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Radagast in Middle-earth

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Radagast in Middle-earth

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 unevenly 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 entrilled 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