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Letters

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LETTERS

Margaret Purdy

Ridgewood, New Jersey

I found the article on the Great Eye of Sauron fascinating. Tolkien's eye imagery is indeed striking, and I've found it influencing my own writing; characters as diverse as a vampire and a unicorn have come out with unusual and compelling eyes. I think it worthwhile to mention that the eyes of Tolkien's good characters are equally as interesting as those of the evil ones. Treebeard's eyes are, of course, the example that leaps immediately to mind. I read somewhere that Tolkien's own eyes were grey, and of course most of the Elves and Dunedain have grey eyes.

The artwork in this issue is all very well done, although naturally I don't agree with all the portrayals. The picture of Gandalf I found particularly attractive, but where is his sharp nose? (One picture I have always wanted to have seen done but have never had the skill to do myself is a scratchboard -- or similar technique -- of the scene in Moria in which Gandalf is lighting his pipe.)

While I'm on the subject of artwork I may as well mention the Ballantine Tolkien calendar for 1977. It is done once more by the Hildebrandts, and suffers from the same faults as the previous one, especially the "Middle-earth Wax Museum" effect. Goldberry in particular looks like a Bavarian peasant girl: "Greetings, Herr Soldier, mien vater is not at home..." However the centerfold, of Bilbo's unexpected party, is an unexpected delight. The atmosphere is perfect, if the details are not; the expression on Bilbo's face is matchless, and a good friend of mine who is something of an authority on folk music as well as a reader of Tolkien went into ecstasies over Bombur's drum.

A question that has been bothering me for some time is the question of what happened to Idril Celebrindal. Most people, I know, will say, "That's easy -- she died. All elf-women die who marry mortals." However, in *LotR* it is never said that Idril became mortal. Indeed, Aragorn, who ought to know, says that "Luthien Tinuviel *alone* of the Elf-kindred has died indeed and left the world" (italics mine). Aragorn, however, mentions Idril not at all, and Tolkien doesn't say very much about her either. It is possible that if she married Tuor before the Valar made their ruling that an elf-woman who married a mortal must become mortal, then she might have passed over Sea after the death of her husband. Or she might have been killed in the Goblin-wars, as so many Elves were. Or Aragorn may have made a mistake. In any case, we may hope that *The Silmarillion* will clear up everything. (Do you realize how many questions that poor overworked book will be expected to clear up? It's something like Frodo's line, "No doubt everything will be cleared up in the morning." We tend to say, "No doubt everything will be cleared up in *The Silmarillion*.")

(When I spoke with Christopher Tolkien, I expressed the hope that *The Silmarillion* would answer many questions. "Yes," he agreed, "but it will create many new ones as well." -- GG)

James Spreckels

Beaumont, Texas

William H. Green's "The Ring At The Centre" (*Mythlore* 14) states, "Only at the very end of *The Lord of the Rings* is the source of Gandalf's hidden power revealed: he has been wearing...one of the three elven rings...." But the ring, Narya the Great, could not have been the source of Gandalf's power. Tolkien "unhesitatingly" told Edmund Fuller

that "Gandalf is an angel." (Isaacs, *Tolkien And The Critics*, p. 35) Surely an angel has plenteous power of his own and has no need of such an extra as an Elven ring. For my part I think Cirdan should have kept Narya, preserving the symmetry of the three greatest Elves keeping the Three Rings in the three great Elven Strongholds: Rivendell, Lothlorien, and the Grey Havens. Then the poor ploy of making the ring invisible on Gandalf's hand would have been unnecessary. More importantly, since Gandalf was an incarnate angel (presumably the Valar were archangels) and quasi-died and rose again, he anticipates Christ. Now Christ used His Spirit and His Hands for His power or "magic" (if that word is at all acceptable), but He used no amulets or enchanted jewelry. Gandalf would have prefigured him better without the unnecessary Narya.

Of course, revisionism is unpleasant, even absurd if one takes the stand that Tolkien was a translator rather than an inventor or subcreator. As a self-rebuttal, therefore, I can reason that Gandalf needed all the strength he could get; and if the ring could redouble his power, so much the better. Yet I still think it makes Mithrandir essentially a less sublime figure.

Which brings up a second question. Tolkien also told Fuller that "Gandalf had voluntarily accepted incarnation to wage the battle against Sauron" (*Critics*, p. 35). The same was true of the other wizards, since they were all sent by the Valar for the same reason. We know Saruman deviated because he succumbed to the lure of the Ring. But why did Radagast become a master of minor lore (however charming)? And what became of the two unmentioned wizards? What caused them to be absent from the scene of their principal duty? Does anyone have any ideas?

Alexei Kondratiev

Flushing, New York

Martha and Laurence Krieg are mistaken in assuming that the names of the bears in *The Father Christmas Letters* come from a language of Tolkien's invention. *Valkotukka* not only "sounds Finnish," it *is* Finnish, as is *Paksu*, and the meanings Tolkien gives for them are the Finnish meanings. *Karhu* may indeed "sound almost Dwarvish," but it is the Finnish word for "bear."

In *Mythlore* 13 Ellen Cronan Rose argued convincingly that Doris Lessing's *Briefing for a Descent Into Hell* could have been inspired in part by Charles Williams' *Descent Into Hell*. However, can't one also detect a Lewis influence in *Briefing*? Some important themes of the Ransom Trilogy also appear in Lessing's novel: the idea that the Solar System is a spiritual entity, ruled by planetary archons; and that the Earth alone is a Fallen and darkened region into which "shock troops" of non-terrestrial beings descent periodically.

Could anyone tell me who was the historical prototype -- if any -- of "the young Pope Deodatus, Egyptian-born" in Williams' *Arthuriad*?

Just to be exact, I would like to correct an inaccuracy I let slip into my letter of Nov. 12. I may have given the impression that the many versions of the *Lebor Gabala* were the primary and best source of material on the Danann/Fomorian theme. The *Lebor Gabala* does indeed deal with this subject, but the detailed, extended account of the war between the two races, including the description of Balor's Eye, is the *Cath Maige Tuired*, a

related but separate narrative.

I am surprised at L. Sprague de Camp's assumption that "in building a secondary world for a fantasy tale, a believer has a theological difficulty." He asks, "Suppose Conan 'got religion'; what True Faith of the Hyborian Age could he have embraced?" First, to answer Mr. de Camp's question: in the unlikely event of Conan's "getting religion," one would have to assume that his conversion was, at least in part, due to his perception of a Divine Plan in the universe, and that he would seek to modify his behavior in order to conform with this Plan. He would then join the cult that seemed, by its teaching and the behavior of its members, to best reflect his new insights. When Fafhrd "got religion," he chose to serve Issek of the Jug for a while because "he had once seen Bwades (the priest of Issek) pat a deaf-and-dumb child on the head *while* (so far as Bwades could have known) *no one was looking*, and the incident (possibly unique in Lankhmar) had stuck in the mind of the barbarian. (*Swords in the Mist*, p. 27) Of course, if the fantasist has chosen to sadistically deprive his subcreation of any halfway decent cults, he might let his hero found one himself!

As for the theological problems, I can see no reason why a believer -- a Christian, at any rate -- should have any quams about mentioning religion in a fantasy world. After all, Christianity recognizes the existence of "virtuous pagans," as well as the beauty and truth found in non-Christian religions. I don't think it was Tolkien's faith that made him exclude formal religion from Middle-Earth (C.S. Lewis was a believer, yet it did not prevent him from depicting very appealing people worshipping pagan gods in *Till We Have Faces*), but simply the nature of Middle-Earth itself: unfallen beings, the Elves, still walk among men, bearing witness to the existence of God and the nature of His will, so that these truths are known firsthand by everybody and cannot be questioned, at least not in theological terms. In this context, formal religion is simply non-functional. Just as churches and priests would have looked incongruous on Malacandra...



Robert E. Boenig

Roosevelt, New Jersey

I am responding briefly to Mary M. Stolzenbach's letter in *Mythlore* 13 about the identity of the "famous magician or wizard somewhere in fact or fiction," Michael Scott. He was, not surprisingly, a Scotsman, and he was educated in Oxford during the opening years of the 13th Century. He later became a leading scholar at the court of Friedrich II von Hohenstaufen (1215-50) where he taught mathematics, medicine, and astronomy and gained some notoriety by predicting the place of the Emperor's death and later the manner of his own death. After the predicted bolt of lightning hit him (really a stone from a bell-tower), his notoriety grew into fame: who but a sorcerer would be struck down with lightning by God -- and know it beforehand? (Cf. Costain's *The Magnificent Century*, pp. 301-3 for a popular treatment of his life.)

Roderick McGillis

Univ. of Calgary,
Alberta, Canada

May I say how pleased I was to receive *Mythlore* 4 (number 13). The quality is high (how exciting to see Owen Barfield a contributor), and the "Inklings Bibliography" is a superb service. Glen GoodKnight deserves praise for his comments on *Mythlore's* status as "fanzine," journal or magazine. The "fanzine" mentality is, in some cases, anti-intellectualism traveling incognito. What is exciting about the Mythopoeic Society is that it combines "popular" appeal and imaginative discipline. The true "fan" researches his subject not merely to parrot facts, but to understand the changes and the significance of what he follows. This concept informs The Popular Culture Association, a society whose members are "fans" of soap operas, baseball, comic books, detective fiction, etc. etc. I see no reason why *Mythlore* cannot continue to serve as an outlet for informed scholarly criticism and research on the Inklings and related writers. In fact, *Mythlore* has accepted a responsibility which no other journal, newsletter or bulletin that I know fulfills. Our quest is for creativity; creativity is not possible without an imaginative ordeal.

Jessica Kemball-Cook

London, U.K.

Touching on Grotta-Kurska's book, I find it very informative on background, but shocking on detail! These are just a selection of the errors I found:

p. 8 -- "Tolkien was lazy." Not so -- just a procrastinator -- but he was always busy.

p. 60 -- Mallory should be spelt Malory.

p. 64 -- "James Barrie amused his children..." He had no children -- he was impotent -- these were the children of a woman he much admired.

p. 64 again -- GK says that "Why the Man in the Moon came down too soon" found its way into *LotR*. Wrong! It's "Hey diddle diddle the cat and the fiddle" that got into *LotR*. "The Man in the Moon came down too soon" is in "Tom Bombadil." GK also says that it is recited by Samwise at the Prancing Pony. Wrong again. It's recited by Frodo, of course.

p. 38 -- Joseph Wrighty should be spelt Wright, of course.

p. 87 -- There's no such pub as the "Burning Babe." Term arises from a mishearing of the words "Bird and Baby" and this error was coined by William Ready!

p. 109 -- I find his discussion of "The Homecoming" full of errors and bad spelling. Did Tolkien write a verse-play based on it, as GK says? I thought it was a verse-play! Imran should be spelt Imram.

p. 110 and 111 -- Wootten should be spelt Wootton.

p. 118 -- I thought D'Ardenne was a woman! Having studied English at Oxford and hearing one of her pupils lecture on AB language, I do have that impression, but haven't got it written anywhere.

p. 122 -- I didn't think that the Gawain translations had been published before 1975. No evidence of this in the current edition. GK may have been misled by a listing of them as published in "Who's Who."

p. 121 -- Tolkien did not get a Hugo (though it was a spaceship type) but the International Fantasy Award. It's Clemence Dane, not Dame.

p. 165 -- Our journal is not called "The Mallon" and is not bimonthly but twice a year. We meet on the first Saturday of the month, not the last.

However, there's still a lot of useful information given, though I wonder how many errors there are in the material I was previously ignorant about.

Michael Chapman

Birmingham, Michigan

In response to Thomas P. Alhoff's question which appeared in the Letters Column of *Mythlore* 14:

As we all know, after the death of King Earendur of Arnor, owing to dissensions among his sons the realm was divided into three separate states: Arthedain, Cardolan, and Rhuduar. It is said that the Ring-bearer was imprisoned in the mound of the Last Prince of Cardolan -- therefore it may be assumed that the brooch taken by Tom Bombadil belonged to this Prince's wife, or perhaps his mother. Since Arthedain was considered to be the "chief" realm in the North, Tolkien has listed only its kings, and as far as I know there are no listings of the names of the Cardolan princes and princesses.

Bombadil, though, had lived in that area since virtually the beginning of Middle-Earth, and so was probably well-acquainted with the local lords and ladies, even way back in T.A. 1964.

In response to Joel Griffith, whose fiery letter appeared in the same issue:

In my opinion, *Bored of the Rings* was never meant to be taken seriously. It is a second-rate parody, nothing more. Also, if you look in the preface, you will find that these Harvard Lampoon people virtually heap praises on Tolkien and *LotR*; and they also make apologies up and down for the parody. It is quite obvious, at least to me, that the book was written for the type of person who automatically assumes that because a book is thick, it will most certainly be boring. This type *deserves* to spend their money on garbage like "*BotR*."

I agree entirely with Steven Chan -- the male mythmakers (or "wordsmiths" as Robley Evans would say) are *not* in retirement. Not only is Roger Zelazny an excellent example, but also Arthur C. Clarke, Samuel Delany and, as far as I know, Lin Carter are all still going strong. I would not cite Katherine Kurtz as an example of an excellent female wordsmith, though -- from reading her *Deryni* books, I would say she is rather unimaginative (among other things). The only *great* female wordsmith I know of is Ursula K. LeGuin, and surprisingly enough, she is not even cited by Mr. Swann.

Gerald M. Price

Thousand Oaks, California

In answer to Mike Chapman's letter which appeared in the January 1977 edition of *Mythprint* regarding Saruman's procurement of foodstuffs:

I would have to assume that he provided food and liquor for his armies the same way he procured such things as Longbottom Leaf for himself and his captains -- by barter and trade.



One must remember that Saruman had been trading with Lotho Sackville-Baggins for some little time, as we discovered in "The Scouring of the Shire" (*The Return of the King*, ppg. 360-a, Ballantine Books edition).

In addition, Saruman wasn't always at war with his neighbors (and even when he was, he had spies like Wormtongue to influence his enemies' policies). So, it's rather likely he was able to keep his hordes in vittles by trading with his neighbors, who weren't even aware of the nature of the residents of Orthanc.

I also have no doubt that, later in the War, his human slaves were busy raiding and brought back as much food as they did other plunder. After all, that's the way armies (any army, for that matter) tend to operate during wartime.

Kathryn Lindskoog

Orange, California

I see in *Mythlore* 14 that Owen Barfield objects to the beginning of my article in *Mythlore* 12, where I claim to have a quarrel with him. I certainly would not presume to have a quarrel with Owen Barfield, of all people, in any serious sense of the word. I have written to him directly to tell him what he could not know from *Mythlore* 12, that this article is the text of my 1974 Mythcon address and that I began the address by presenting a copy of *The Silver Trumpet* by Barfield to the Society archives. Then I rather playfully made the transition from *The Silver Trumpet* to my topic, women in Lewis's life, by using the Barfield words about Lewis's attitude toward women.

My sincere apologies to Owen Barfield for the casualness with which I used his name and words, especially as they are reproduced in the article. I am sure that if I had written to him about the subject matter (we had not met yet at that time), he would have responded by clarifying the quotation for me and deepening my understanding of Lewis. He helps us all to understand Lewis (and other matters), and I appreciate him more than I can say.

It is true that I would prefer to think that Lewis was not a misogynist even in theory, but I expect to leave that topic to Margaret Hannay and others. I touched on Lewis's view of women in my book *Up From Eden* (1976), but I expect to go no further with it.

John L. Leland

New Haven, Connecticut

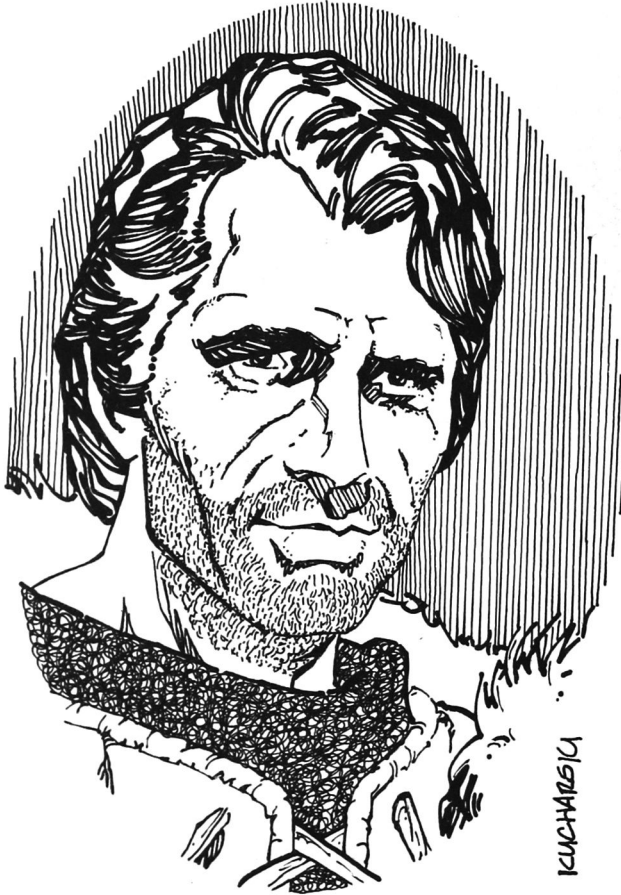
Your issue 13 came in today with several letters that seem to call for comment from me.

First, Joseph Firneno asks how Sauron fed his armies. Mr. Firneno is apparently unaware that this point is raised and answered in *Lotr* itself (Vol. III p. 246 of the Ballantine edition). Sam, looking down on Mordor, says "Where there's such a lot of folk, there must be wells or water, not to mention food," and Tolkien auctorially comments, "Neither he nor Frodo knew anything of the great

war machines but it seems likely to be true in general. Sauron's mechanisms probably did not make life pleasanter but they quite probably tended very much in the direction of efficiency and increased production. We have seen many such inventions in our day. It may also be noted that Rhun approximately equates to the steppes of the Ukraine, a notable grain-growing area in our world.

Second, on Mary Stolzenbach's suggestion that tobacco decreased the size and increased the hairiness of the hobbits. I am inclined to doubt this for several reasons. 1) Merry Brandybuck, in view of his actions as described in the book (especially Vol. III p. 178) and in view of the fact that he devoted considerable space to the plant in his *Herblore of the Shire*, was obviously devoted to smoking, yet he grew to be one of the tallest hobbits. Admittedly his growth was artificially stimulated by entdrafts, but the smoking cannot be considered to have had much effect if a few doses of entdraft over a limited period so markedly over-balanced the effect of what appears to have been a lifelong addiction to pipeweed. 2) A similar though less strong case may be made for Peregrin Took. 3) My brother has the hairiest feet I have ever seen and hates tobacco.

Third, in regard to Mr. de Camp's criticism of my comments on the difference between Williams's views and those of Lewis and Tolkien, I do not think that he laid enough stress on my use of the word "open." I grant that Lewis believed in the existence of devils -- or at least, I do not debate the point, though I do not off-hand recall a specific affirmation of it anywhere -- my point was that no information I possess (I have not read all of Lewis's works by any means) indicated that he believed in the practical invocation of physically-apparent evil spirits in the present day. His modern devils operate by implanting trains of thought in the minds of men, in most cases at least. The assumption that a belief in orthodox Christianity, including devils, requires a belief in the reality of diabolic direct contact with witches is simply not true. In the Middle Ages and Renaissance this very point was argued for centuries. Some theologians held that witches were merely deluded, others that they had actual contact with devils. As Elliot Rose demonstrates at considerable length in *A Razor for A Goat* it is possible for an Anglican medievalist (as he is and Lewis was) to maintain that even if devils exist they may simply not operate that way. Most space scientists concede the possibility of life in outer space without by any means feeling bound to accept every vagary of the saucer cults. Similarly a Christian may say, yes, there may be devils, without believing that certain rituals involve direct contact with them. My point with regard to Williams was 1) That he was known to be at one time a serious occultist -- his membership in the Golden Dawn is in fact cited in *Mythlore* 13, p. 23 -- and my own understanding of his *Witchcraft* is that it, at least, speculates on how real devils may really operate. Mr. de Camp obviously did not understand it that way, and I do not have my copy available to check, but that was certainly my understanding of the passage I cited in my first letter. 2) The fact that the passage from *Witchcraft*, which I understood to be presented by Williams as a real possibility, and the passage from *The Noises That Weren't There*, were IDENTICAL, seemed to indicate to me that Williams's beliefs may have influenced his fantasy writing. I am quite prepared to concede that this is not always the case, and that it is not, in the strict sense, the case in Mr. de Camp's own work, though I would note that in fact his books (which I may say I admire and enjoy much more than Mr. Colvin seems to) do, on one level, make fun of the supernatural -- his gods fruitlessly arguing predestination in *The Tritonian Ring*, for example -- would probably indicate that he did not take gods very seriously, even if he did not obtrude his views so frequently into his literary criticism.



slave-worked fields away south in this wide realm, beyond the fumes of the Mountain by the dark sad waters of Lake Nurnen; nor of the great roads that ran away east and south to tributary lands, from which the soldiers of the Tower brought long wagon-trains of goods and booty and fresh slaves." Thus the answer is that Mordor produced a considerable amount of its food for itself, by farms which I imagine resembled the great grain-growing latifundia of the late Roman empire -- many of which, it may be noted, were in North Africa in a climate rather like Mordor's. Other goods were apparently imported from Harad and Rhun -- the south and east. As regards the idea that the Haradrim were "barbaric," I doubt they were any more so than the Western folk; if anything, they were probably more "civilized" from a technological point of view. The most technologically advanced people we meet in *Lotr* are Saruman and his people, and we are told that Saruman's achievements are a feeble imitation of Sauron's. This comparison is made in regard to

In this connection I would like to comment on a remark of Mr. de Camp's in his article on Tolkien in *Fantastic*. He says that, given that a land of immortals would be a Utopia (which I think questionable: consider the unhappy longiaevi in Swift), Ar-Pharazon's decision to seize the Undying Lands was perfectly rational. But it appears to me that this is to accept only part of the data Ar-Pharazon had. He knew that the Undying Lands existed, but he also knew that he had been forbidden to go there by powerful supernatural beings. In a world where magic works -- and the Undying Lands could exist in no other -- disobeying powerful supernatural beings is always stupid. One can endlessly debate the philosophical/theological value of the Ban, but once it had been pronounced violation of it was sheer folly which only a mind made desperate by the fear of death could conceive.

P.S. After reading the above, I realized I had omitted one point I meant to make. De Camp says that Lewis knew little of science and disliked it. Lewis himself conceded his ignorance in his reply to J.B.S. Haldane's criticism of the Deep Heaven trilogy. However, he went on to say that he was pleased that Haldane considered Weston a recognizable scientist. Since Haldane as a noted biologist and a Communist, was both more a scientist and more violent rationalist than Mr. de Camp, I think Mr. de Camp should accept Haldane's evidence that Lewis did, in fact, give a recognizable description of the scientific point of view. Mr. GoodKnight's inserted comments regarding Lewis's views on scientists are also, I think correct, but apply more to *That Hideous Strength* than to *Out of the Silent Planet*. In the first book, Weston's views are "bent;" the misdirection of what is conceded to be valuable dedication to inquiry and to the preservation of his race. In the second book, Weston is broken, and in the third book the rather feeble men running N.I.C.E. have clearly abandoned rationalism for a pseudo-scientific neo-diabolism quite visible today and in general antipathetic to committed rationalists. Against this neo-diabolism Lewis was quite willing to accept the support of honest rationalists like McPhee -- or, I venture to suppose, Mr. de Camp.

Clay Booker

Everman, Texas

I thought that the following article which appeared sometime in July in the Houston Post might be of interest to Society members:

ASLAN PRAISES KIN: The new president of Lions International says he got his spirit of community service from his immigrant parents. "They became good American citizens who were civic minded and they appreciated America because it gave them liberty which they had never known before," said Harry J. Aslan, a grower, shipper, and packer in the San Joaquin Valley community of Kingsburg, Calif. Aslan, who was installed as president of the service club last weekend in Dallas, said that during his year in office he wants Lions clubs to seek new ways to help their communities.

Michael McKenny

Aylmer, Quebec, Canada

I am writing in response to a question in the recent issue of *Mythlore* as to the identity of Michael Scott and his connection with magic. I assume this is a reference to the brilliant scientist of the early 13th century who spelled his name with one T, served under the emperor Frederick II, was acquainted with the work of Leonardo of Pisa (called the greatest Christian mathematician of the Middle Ages) and hence the Arabic numerals, has been claimed as an Irishman though he declined an appoint-

ment as archbishop of Cashel in 1224 on the grounds he couldn't speak Irish (an example lamentably ignored by absentee landlords), was born and lived in Scotland, translated Arabic works and was assumed (as was the case with many learned men of those centuries) to be a practitioner of the arts magical. It seems he was not unacquainted with Hermetical (Alchemical) texts and indeed wrote on the theme. As to the literal interpretation of such works Scott was skeptical about translation of metals and probably never used magic in the sense of attempting to invoke spirits, etc.

I would be most grateful if you could convey this to Mary Stolzenbach who inquired. You may feel free to mention my address should she wish additional information on this thirteenth century scholar. Of course you are free yourself to so inquire, though no doubt your interest is minimal. Should this be



the case, please accept my apologies for the length of this letter. Allow me to use the occasion to thank you most sincerely for the effort and care you put into the publication of your magazine.

A REPLY TO MARGARET HANNAY

by Eugene McGovern

Margaret Hannay's essay on "C.S. Lewis' Changing Attitudes Toward Women" is clearly the effort of someone who has read Lewis thoroughly and who greatly values his work. But I found the essay exasperating. I will try to explain why it exasperated me, but to consider every point I dispute would make a very long letter and will not be attempted.

Hannay greatly exaggerates the effect Joy Davidman had on Lewis's thought. She does this by citing

passages written before he met Joy in 1952 and other passages written later. But the case is not as simple as she makes out. Rummaging through Lewis's work would turn up more, I'm sure, but I think the two passages which follow will make it clear that Lewis did not have to wait until he was 54 to realize "that women are fully human, rather than some separate and inferior species," and that he did not, after he met Joy, come to regard the relationship between the sexes as a symmetrical one which should be characterized by an undifferentiated equality (whatever "equality" might mean here).

The first is from "Addison," in *Selected Literary Essays*, and was first published in 1945.

"It is all there in the *Spectator* — the vague religious sensibility, . . . the playful condescension towards women, . . ."

"His Rational Piety, his smiling indulgence to 'the fair sex', his small idealisms about trade, certainly fall short of actual Christianity, and plain justice to women, and true political wisdom. They may even be obstacles to them; palliatives and anodynes that prolong the disease."

(*Selected Literary Essays*, Cambridge U.P. 1969. Page 167.)

The second is from "We Have No 'Right to Happiness'" (in *God in the Dock*, pp. 321-322) and was the last thing he wrote for publication; it was published posthumously in 1963.

"A society in which conjugal infidelity is tolerated must always be in the long run a society adverse to women. Women, whatever a few male songs and satires may say to the contrary, are more naturally monogamous than men; it is a biological necessity. Where promiscuity prevails, they will therefore always be more often the victims than the culprits. Also, domestic happiness is more necessary to them than to us. And the quality by which they most easily hold a man, their beauty, decreases every year after they have come to maturity, but this does not happen to those qualities of personality — women don't really care twopence about our looks — by which we hold women. Thus in the ruthless war of promiscuity women are at a double disadvantage. They play for higher stakes and are also more likely to lose."

Hannay relies far too heavily on the word (if it still is a word) "chauvinism" and its forms. She objects to the "chauvinistic inferences" (she means "inferences of chauvinism") which can be drawn from the following two lines in a poem by Barfield and Lewis: "N is for Not-being which sinks even deeper, / More formless, more female, more footling -- and cheaper." Why call these lines "chauvinistic"? Why not say they are insulting, or foolish, or uncharitable, or unworthy of their authors, or whatever else is thought to be objectionable about them? The same woeful lack of critical precision is obvious in the attempt to maintain that The Tragedian (the husband of Sarah Smith in *The Great Divorce*), and Tor, the King of Perelandra, are examples of "male chauvinism." Could two characters be more dissimilar? Who would have thought that they have an outstanding characteristic in common?

Hannay makes two charges which are more substantial than that of "male chauvinism," and she makes them all too casually. She remarks that Lewis's "attitude toward women in the church apparently includes a measure of superstitious taboo." "Superstitious taboo" is a strong charge and Hannay, though she writes a bit about it, does not support it. Perhaps she had better not try to support it unless she is prepared to undertake a criticism of several thousand years of Judaeo-Christian theology. Hannay also finds "implicit racism" in the fact that the Narnians are fair and the Calormenes dark, and in the fact that Ransom is afraid of a *black* cross. This is criticism of a very low order and can be answered on its own level by noting that it is a *White* Witch who causes the death of Aslan, or even

by pointing out that at least Lewis did not make Aslan a polar bear.

The most exasperating part of Hannay's essay is her discussion of the women in *That Hideous Strength*. Here nothing is too small for her to pick over. Camilla Denniston is a promising character because she is among several who have a knowledge of Arthurian Britain far beyond that of orthodox scholarship; alas, she is destined for pregnancy: "It is her body which Logres needs, not her mind." Grace Ironwood is a physician, "a Christian career woman," and Hannay regrets that she is never referred to as "Dr. Ironwood." The portrait of Mother Dimble is patronizing toward women, says Hannay; her reason seems to be that while Mother Dimble is given many virtues there is no evidence that she is unusually intelligent. The women do not take part in the verbal duel occasioned by the descent of Viritribia -- they only watch in silence and will later remember in admiration.

It is Lewis's depiction of Jane Studdock and her marriage to Mark, however, which fully engages Hannay's attention. The first page of the novel is "extremely perceptive," but "suddenly the intelligent woman reader is betrayed, we are not to have a competent woman who fills her life with scholarship after all." Why is this a betrayal(!)? After all, most people, like Jane and I, are not "very original thinkers," and quite a few people, again like Jane and I, begin doctoral studies and never complete them. Why is it a betrayal (of "the intelligent woman reader") to portray such a character? Hannay doesn't tell us.

Mark Studdock is "despicable," "unappealing," and seems to have been "deliberately made . . . as repulsive as possible so that the principle of wifely submission must stand alone, without love and without respect." On the other hand, "Jane's flaw is the desire to be independent, to run her own life," but she is "ridiculed by the author for her attempt at studying Donne," "idolatry" of her husband is apparently expected of her, and (apparently) she is not "even permitted to retain her mind and individuality." Only a critic who has read the novel while wearing some kind of ideological blinders could depict it in such a fashion. Such blinders prevent useful criticism, and can even make the wearer forget what she knows very well: Hannay notes that Jane *did* vow obedience to Mark ("but that was a quite different Mark"), but she does not remind us that Jane took Mark "for better or for worse."

(I suppose the same blinders are responsible for Hannay's pointing to the sentence, "Scrubb was quite right in saying that Jill (I don't know about girls in general) didn't think much about points of the compass," and suggesting, in all seriousness, that perhaps Joy Davidman deserves the credit for the parenthetical remark.)

In "reaction to the apparent chauvinism in Lewis's works," says Hannay, "many women have grown so sensitive to the underlying prejudice that they no longer appreciate Lewis's work as a whole." Perhaps it is too severe, but then again perhaps it is not, to yield to the temptation to respond to this with Lewis's remark to the "American Lady"; "I loathe 'sensitive' people who are 'easily hurt' . . . don't you? They are a social pest. Vanity is usually the real trouble."

AN ANSWER TO

EUGENE MCGOVERN

by Margaret Hannay

I was pleased to see that Gene McGovern felt free to critique my essay on Lewis; one serious weakness of publications on the Inklings has been a reluctance to debate controversial issues. Of course the tone of the letter was rather disappointing, in that it was more of a personal attack than a scholarly reevaluation of the ideas presented in

the original article.

Gene and I had the opportunity to meet at MLA, after the letter was written. It was pleasant to find that we are not so far apart on these issues as I would have imagined. For example, we discovered we agree that women should be ordained if they are called to the ministry, and that Lewis's argument to the contrary in "Priestesses in the Church?" is, in Gene's words, probably the "least persuasive" of Lewis's essays.

There does not seem to be substantial evidence against my thesis in Gene's remarks. The quote from "Addison" is excellent, and may indicate that the process was not quite so simple as I may have made it sound; however, it does not disprove the fact that Lewis changed his ideas about women.

The "superstitious taboo" mentioned was Lewis's direct reference to menstruation as disqualifying a woman from the priesthood. Surely that is not a *theological* argument against the ordination of women; that portion of *The Arthurian Torso* does seem to be based on a taboo.

Gene reiterates my objections to *That Hideous Strength* fairly accurately; I do not see that he has answered them. Mother Dimble irritates me not because she is unintelligent, but because her disparaging generalizations about women are presented as wisdom. The fact that Grace Ironwood is never given her title bothers me only because so many of the men *are* given professional titles at various points in the novel. It is not simply that she is called Grace; she is "Miss Ironwood" while the men are "Dr. Ransom," "Dr. Dimble," "Professor Frost."

Yes, of course there is a White Witch in Narnia. I certainly would not expend much energy defending the tangential note on a possible racial reference in the description of the hross. My students found it annoying that after a half a dozen references to its color, Ransom expresses his fear in these terms: "It seemed friendly; but it was very big, very black, and he knew nothing at all about it." "Very big" they could understand as frightening, but "very black"?

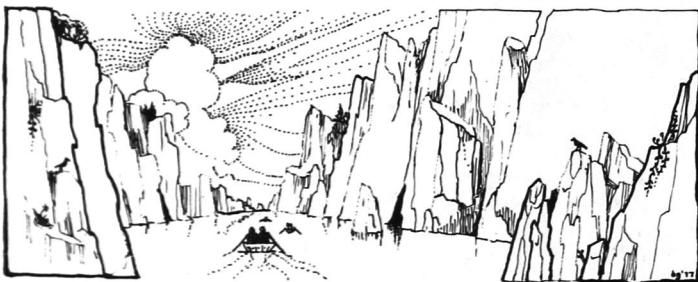
Gene told me that he was afraid his final quote from Lewis was a bit harsh. I will close with a better one: "Opposition is true friendship."

William G. Kelly Orinda, California, U.S.A.

After reading Jessica Kemball-Cook's suggested origins for the name "Moria" in the February *Mythprint*, I feel moved to point out another possible analogue. As a Christian, Tolkien was influenced by the Bible and may have regarded the coining of names with Biblical echoes as a sort of private joke.

In Gen. 22:2, God commands Abraham to "get thee into the land of Moriah" to offer up Isaac, and subsequent references (2 Sam. 24:18, 1 Chr. 21:18, etc.) accordingly treat Moriah as a place of sacrifice. I don't suggest that we take this correspondence very seriously, but the parallelism is interesting to note.

Another point: has anyone compared the idea of the Balrog with Job 12:22? Here the King James version reads, "He discovereth *deep things* out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death." Far-fetched, perhaps, but fun.



TILL WE HAVE FACES

and its Mythological and Literary Precursors

by Andrew Howard

C.S. LEWIS never wrote anything else like *Till We Have Faces*. Lewis' literary output includes children's books, space fantasies, allegorical fantasies, Christian-apologetic essays, and works of medieval scholarship, but *Faces* falls distinctly outside of all of these categories. It is difficult even to assign *Till We Have Faces* to a familiar fictional genre. It contains elements of the historical novel, the maturation novel, the mystic romance, and the fictionalized philosophical treatise; but it does not fit comfortably into any of these categories. For all its singularity, however, *Till We Have Faces* has some significant links with its mythological and literary precursors, and our understanding of *Faces* can be deepened by comparing it with its forerunners.

Lewis takes the story of Psyche and Cupid from the second-century Latin novel *The Transformations of Lucius*, by Lucius Apuleius. The fundamental story of the mortal who is punished for looking upon her divine lover is much older and appears in more than one culture. Lysias, the Greek tutor in *Faces*, tells a variant of the story with the sexes reversed,¹ and Robert Graves notes that the story "is still widely current as a primitive folk-tale in countries as far apart as Scotland and Hindustan."² In Apuleius' novel the Cupid and Psyche story is a three-chapter short story inserted into a rollicking and rather disheveled tale of the journeys of an unlucky young nobleman who is turned into an ass for meddling with magic. An old woman tells the story to a frightened young girl, who has just been kidnapped by robbers, in an effort to make her "feel a little better" (Graves, p. 95). Lucius the ass hears the entire story, and remarks that

though it was told by a drunken and half-demented old woman, I regretted that I had no means of committing it to writing.
(Graves, p. 143)

The drunken old woman's story differs from Lewis' in several respects. Apuleius' story is set unambiguously in the context of Graeco-Roman mythology, the principal divine characters being Venus and her mischievous son Cupid. There are three royal sister in Apuleius' story, as in Lewis' but all three are beautiful; Psyche, the youngest, far outshines the others in beauty, but they too are lovely. Psyche from the start is a very different character from Lewis' Istra. The old woman calls her "simple-minded" and "silly" (Graves, pp. 113, 115), and there is not trace of the toughness of mind and body which characterize Istra. The two elder sisters are unmistakably cruel, and distinctly jealous of what Psyche receives from her divine husband—for they can see and feel her palace just as easily as she herself can. Thus Apuleius' story corresponds more closely to the tale of the Priest of Istra in Lewis' book (Ch. 21) than to the events of the book themselves.

Lewis attaches great importance to the fact that Istra's

¹ C. S. Lewis, *Till We Have Faces* (New York: Time, Inc. 1966; orig. pub. 1956), p. 7. Subsequent references will be to this edition.

² Robert Graves, Introd. to his transl. of *The Transformations of Lucius* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1951), p. xix. Subsequent references will be to this edition in the form "Graves, p. ."