

Winter 2-15-1985

Early Review of Books by J.R.R. Tolkien - Part II

George H. Thompson

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore>



Part of the [Children's and Young Adult Literature Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Thompson, George H. (1985) "Early Review of Books by J.R.R. Tolkien - Part II," *Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature*: Vol. 11: No. 3, Article 11.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore/vol11/iss3/11>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Mythopoeic Society at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature by an authorized editor of SWOSU Digital Commons. An ADA compliant document is available upon request. For more information, please contact phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu.

To join the Mythopoeic Society go to:
<http://www.mythsoc.org/join.htm>



Online Summer Seminar 2023

August 5-6, 2023: Fantasy Goes to Hell: Depictions of Hell in Modern Fantasy Texts

<https://mythsoc.org/oms/oms-2023.htm>



Early Review of Books by J.R.R. Tolkien - Part II

Abstract

Briefly annotated checklist of minor early secondary materials on Tolkien not represented in Judith A. Johnson's *Six Decades of Tolkien Criticism*. Part II includes *Fellowship of the Ring* and *Two Towers*.

Additional Keywords

Tolkien, J.R.R.—Bibliography; Tolkien, J.R.R.—Critical reception

Early Review of Books by J.R.R. Tolkien

Compiled by George H. Thompson

PART II

The Fellowship of the Ring

"The Fellowship of the Ring." British Book News No. 170 (Oct. 1954), p. 577. [A brief notice which speaks of "the curious fascination of this strange romance with its original and compelling mythology, its sense of serious purpose and its fine imaginative writing."] + FR '54E

Flood, Robert H. "Hobbit Hoax?" Books on Trial 13 (Jan.-Feb. 1955), 169-170. [Preentious snobbery is the best description for this scholarly off-shoot of a once-done fairy tale." Violent objection is made to the dust-jacket testimonials. "This book is not recommended; there is no 'moral' problem involved except injustice by the publisher or a waste of time by the reader." Brief.] - FR '54A

H[udson], C.H. "Land of Adventure and Magic". Oxford Times, 13 Aug. 1954, p. 8. [A perceptive and descriptive review of an "extraordinary" book that defies classification. It is allegorical in the sense that the ring is a symbol of absolute power. Good and evil are mingled, but issues are clearer and the inhabitants and their deeds are elemental.] + FR '54E

Hughes, Richard. "The Lord of the Rings". The Spectator No. 6588 (1 Oct. 1954), pp. 408-409. [He defends his statement on the dust jacket that LotR was "something which has scarcely been attempted on this scale since Spenser's Faerie Queen," and that it was distinguished by width of imagination. But he agrees with Edwin Muir that it is simplified in characterization and lacking depth.] + FR '54E

Jackman, Stuart B. "The Fellowship of the Ring". Theology (London) 58 (June 1955), 240-241. ["Mr. Tolkien has written a long, pedestrian fairy-story for adults...." Two things are wrong with the book: (1) Tolkien's obsession with detail produces a "morass of words"; (2) though the book appears to have meaning, one can't make out what it is. See letter from Waal.] - FR '54E

John, K. "The Novel of the Week". Illustrated London News 225 (9 Oct. 1954), 612. [This review of modest length ends by asking if FR has as much genius as The Wind in the Willows: "I am afraid the answer is self-evident. It is a wonderful invention, an enchanting feat; but it has not the salt of genius"] +- FR '54E

J[ordan]-S[mith], P[aul]. "Adults Now Exposed to More Serious Side of Hobbit History". Los Angeles Times, 25 Dec. 1954, Part IV, p. 8. [A brief, sympathetic review: "We hereby warn all who have been dried and smoked in the smog of realism to avoid any invitation to enter the bright world of J.R.R. Tolkien in The Fellowship of the Ring."] + FR '54A

Keptert, L.V. "Adventure in a new Fairyland". Sidney Morning Herald (Australia), 16 Oct. 1954, p. 11. [A long rather wordy sympathetic review. He admires the "brilliantly wrought scenes," and the mysterious and

terrifying power of the supernatural. After quoting from the Beowulf essay about "Shoreless Sea and the outer darkness" he says of Tolkien: "It is something of that feeling which he has infused in this peculiarly memorable twentieth-century contribution to legendary romance."] + FR '54E

Kiely, Benedict. "Hobbits in the Belfry". The Irish Press, 4 Sept. 1954, p. 4. [Tolkien's book is "an enchanting freak," "more than four hundred pages of rich fantasy about nothing in particular." The invention and the lovely prose do not save it from dullness.] - FR '54E

Lambert, J.W. "New Fiction". Sunday Times, 8 Aug. 1954, p. 5. [The allegory is "not unduly stressed; and the story of the pilgrimage...is followed with verve and humour, and cunning variations of pace and style." The Brothers Grimm, The Wind in the Willows and The Sword in the Stone are fair comparisons.] + FR '54E

L[aycock], E[dward] A. "Off the Beaten Path". Boston Globe, 21 Nov. 1954, p. A-7. [He notes the parallel between the North, East, South and West farthings of the Shire and the four Yorkshire Ridings; and that Tolkien taught at Leeds in the West Riding of Yorkshire. It is best to read the book aloud. "Not everyone will like this fantasy, but those who do will like it very much."] + FR '54A

Lehamann, L. Th. "Het Occulte Indianenboek" [The Occult Indian Book]. Litteraire Passpoort (Amsterdam), April 1955, pp. 78-80. [He is annoyed at so much fuss over LotR and so little over John Cowper Powys's Atlantis. Tolkien can make landscapes come alive. But the ring is a piece of lifeless occultism and the more supernatural characters like Tom Bombadil are not believable. Tolkien is not economical in his invention. He calls in new characters every time he needs a new sensation. The adventures become a conglomerate of unexpected attacks and narrow escapes, so that the whole begins to resemble an occult Indian book. Tolkien does not spare us the suggestion that the Hobbits are the salt of Middle Earth. But he fails to define the evil of Sauron and the Orcs.] - FR '54E

Lewis, C.S. "The Gods Return to Earth". Time and Tide 35 (14 Aug. 1954), 1082-1083. [Lewis praises FR as a new conquest in the territory of romance, as a solid and wholly created world (from which the Hobbit was torn, a juvenile fragment), as myth without allegorical pointing; and for its note of anguish at the darkness having come, and for the powerful sense of history in the work.] + FR '54E

Martin, E.W. "A Critic's Notebook". Inquirer (incorporating The Christian Life) (London), 18 Sept. 1954, p. 304. [Briefly describes the work as a "mythological chronicle."] + FR '54E

Miller, P. Schuyler. "The Reference Library". Astounding Science Fiction 55 (July 1955), 156-157. [This [H and FR] is one of those rare fantasies, invented for children but taken over by adults, which

become classic in their circle. If you like the blend of faerie and saga that is in Fletcher Pratt's Well of the Unicorn or Poul Anderson's The Broken Sword, maybe you'll go for these oddly charming, oddly heroic adventure myths of a synthetic half-world...." "It's not science fiction, in spite of what eminent writers say about it on the jacket...." + FR '54A

Mitchison, Naomi. "One Ring to Bind Them". The New Statesmen and Nation 48 (18 Sept. 1954), 331. [A review filled with praise which concludes: "And above all it is a story magnificently told, with every kind of colour and movement and greatness." She holds that Middle-earth is flat.] + FR '54E

Muir, Edwin. "Strange Epic". Sunday Observer, 22 Aug. 1954, p. 7. [Though "an extraordinary book," the characters are simply good or evil, there is no room for "a Satan both evil and tragic." "But admitting that Mr. Tolkien does not have the sensibility or the style to express the particular degree of humanity which we find in Spenser and Ariosto and Malory, his book remains an extraordinary feat." Muir concludes: "And if Mr. Tolkien's imagination had been equal to his invention, and his style equal to both, this book might have been a masterpiece."] + FR '54E

N[icholls], A[lan]. "A Fairy Tale--But Not for Children". The Age (Melbourne), 24 Dec. 1954, p. 16. [Though a fairy tale, "it is not unreal. The closeness of its analogy to the human situation gives it a dreadful reality and relevance. It is a prose-poet's rendering of the mental twilight of the modern world, darkened as it is by the black power....of the atom bomb." The book is "one of the most significant literary achievements of modern times."] + FR '54E

Pearson, Gabriel. "Two Dons". The Isis (Oxford) No. 132 (20 Oct. 1954), p. 11. [Tolkien has created a varied, ample, and rich world. Fortunately "there is no suggestion of allegory, nothing Kafkaish and terribly modern. True, there is a basic conflict of good with evil, but this conflict is at once archetypal and subtly concrete."] + FR '54E

Popplewell, Olive. "Hobbits and Gobelings". The Friend: The Quaker Weekly Journal (London) 112 (26 Nov. 1954), 1197. [Brief. Frodo is "a sort of homely little Parsifal...."] + FR '54E

Prescott, Orville. "Books of the Times". New York Times (2 Nov. 1954), p. 25. ["This is a remarkable book, but it is far from a completely successful one. It grows tedious. It becomes repetitious. And finally it frankly bores." As a writer of romantic fantasy, Tolkien is not as good as E.R. Eddison. In particular he fails to make his characters interesting as 'individuals and fails to give them sufficient heroic qualities.] - FR '54A

Price, Anthony. "Fairy Story for Grownups Too". Oxford Mail (Eng.), 16 Sept. 1954, p. 4. ["The matter-of-fact skill with which the story is told" makes it easier to accept Tolkien's fantasy than one might expect; "and once the imagination has accepted Middle Earth a new world opens up." Tolkien's mythology has all the authority of the old Celtic, Scandinavian and German mythologies, yet is a new creation. The book is like a chronicle of true events in a real world outside our own. The story is stirring beyond measure."] + FR '54E

Puffmore, Henry. "Under Review: Hey ding-a-dong". The Bookseller No. 2539 (21 Aug. 1954), p. 754. [A

scornful summary of C.S. Lewis' "scholastic extravagance" in his review of FR in Time and Tide.] - FR '54E

"Realism in a Frame of Fantasy". The Scotsman, 23 Sept. 1954, p. 11. [A review of several books. "The author has created a new mythology with remarkable realism."] + FR '54E

Smith, Ronald Gregor. "Vigour and Strength". British Weekly (London) 135 (23 Dec. 1954), 2. [A brief, reasonably thoughtful review of FR and TT. "...the best way to encourage you to buy and read these books is to speak not of the great epics and romances of other ages, but of the sheer vigour and strength of the narrative, the vertu with which the adventures unfold."] + FR '54E, TT '55

Sotemann, G. "The Fellowship of the Ring: Een fantastisch epos" ("A fantastic epic"). Algemeen Handelsblad (Amsterdam), 20 Nov. 1954, p. 13. In Dutch. [Tolkien's realistic-unrealistic epic has parallels ranging from medieval romance to The Wind in the Willows. To pick up the book is to be carried away for Tolkien has created his own mythological world with unequalled imagination. The story is carried forward with a lean and varied style. It is free of didacticism and excessive symbolism. It is masterful in its range of human sentiment and in the unity it achieves out of multiplicity.] + FR '54E

Spring, Howard. "Imagination, Fancy and Invention". Country Life (London) 116 (26 Aug. 1954), 667-668. ["....a work of art." Though in the form of prose fiction, it "is also a long poem, in the sense in which Malory's Le Morte d'Arthur is a long poem; and, as surely as that book, it meets Keats' test: it has invention, fancy and imagination." Tolkien sees splendidly and describes splendidly. He proves that creative fiction is not dead.] + FR '54E

"There were Hobbits in the Land in those Days". The Northern Echo (Darlington, Eng.), 3 Sept. 1954, p. 8. [Confronted by this remarkable feat of the imagination, scholars and critics have spoken of Malory, Spenser, Ariosto. The present reviewer sought a pedigree for Volunga Saga out of Puck of the Pook's Hill, but none of these will really do. The best thing is to accept Tolkien as a considerable romancer in his own right. The fit reader will find in this strange world an astonishing variety of scenes and characters. (Summary from Book Review Editor. Not seen.) + FR '54E

Virginia Kirkus' Service 22 (1 Sept. 1954), 598. [A descriptive, mildly favorable notice.] + FR '54A

Waal, Victor de. Letter in reply to S.B. Jackman's review. Theology 58 (Aug. 1955), 308. [He defends Tolkien whose "learning in myth and folklore has enabled him to touch the springs of human symbolism; and through his world charity breathes."] + FR '54E

Wagenknecht, Edward. "Book Relates Wonderful Story". Boston Sunday Herald, 31 Oct. 1954, Sect. 4, p. 7. ["Here is a great work of the imagination...." "The story is wonderful as story alone and the prose a consistent glory." Though not an allegory, FR may "illuminate our world, or even rise, here and there, to prophetic stature." A rather brief review.] + FR '54A

Wagenknecht, Edward. "Ring Joins Great Novels of the Year". Chicago Sunday Tribune: Part IV, Magazine of

Books, 26 Dec. 1954, p. 4. [An enthusiastic review, praising the largeness of theme, the nobleness of imagination, and the memorable prose. "It is not really a novel but a prose romance." Tolkien, like Blake, has "created his own mythology."] + FR '54A

Weir, Andrew. "O, brave Old World!" Yorkshire Post, 10 Sept. 1954, p. 4. [Like Lewis Carroll, Tolkien has added a new country to the world. Tolkien's "power of invention is as unflinching as his gift for narrative and description is great." A review of modest length.] + FR '54E

"Weirdies". Time 64 (22 Nov. 1954), 106, 108. [A fairly favorable review: "Obscure in allegorical meaning but apocalyptic in tone, The Fellowship of the Ring sometimes melts its magic in plausibility, forgetting that a fairy tale is a snow man that cannot be brought into the house."] + FR '54A

Wickenden, Dan. "Heroic Tale of Tiny Folk". New York Herald Tribune Book Review, 14 Nov. 1954, p. 5. [FR is "an unabashed fairy-tale" with a style graphic and eloquent. "Bewitching us into a complete suspension of disbelief, FR does, after all, connect with one aspect of our own experience -- perhaps miraculously, it revives the naive and breathless delight we derived from certain books of our childhood."] + FR '54A

Wisconsin Library Bulletin 51 (Jan.-Feb. 1955), 38. [The imagery and motivation remind the reader of the legends of the North. The writing and imagination delight the special reader who will stay with the story.] + FR '54A

The Two Towers

TT '54 London: A&U, 11 Nov. 1954
TT '55 Boston: HM, 1955

Barr, Donald. "Shadowy World of Men and Hobbits". New York Times Review, 1 May 1955, p. 4. [Barr praises the book as "the old, forthright, virile kind of narrative." He commends its linguistic delights and Tolkien's intimate access to the epic tradition.] + TT '55

The Booklist 51 (1 May 1955), 368. [A brief notice surveying the plot.] o TT '54

[Boucher, Anthony], The Editor. "Recommended reading". Fantasy and Science Fiction 9 (Aug. 1955), 93. [Though his books are unduly long, it is still true "that no writer save E. R. Eddison has ever so satisfactorily and compellingly created his own mythology and made it come vividly alive."] + TT '55

Boucher, Anthony. "Recommended Reading: The Best Science-Fantasy Books of 1955". Fantasy and Science Fiction 10 (March 1956), 120-124. [He includes TT in the "Fantasy" section. "...Tolkien continues with the second volume of his magnificent epic myth..."] + TT '55

Brady, Charles A. "Wonderous Visit to Land of Dwarves and Elves". Buffalo Evening News, 23 April 1955, Magazine Section, p. 10. ["How is one to sum up the unique flavor of Tolkien's sturdy fantasy? Epic is too strong a term, fairy-tale too weak." Tolkien's myth sustains the spirit. "It scales down to the dimensions of the story the most tremendous and immutable moral truths.... The Two Towers is a nursery Nibelungenlied,

a domesticated Inferno, a Paradise Lost diminished for the fireside consideration of Robin Goodfellow."] + TT '55

"Brief Notes, Fiction". The New Yorker 31 (14 May 1955), 154, 157. [Brief. "Mr. Tolkien writes with love and precision, but...he is tedious a good deal of the time."] - TT '55

Cherryman, A. E. "Modern Legend". Truth (London) 154 (12 Nov. 1954), 1402-1403. [Vol. II is just as good as Vol. I. This "fictional masterpiece of our time" breathes a spirit of "optimism." In part this is expressed by "sheer goodness of the forces of good." But what is even more significant, there are infinite lessons in the author's compassion for the forces of evil.] + TT '54

Cooperman, Stanley. The Nation 181 (17 Sept. 1955), 251. [A very brief notice in a review of recent fiction.] + TT '55

Cureau, Doris L. "Hobbits, Ents, Wizards Struggle Against Evil". The Hartford (Conn.) Times, 23 April 1955, p. 22. [A modest review with some good perceptions. She observes that the "reader's mind must compass a world that is not man-centered." "To call this fantasy is scarcely true. There is too much of substance, too much of what holds truth in any time or in any world."] + TT '55

de Camp, L. Sprague. "Book Reviews". Science Fiction Quarterly 4 (May 1956), 51. [Vol. II is even better than Vol. I. "It keeps its suspense up better, with fewer long slow passage."] + TT '55

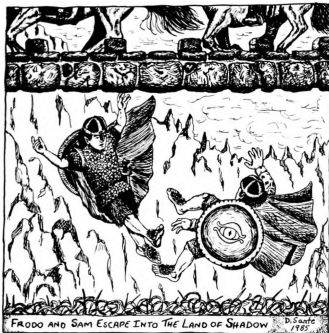
Dolbier, Maurice. "Hobbit-Forming". Providence Sunday Journal, 24 April 1955, Section 6, p. 10. [This is "one of the most remarkably imaginative works of modern times." Brief.] + TT '55

Dunlavy, Marjorie. "Role of Fantasy: Universal Meaning Artfully Inserted". Dallas Times Herald, 22 May 1955, Section 2, p. 2. [Remoteness in time gives credibility, a fact true equally of epic and of LOTR. Fantasy is Tolkien's "method for packing more universal meaning in an action story." "Courage and selflessness are the heroic virtues and they transmute hobbits and men to heroes when the situation is desperate and a champion is needed." An intelligent review.] + TT '55

"Elemental Forces in Conflict". The Scotsman, 17 Dec. 1954, p. 11. [TT has its roots in the Norse Sagas, Old English heroic poems, and medieval romances. "The values it embodies are heroic values: nobility, courtesy, loyalty, and courage. The author's narrative and descriptive talents and outstanding."] + TT '54

"The Epic of Westerosse". Times Literary Supplement, 17 Dec. 1954, p. 817. ["The whole is a prose epic in praise of courage." "...Westerose... comes to rank in the reader's imagination with Asgard and Camelot." Brief.] + TT '54

[Fausset], H. L. A. "Magical". Manchester Guardian, 26 Nov. 1954, p. 9 [Mr. Tolkien's powers of imaginative invention show no signs of flagging." The theme "tends to be rather overlaid with an overgrowth of sensational romance." "Mr. Tolkien is, in fact, hardly a Spenser or an Ariosto, as has been claimed. But he is a thrilling story-teller." Brief.] + TT '54



"Fiction". British Book News No. 174 (Feb. 1955), p. 846. [A brief notice, mainly plot summary.] o TT '54

Forrest, Julian. "Has look of New Classic". Boston Sunday Herald, 31 July 1955, Section III, p. 6. ["...this work which is one of the best wonder tales ever written-- and certainly one of the best written-- is also a picture of our world, all the more illuminating because we see it here in a light that never shone on sea or land." Fairly brief.] + TT '55

Gerson, Villiers. "The Spectroscope". Amazing Stories 29 (Dec. 1955), 115. [Frodo is described as a "humanoid being." This volume is not as good as the first and Tolkien is sometimes pedantic, "but his gifts are so plentiful that we must forgive him his enthusiasm and enjoy this, his masterpiece, in toto..." It deserves to stand with Edison.] + TT '55

Glackin, William C. "Out of this World". Sacramento Bee, 7 May 1955, p. 6. [An enthusiastic review. "Tolkien has created a new mythology." "The story has drama, excitement, suspense, a little humor and genuine humanity." The author "is a wizard to match against his own Gandalf the Grey."] + TT '55

Grady, R. F., S.J. Best Sellers 15 (1 May 1955), 25-26. ["A magnificently inventive creation that has the authentic ring of saga, of epic poetry." "Mr. Tolkien's great gift is that he has made his imagined land as real to us as any land just over the horizon hills." + TT '55

Hall, David. "Fire and Sword". New Zealand Listener, 18 March 1955, p. 14. ["The effect becomes massive, although not even his excellent and simple style can do much more than garnish the labels placed on most of the people..." Brief.] + TT '54

[Judson], C. H. "To the Dark Lord". Oxford Times, 19 Nov. 1954, p. 10. [A descriptive review. Vol. II has not quite the appeal of Vol. I. "It is a grimmer tale altogether, and we miss, among the violence and the

darkness, the kindly magic of the first part..." But the story appears to be moving towards a powerful climax.] + TT '54

John, K. "The Novel of the Week". Illustrated London News 266 (22 Jan. 1955), 156. [He declines to enter the debate about the greatness of LOTR. But Vol. II is every bit as good as Vol. I and has even more action. "And the suspense is cruel."] + TT '54

Jordon, John. "The Little Life of Man". Irish Press (Dublin), 18 Dec. 1954, p. 4. [A thoughtful and substantial review in praise of Tolkien's narrative skill in the "weaving of epic, heroic romance, parable, and fairy tale, and the more adventurous kind of detective story, into a pattern at once strange and curiously familiar to our experience." The meeting of Merry and Pippin with Trueblood is especially praised as "a reflection of a relationship we know and love in our own world, the tenderness of the very weak, the bond between the very old and the very young." "Such is the seriousness of ...Tolkien's vision of good and evil, that we may without irreverence note the Christian parallel of Gandalf's descent into hell, and resurrection." "...so far it has the air of a masterpiece." + TT '54

Keper, L. V. "More About the Hobbits". The Sidney Morning Herald (Australia), 19 Feb. 1955, p. 12. ["... the almost human characteristics of the hobbits, and their friendly, gossipy, greedy approach to life, make their dangers the more real and gripping." This volume is "rich in invention of new characters." Particularly praiseworthy is the handling of the speech of the Orcs, Ents, etc.] + TT '54

Lambert, J. W. "New Fiction". Sunday Times, 12 Dec. 1954, p. 5. [An interim brief review of Tolkien's "prodigious enterprise." "The standard of invention and narrative drive is nobly maintained; I am not sure that the book grows in stature."] + TT '54

L[aycock], E[dward] A. "Something Very Special". Boston Globe, 24 April 1955, p. 85. [Mostly plot summary.] LOTR is "something very special." It may be compared to The Kalevala. Fairly brief.] + TT '55

Manzalaoui, Mahmud. "No Artificial Allegory in this Fairy Romance". Egyptian Gazette, 18 Feb. 1955, p. 2. [It is a great epic set in an imaginary land, peopled with characters of fairy-land; at the same time it has the "solid, purposeful power of a heroic romance." It is symbolic of all struggles against evil. "This book has not pleased readers of the staple modern psychological novel. To them, its epic quality cuts it off from the reality of contemporary life, and its fantasy divorces it from the analytical study of human nature." It signifies, however, a new trend in fiction, along with Amos Tutuola's My Life in the Bush of Ghosts.] + TT '54

Martin, E. W. "A Critic's Notebook". Inquirer, incorporating The Christian Life (London) 11 Dec. 1954, p. 405. [There is meaning in Tolkien's creatively exciting story, "this shining Arthurian-like cycle." Brief.] + TT '54

Miller, P. Schuyler. "The Reference Library". Astounding Science Fiction 57 (March 1956), 155-156. [Though Vol. I is finer, the Ents and the terrific battle at Helm's Deep are admirable. Rather brief.] + TT '55

Muir, Edwin. "The Ring". Sunday Observer, 21 Nov. 1954, p. 9. [Vol. II carries on and expands the admirable qualities of Vol. I. The Ents and episodes like the battle of Helm's Deep are magnificent. The Ring cannot be reduced to the hydrogen bomb, it "seems to stand for evil itself," tempting the good, strengthening the bad. It is just that the natural forces of earth should be involved in this great struggle.] + TT '54

P., A. "In Middle Earth". Oxford Mail, 6 Jan. 1955, p. 4. [A fairly brief account of the story is followed by this comment: "The Ents are a fine imaginative creation, but even they are surpassed by Gollum... who now emerges uneasily into daylight."] + TT '54

Pearson, Gabriel. "An Abstract Legend". The Isis (Oxford) No. 1244 (23 Feb. 1955), p. 29. [TT is not genuine legend, the characters being too individual for that. But the world of the book has complete integrity. This review is really very confused. Its tone is one of admiration with some qualification.] + TT '54

"Professor's Fertile Fantasy". Church Times (London), 17 Dec. 1954, p. 4. [The picture of good and evil "is cross-hatched by temptation and repentance." Despite what has been said about the artificiality of Tolkien's style, "the real danger of his style is its essential simplicity." This is not always effective; but most often it works and the style becomes transparent. The discussion of style makes this very favorable review of some interest.] + TT '54

Richardson, Maurice. "New Novels". The New Statesman and Nation 48 (18 Dec. 1954), 835-836. [He reacts against the praise by Hughes, Lewis, Auden, and Mitchison (who compared Tolkien to Malory). "It will do quite nicely as an allegorical adventure story for very leisured boys..."] - TT '54

"SR's Spring Poll". Saturday Review 38 (9 April 1955), 14-15. [The book editors vote for 6 books. Dolbier gives one vote to TT. The plot is very briefly surveyed.] + TT '55

Street, Allen. "Little Men's Day". Current Literature, Dec. 1954, p. 211. [A brief comment under the heading "Epic Romance" notes that "once again the great sweep and epic quality of Mr. Tolkien's heroic romance carries the reader entranced to the last page."] + TT '54

"The Two Towers". The Times of India (Bombay), 8 Jan. 1956, p. 6. [The plot is surveyed and praised. "The allegory sticks out as plain as a pike staff." The conflict of good and evil is then discussed briefly. (Obviously the same reviewer as Vol. I.)] + TT '54

Wagenknecht, Edward. "The making of a Classic". Chicago Sunday Tribune: Part IV, Magazine of Books, 24 Apr. 1955, p. 3. [He praises TT along the same lines as FR in the earlier Tribune review.] + TT '55

Walbridge, Earle F. Library Journal 80 (15 May 1955), 1219. [Very brief: "An astonishing feat of the imagination..."] + TT '55

Weir, Andrew. "Epic Fairy Tale". Yorkshire Post, 12 Nov. 1954, p. 4. [A short, thoughtful review. The book is for highly intelligent children and for adults who delight in fantasy. Tolkien's stamina in description, narrative, and plot invention is admirable.] + TT '54

Wharton, Will. "Myth of Middle-Earth". St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 10 July 1955, p. 4C. ["...the books are excellent juveniles." (Summary from Book Review Editor. Not seen.)] + TT '55

Wickenden, Dan. "Humor, Drama, Suspense In a Unique, Romantic Epic". New York Herald Tribune Book Review, 8 May 1955, p. 5. [The prose of this romantic epic for adults "falls repeatedly into heroic and poetic rhythms which recall Malory and the great Nordic sagas." "The great design of the whole begins to emerge... the pace is swifter, the drama is heightened, the suspense becomes at times almost literally unbearable."] + TT '55

Wizards, Elves and Goblins!" The Herald (Melbourne), 19 March 1955, p. 24. [A favorable review according to the paper. Not seen.] + TT '54

See also review of FR by Smith and of RK by Blair, Lehmann, Lewis, Sotemann, and Yeiser.



Radagast in Middle-earth

Brown, fading Radagast took no share
Redeless, heedless, he was not seen in battle.
Grey Gandalf, worn with war, and schemes, and care,
Thought him faithful but a fool to prattle.
Wood wanderer, of no strategy the framer,
He was dismissed by Saruman the White
As Radagast the Simple, the Bird Tamer,
Figured on by no one in the fight.
He only heartened animals to breed,
In the dark days of Nazgul, and plants to grow
Under the shadow, the Istar of no deed
And of no need to Middle-earth men know.
Thoughtless, all thought, he carried Gandalf's word
Through land and air to eagles, and was heard.

Ruth Berman