A Celebration of Tasker Hepplewater's Mock Turtle (1935)

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Tolkien’s literary work derives its scope from his medieval studies and its form from his theory of subcreation, the rearranging in the secondary world of the artist the components perceived in the primary world. He has rearranged material in *Beowulf* as he interprets it from his own scholarly and Christian perspective to create *The Hobbit*. He has given us the opportunity for seeing with new eyes things which have lost their meaning through familiarity, for "seeing things as we are (or were) meant to see them."

Endnotes


3 My text is *Beowulf* and *The Fight at Finnsburg*, ed. Friedrich Klaeber, 2nd ed. (New York: D.C. Heath, 1928), since it is the edition Tolkien would have known in the thirties.


6 Publication came some years later in the *Dublin Review*, CCXVI (January 1945); twenty years afterwards it was reprinted with "On Fairy-Stories" in *Tree and Leaf*, and a year later both were reprinted in *The Tolkien Reader* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1966).


9 Tolkien attacks the general position held by Chambers, Klaeber, et al, but he does not deal specifically with Klaeber. Yet much of his discussion parallels.

10 "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics," p. 86.


12 The Anglo-Saxon’s doom Tolkien calls in his essay on *Beowulf* "this paradox of defeat inevitable yet unacknowledged," concluding that "It is in *Beowulf* that a poet has drawn the struggle in different proportions, so that we may see man at war with the hostile world, and his inevitable overthrow in Time" (p. 67). Beowulf has the comfort of knowing at his death that he has shown courage, "the exaltation of undefeated will" (p. 66). He knows that his foes are God’s also.

13 Man alien in a hostile world, engaged in a struggle which he cannot win while the world lasts, is assured that his foes are the foes also of Dryhten, that his courage noble in itself is also the highest loyalty: so said thyle and clerk, (p. 78).