
53. Return, pp. 359, 360.
54. Fellowship, pp. 68, 69.
55. Towers, p. 125.
56. Ibid., p. 190.
57. Return, p. 29.
58. Ibid., pp. 30, 31.
59. Fellowship, p. 375.
60. Return, p. 365.
61. Fellowship, p. 344.
62. Towers, p. 279.
63. Ibid., p. 106.
64. Return, p. 275.
65. Ibid.
66. Return, p. 233.
67. Towers, p. 222.
68. Return, p. 204.
69. Ibid., pp. 252, 253.
70. Ibid., p. 276.
71. Ibid., p. 282.
72. Ibid., pp. 285, 289.
73. Ibid., p. 285.
74. Saint Joan (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1924), p. 159.
75. Hobbit, p. 98.
76. Return, pp. 221, 222.



convinced me the task was hopeless. Also I had to be away for a total of four months to various rehabilitation schools. So the TSA is now a part of the Mythopoeic Society and TJ and GrD are gone as independent publications. I do plan to have a column in the new Mythlore, and to hold Yulemoots and other meetings in the NY-Mass-NH area.

I am sure that Glen will do a wonderful job and that the combined societies will grow and prosper.

MERGER AGREEMENT

OF
THE TOLKIEN SOCIETY OF AMERICA
AND
THE MYTHOPOEIC SOCIETY, INC.

Upon merger, the separate existence of the unincorporated association known as The Tolkien Society of America shall cease, and the surviving corporation known as The Mythopoeic Society, Inc. shall succeed, without other transfer, to all rights and property of each of the organizations.

The merger shall not require any change in The Articles of Incorporation of The Mythopoeic Society, Inc.

The Thain (President) of The Tolkien Society of America, Edmund R. Meskys, shall become a member of the Board of Directors of The Mythopoeic Society, Inc.

The publication of The Tolkien Society of America, Tolkien Journal, shall be merged with Mythlore, a publication of The Mythopoeic Society. Subscribers to Tolkien Journal shall have their subscriptions continued, on a prorated basis, with either Mythlore or Mythprint, owing to the subscriber's option.

The Board of Directors of the surviving Mythopoeic Society, Inc. shall be authorized to administer the former funds, cash, and property of The Tolkien Society of America.

This agreement of merger shall become effective upon the signatures of the Thain (President) and Thain (Secretary) of The Tolkien Society of America; the signatures of the President and Secretary of The Mythopoeic Society, Inc.; and approval of the appointment of Edmund R. Meskys, former Thain of The Tolkien Society of America, to the Board of Directors of The Mythopoeic Society, Inc. by the Council of The Mythopoeic Society, Inc. as according to its Bylaws.

(signed)

Edmund R. Meskys
Thain of The Tolkien Society of America
Nancy Meskys
Thain of The Tolkien Society of America
Glen H. GoodKnight II
President of The Mythopoeic Society, Inc.
Bonnie Sue GoodKnight
Secretary of The Mythopoeic Society, Inc.

NOTES by the new editor

Ed contacted me in late March about going ahead with the merger. He has suggested it as a possibility last November, if his last eye operation would turn out unsuccessfully. Since March we had been moving steadily to make the merger as smooth as possible. It involved the moving of all the records, back issues of TJ, and other properties of the TSA to California. This transfer is not complete yet, but will be by mid-summer.

As you probably know, when Dick Plotz founded TSA, he and others took names from The Lord of the Rings. He

was Frodo, W.H. Auden was Gimli, etc. Back in 1967 I identified with Elrond in similar spirit. This is only to preface my statement that my real name is Glen GoodKnight. Some people have occasionally asked me if it isn't some kind of assumed name, for the sake of romantic color. No, it is the real one. I bore the brunt of innumerable puns on it as a child, and was upset that I was labeled with such an unusual name until I became old enough to learn its origin. The first GoodKnight was Pierre du Terrail Bayard (1476?-1524), a knight of France in the late Renaissance. He earned the nickname "le bon Chevalier sans peur et sans reproche," or simply "the Good Knight." The name stuck to the family. However my American ancestors far from reflected their aristocratic origin; they were always on the frontier, since the first one came in 1698. I only elaborate to make clear to doubting minds the genuineness of my name, as doubts would only naturally arise from those who have never heard of me before.

I regret that there is not more artwork in this issue. When Ed talked to me about the merger, we agreed that TJ15 would be done in California, since neither Ed or Nan were able to in New Hampshire. He sent me all the artwork and manuscripts that he had, plus a list of suggestions as to which manuscripts should be used in this issue, and in what order they should go. I have followed these suggestions as closely as possible in laying out the issue.

We wanted the issue to appear as soon as possible, since it had already been delayed several months due to Ed's misfortune. The trouble was that there was very little usable topical artwork on hand, and I knew that to approach a number of artists for additional artwork would take time. I decided to use what art there was on hand for the issue, except for the one piece Paula Marmor did, and the several, including the cover, done by my wife Bonnie. Special thanks to them for helping in this way.

I do ask the artists reading this to consider sending in sample artwork for consideration. Future issues should be the best balance of both literate and artistic elements as our resources allow. This means we also want to continue receiving manuscripts for publication. Nothing can be any better than its contributors make it.

What will be the place of Tolkien and his work in the future issues of Tolkien Journal-become-Mythlore? Very important, you can be sure. Mythlore in the past has always published Tolkien related articles and artwork. In fact our last issue, #8, was a special birthday issue in honor of the Professor, with cover by Tim Kirk, and an appreciation of the Professor by myself, plus several articles on his works. Copies are still available at \$1.

Some people feel that Tolkien criticism is nearly played out. They've told me, 'You can only say so much about Tolkien, and that's it.' I disagree. I feel we have only begun to carefully analyse and discuss the innumerable elements in this man's work. There is much, much more waiting to be said, and I hope Mythlore will be the place it is said.

On the other hand, Mythlore will continue to publish informative material on the other Inklings, especially C.S. Lewis and Charles Williams. Mythlore will also continue to publish general articles related to a better understanding of myth, fantasy, and the imaginative creative process.

Before the merger came about, it had been planned that the next Mythlore would deal chiefly with Tolkien related material. In addition I have several good articles on Tolkien that Ed sent, that were not included in this issue. We will use most of them in future issues and return the rest. In this light, only for the time being, I would ask potential contributors to concentrate on Lewis, Williams, other related authors, or general thematic material.

There is so much that we have to say and share with each other. You have my commitment to make the future of the two merged groups as relevant and enjoyable as possible. Looking forward... — Glen GoodKnight

