

The Charles Williams Society

NEWSLETTER

NO 13 SPRING 1979

MEETINGS OF THE CHARLES WILLIAMS SOCIETY 1979

21 April 1979: Rev Dr Brian Horne. Subject: 'Charles Williams' and Gerard Manley Hopkins' Theology and Poetry'.

9 June 1979: Annual General Meeting

The Society's third annual general meeting will be held in Liddon House, 24 South Audley Street, London W1 on Saturday 9 June 1979 at 2.30 pm.

Agenda: 1. Apologies for absence.

2. Report on the year's work presented by Richard Wallis, chairman of the Council.

3. The accounts will be presented by Philip Bovey, treasurer.

4. Report of the General Secretary.

5. Report on the Newsletter introduced by Molly Switek, editor.

6. Election of Council members under paragraph 5 of the Society's constitution.

7. Any Other Business.

Brian Horne, General Secretary.

The annual general meeting is open to members only. After it has ended, at, or as soon as possible after 3.30pm, a meeting open also to non-members will be held, at which Anne Scott will be the speaker. Questions and discussion will follow, after which refreshments will be available.

The Council hopes that as many members as possible will be present and invite their friends to the open meeting.

The 21 April meeting will also be held at 2.30 at Liddon House, 24 South Audley Street, London W1. (North Audley Street is the second turning to the right, south, off Oxford Street, going from Marble Arch towards Oxford Circus. After Grosvenor Square it becomes South Audley Street. Another convenient access is from Park Lane.)

Meetings are followed by discussion and tea. Please bring copies of any books which might be referred to at a meeting. There is no fee for members, but 50p must be paid for a guest (each member may bring one guest) and this should be handed to the person in charge of the meeting.

The Society's Lending Librarian brings a selection of library books which may be borrowed by members.

MEETINGS OF THE S.W. LONDON GROUP OF THE SOCIETY

For information please contact Martin Moynihan, 5 The Green, Wimbledon, London SW19 5AZ, telephone 01 946 7964.

LONDON READING GROUP

10 June, Sunday, at 1pm, at Charles and Alice Mary Hadfield's house, The White Cottage, 21 Randolph Road, London W.9 (nearest station, Warwick Avenue). Please bring sandwiches.

7 July, Saturday, at 7.30pm, at Charles and Alice Mary Hadfield's house, The White Cottage, 21 Randolph Road, London W.9 (nearest station, Warwick Avenue)

5 August, Sunday, at 1pm at Richard and Joan Wallis's flat, 6 Matlock Court, Kensington Park Road, London W11 (nearest station, Notting Hill Gate). Please bring sandwiches.

4 November, Sunday, at 1 pm, at David and Dulcie Caro's house, 50 Drayton Gardens, London SW10 (nearest station, Gloucester Road). Please bring sandwiches.

At Saturday meetings we are currently reading The Figure of Beatrice with Dante's Purgatorio and Paradiso; at Sunday meetings War in Heaven.

OXFORD SUMMER CONFERENCE

In outline, we plan to meet in Oxford about 1.30 on Friday 7th September, after our members have given themselves an early lunch. We shall then visit the main "sights" associated with C.W. before arriving at the Oxford University Press in Walton Street at 3.30. There we shall be received by the London Publisher, Sir John Brown and some of the staff, to see an exhibition of C.W.'s books formerly published by OUP; meet several of his contemporaries; hear a short talk; and be given tea.

Members will then be free for the rest of the day: some may later wish to visit the Eagle & Child pub in St Giles, where the Inklings used to meet.

On Saturday 8th September we shall meet about midday for a walk to CW's grave in Holy Cross churchyard. Afterwards members will find their own lunches, and reassemble in the Curators' Room in the Bodleian Library at 2pm for a three-hour conference. Most of the time will be given to a reading (by arrangement with Ruth Spalding) of Thomas Crammer of Canterbury, with Martin Browne, the Skeleton in the original production, reading that part. Some parts will be allotted in advance to readers: others will be read in rotation as on previous occasions. The reading will be preceded by a talk by Martin Browne, President of Radius, the Religious Drama Society. The Conference will end at 5pm.

During the period of the Conference, and also before and after, the Bodleian Library will be presenting a Charles Williams Exhibition in the Divinity School building, next to the Library. Members can visit this at their own convenience.

Final details of the Conference will be published in the summer Newsletter.

The following are interim notes:

1. We are making no residential arrangements. Members should make their own plans to stay in Oxford overnight, though it is easy enough for most people to travel to and from it by car or train each day.
2. No meals are being provided, except tea on Friday.
3. Members and guests will be asked to pay 50p per day each as an attendance fee to cover expenses. Money will be collected on the spot, and should not be sent in advance.
4. It will not be necessary formally to book places, but the Secretary will, after final details have been published, be glad of informal notification of those likely to be present for the OUP visit, in order that we can tell our hosts how many to expect for tea.

Ruth Spalding writes in connection with the advance notice that appeared in the Autumn Newsletter: "St Mary's, the University Church was NOT Charles's regular place of worship. He sometimes went there but he made his Communion every Sunday morning at St Cross where he was buried."

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members are reminded that the 1979-80 subscriptions are due from 1 March 1979. The sums are £2 for single members, £3 for couples. Please send the appropriate amount to the Treasurer.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to:

Mrs M B Boughton, Fäntisstrasse 8, 9034 Eggersriet Sg, Switzerland

Dr Glen Cavaliero, 29 Portugal Place, Cambridge, CB5 8AF

Mr C J Cooper, 1 St James's Street, London SW1

Miss Rowena Hamer-Jones, 2 Sedlescombe Road, London SW6

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

Chairman: Richard Wallis, 6 Matlock Court, Kensington Park Road,
London W11 3BS (221 0057)

Secretary: Rev Dr Brian Horne, 11b Roland Gardens, London SW7 (373 5579)

Treasurer: Philip Bovey, 32 Maple Street, London W1 (637 0449)

Membership

Secretaries: Jenet and Philip Bovey, 32 Maple Street, London W1 (637 0449)

Lending

Library: Mrs Anne Scott, 25 Corfton Road, London W5 2HP (997 2667)

Editor: Mrs Molly Switek, 8 Crossley Street, London N7 8PD (607 7919)

THE MYTH OF BACON

Alice Mary Hadfield offers an apology to members. She thought that her typescript of The Myth was the only one to survive; and, because the pages were numbered serially, that it was complete.

Since publication, however, a member has found the programme for the original Downe House performance with CW's programme notes. This shows that there was an intermediate Part II, in which Bacon talks to Shakespeare. Another member, happily, has the missing portion of text. The editor hopes, therefore, to publish both the programme and Part II in the next issue of the Newsletter. This episode perhaps shows the Newsletter's value.

CW AND ST ALBANS - a contribution from Eric James, Canon Missioner of St Albans.

When I arrived in St Albans in 1973, I had no idea that Charles Williams had lived here.

As soon as I arrived here, I had to go to bed with a recurrence of back trouble. My good bishop, Robert Runcie, came to visit me in bed, and asked me if I would write the annual St. Alban's-tide prayer leaflet whilst in bed. I said I'd like to do anything to help, but wouldn't it be better if someone else did it, as I knew nothing about St. Alban; nothing about St, Albans, the City; and nothing about St. Albans, the Diocese. "Well" said he, "let me be honest. We've forgotten about it, and it ought to have gone to press; you're the only one with the time. Try and do something." "Alright" I said, "but only if you'll

bring me the books which will enable me to tell the story of St. Alban as honestly as possible. I can't bear hagiolatry." "Done" said he.

I enjoyed the reading. The story of Alban is particularly moving, and, I think, convincing. Who would invent the story of a saint who was not baptised; who was being prepared for baptism; who helps the priest who is preparing him to escape; who puts on the priest's clothing to enable him to escape; and who gets killed instead of the priest because he's wearing his clothes. Death by inadvertence rather than martyrdom, strictly speaking. Certainly death by substitution.

It was the last thought which suddenly made me say to myself - in bed - "This is pure Charles Williams". I must find out if there's any evidence he knew the Alban story.

One of the priests at the Abbey came to see me - Keith Jones - who I reckoned might be a Charles Williams' fan. "Keith" I said, "do you know if there's any evidence connecting Charles Williams with St. Albans?" "Well" said Keith, "I shall be taking his sister Communion tomorrow morning. His dad kept a shop in Victoria Street, opposite the library; and he went to St. Albans School - when it was the Grammar School".

You could have knocked me down if I'd not been in bed.

I decided that I ought to join the Charles Williams Society, and did - via Elizabeth Montefiore. But I've not been able to get to any of the meetings. I've done nothing but welcome the newsletter.

I've been here nearly six years. I don't expect I shall stay much longer - though it has been a very happy time. But before I leave I would like to see some permanent memorial to Charles Williams in the Abbey. He must have loved the place. I'm sure it has had its effect on him. He is one of St. Albans' great men.

Would this be a cause the Charles Williams Society would want to promote?

There is an "appeal" on here at the moment for the Abbey; but I am quite sure it shouldn't get "lost" in that.

I'd much rather see something like glass doors with a characteristic Charles Williams image on them and words.

Charles began his schooling at the Abbey School in 1894; in 1898 he went to St. Albans School. In 1917 Charles and Michal were married and went to live in Hampstead.

TWENTIETH CENTURY LITERARY CRITICISM, VOL 1. Alice Mary Hadfield writes:

This contains criticism on novelists, poets, playwrights, short story writers and other creative writers who died between 1900 and 1960; editors Dedria Bryfonski and Phyllis Carmel Mendelson.

Our Society has been sent a copy of this large book, published by the Gale Research Company, Book Tower, Detroit, Mich. 48226, U.S.A. It is to be an annual publication, containing significant passages from published criticism.

In this first volume we are pleased to find Charles Williams, as evidence of American readers' sense of his importance.

The arrangement by death dates gives an interesting spread to the book, from Samuel Butler, born in 1835 and Emile Zola born 1840, to Bertolt Brecht, Gertrude Stein and Max Beerbohm died 1956 and Raymond Chandler died 1959. There are 38 authors and a great number of critics, many nationalities in both. The first English edition of foreign language work is given. Browsing is irresistible.

Charles Williams has 7½ pages, criticism by Lewis, Auden, Hadfield, Moorman, Weales, Fairchild, Fuller, Winship, Irwin and Spacks. It makes good reading, with surprise evident in the critics' reactions. They tackle his poetry, novels, plays, theological and critical works. The book, given to us by the publishers, will be for a year in the Society's lending library, c/o Mrs Scott, 25 Corfton Road, Ealing, London W5 2HP, postage will be £1.06p each way; after a year the book will be deposited in the Society's Reference Library on the first floor of King's College, Strand, London. Copies can be bought from European Book Service, Flevolaen 36-38, P.O.B.124, 1380 AC Weesp, Netherlands, price \$38.00, postage paid by Gale Research if customer prepays. Mr J Derkx, Gale Department.

The book, Gale's Twentieth Century Literary Criticism is not to be confused with Gale's Contemporary Literary Criticism which considers authors living from 1960. There will be no duplication between the two series.

GEORGE DARLEY

Anne Ridler writes: Darley was one of the neglected poets whom CW discovered for himself, and revived for others. I vividly remember his reading of passages from Nepenthe, and the lyric 'Wherefore unlaurelled Boy' with its obvious application to Darley himself. In the Preface to the Oxford Book of Regency Verse (largely written by CW) he wrote: 'Hood has been misjudged - his puns have been remembered and his poems forgotten. But Darley has not been judged at all. He was neglected in his lifetime; he has been neglected since. "It is time something was done about it", and a small beginning is made here.' In editing an edition of Darley with a careful text, - never done before - and a worthy presentation, I have thought of the work as fulfilling a debt to CW, as well as repairing neglect. The book is illustrated by vignettes from Berwick, and published by the Merrion Press at £10.

NEWS FROM U.S.A.

As we thought that it would interest members both here and in U.S.A. to know something of the Collection of the works of Charles Williams and other writers at Wheaton College, Illinois, U.S.A., we asked Professor Clyde Kilby to write the article which follows about the Collection.

'The Marion E. Wade Collection at Wheaton College is now about fifteen years old. Wheaton College is a liberal arts institution located some 26 miles west of Chicago. It began because of a special interest in the authors involved - Owen Barfield, G.K.Chesterton, C.S.Lewis, Dorothy L. Sayers, J.R.R.Tolkien and Charles Williams.

The Collection began with few books and fewer manuscripts, the latter consisting mainly of some letters from C.S.Lewis to Professor Kilby and ten

sonnets on as many pieces of paper written by Charles Williams. The original Lewis letters now run to more than a thousand and the holographs of Charles Williams to several hundred. Thanks to the interest of Mrs Charles Williams and her son Michael, the total of Williams's letters is more than eight hundred.

The essential unity of the Collection is marked by the fact that these writers form a sort of family. Though well individualised in their lives and in some 350 books they produced, they join hands in holding a high and serious, indeed a Christian, view of life.

Many of these writers were personal friends. Williams, Tolkien and Lewis were prominent members of the Oxford literary circle known as the 'Inklings'. G.K.Chesterton and Dorothy L. Sayers were both members of the mystery writers' 'Detection Club'. Most of them were graduates of Oxford University. The only one of the authors not of the twentieth century was George MacDonald, but his influence on some of the others is well known.

The Marion E.Wade Collection holds first British editions (including many autographed ones) of the works of Charles Williams, along with nearly all other editions and reprints. It also contains books about Williams, such as Alice Mary Hadfield's An Introduction to Charles Williams, Lois Glenn's Charles W.S.Williams, A Checklist, and Mary McDermot Sheidler's The Theology of Romantic Love: A Study in the Writings of Charles Williams. It also holds M.A. and Ph.D. studies such as those of Christopher E. Fullman, Joyce R. Hines, Thomas T. Howard, Robert W. Peckham, Robert J. Reilly, Clinton W. Trowbridge and Marjorie Evelyn Wright.

The Collection contains a considerable proportion of the letters and manuscripts of Charles Williams, including about 800 of his original letters, most of them written to his wife during the war period in which he had removed to Oxford with the Press while she remained in London. Of manuscripts it contains a variety of his lecture notes and many of his poems, along with complete holographs of The Figure of Beatrice, Flecker of Dean Close, Witch craft, Descent into Hell and two drafts of All Hallow's Eve, and of many fragments, including the unfinished novel "The Noises that Weren't There". There are also many book reviews by Williams and also published reviews of his books and periodical articles about him.

In addition to the Charles Williams library, the Marion E. Wade Collection contains the following:

OWEN BARFIELD. First and other editions of all his books, the majority of his periodical articles, his "Great War" and other correspondence with C.S.Lewis and almost all of his holographs. It also has a typescript of his unpublished novel English People.

G. K. CHESTERTON. An excellent collection of his books, including many numbered and signed copies, three short manuscripts and two of his letters. It holds, with the exception of five numbers, all of G. K.'s Weekly. It has two copies of The Turkey and The Turk signed by author and illustrator and also several of Chesterton's original drawings. It also holds a large collection of articles about Chesterton.

C. S. LEWIS. First and other editions of all his books except Out of the Silent Planet, over a thousand of his original letters, and holographs of An Experiment in Criticism, and "John Donne and Love Poetry in the Seventeenth Century". One of its most valuable holdings is an eleven-volume typed record of Lewis family journals, letters, and miscellany going back to 1850. There are also a few books from Lewis's personal library with

annotations by him. Of special value are the holographs of Lewis's boyhood "Boxen" stories illustrated by him.

GEORGE MACDONALD. An unusually complete collection of his books except for certain first British editions, including 13 different editions of At the Back of the North Wind. It holds about 20 of his original letters and many articles and reviews.

DOROTHY L SAYERS. First British and other editions of all but a few of her books, including some inscribed ones. It holds about 70% of her holographs of published writings and some unpublished ones. Also about 20 of her original letters, along with some rare pamphlets and Christmas cards, and a substantial file of articles.

J. R. R. TOLKIEN. An almost complete collection of his books, including the rare 1937 British edition of The Hobbit and proof copies of The Fellowship of the Ring and The Two Towers. It has some 25 of his original letters. A file of articles and book reviews and some original art work from The Lord of the Rings round out the holdings.

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The archives and resources of the Collection are open to all, and we especially invite the members of the Charles Williams Society to visit and study in The Marion E. Wade Collection.'

A HYMN IN "THE PLACE OF THE LION"

The following article was contributed by Dr Richard Sturch.

On p. 103 of the Faber edition of "The Place of the Lion" we are told that: "a couple of lines from one of Abelard's own hymns especially rang in her" (Damaris's) "ears as such things will.

Est in re veritas Jam non in schemate;
until her maddened mind produced (incorrectly) as a translation:
Truth is always in the thing Never in the reasoning."

This passage left me for one wondering what the correct translation really was; and perhaps the same curiosity may have been aroused in other readers. The passage comes, as Damaris remembers, from a hymn for Lauds on Sunday: meant to be sung at dawn, it contrasts the light of Christian truth with the puzzling darkness that preceded it. I have ventured a doggerel paraphrase:

"The light of dawn is rising,
The dark has passed away;
We rise from night to welcome
The glory of the day:
And as the sun with splendour
On morning's cloudbanks shines,
The Gospel's splendour brightens
On ancient laws and signs.

The dark symbolic figures
Of Moses ruled for long,
But we are daylight's children
And sing a daytime song;
All things arise and waken
With Jesus from the tomb;
His light will never leave us
To sink again in gloom.

The Kingdom shall no longer
Be veiled in symbol's shade;
The truth is here in substance,
The symbols pass and fade: *
Yet Christ, the Law's fulfiller,
Gave truth behind the veil,
And not one jot or tittle
Of prophecy can fail.

Though night's the time for weeping
While Christ is with the dead,
The Sun of life this morning
Brings joy and peace instead:
For Christ from death is rising
And round His tomb the light
Of high angelic splendour
Puts stricken guards to flight.

The saints of ancient Israel
Who slumbered in the grave
Rise to proclaim the glory
Of Him who lives to save;
Thus from the earth beneath us
And from the heavens above
Angels and saints bear witness
To God's victorious love.

Now to the Lord be glory
Through all eternity,
From whom and by and in whom
Creation comes to be:
From whom, from God the Father,
By whom, by God the Son,
In whom, in God the Spirit,
The Three for ever One."

* Representing "Est in re veritas Jam non in schemate" !

THE INKLINGS by Humphrey Carpenter, publishers George Allen & Unwin, London
1978, 287pp, £6.50p.

The following review was written by Brian Horne.

I must declare my hand at the beginning of this review: I do not have a taste for 'Literary Biographies', even those, like George Painter's biography of Proust or Michael Holroyd's life of Strachey, that are recognised as major achievements. I have always sympathised with the belief, which lay behind T. S. Eliot's request that no biography of him should be written, that what a writer is, and what a writer wishes the world to know about himself, is adequately contained in his own writing. With statesmen, or soldiers, or bishops, the case may be argued differently, but with artists it is so. Literary biographies seldom illuminate the work of the writers and frequently succeed, contrary to the intentions of the biographer, only in diminishing their subjects in the eyes of the reader.

Humphrey Carpenter's book is not exactly a literary biography; it is the story of a group of men who held certain views in common, met frequently, and enjoyed each other's company. Most of the members of the group wrote and had works published, but they were not primarily writers. One was a soldier, one a doctor, most of them were dons. Even C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien, the sale of whose books ran into millions, were first and foremost scholars and teachers - men of the university. They were central figures in the story of the Inklings and Mr Carpenter recounts the lives of these two men and their friendship with great insight and sympathy. This is not literary biography. What is of interest to the reader is not what light is shed on the making of The Lord of the Rings or the construction of the Narnia tales, but the relationship of the two men to each other, their relationship to the group, and their relationship to the university. And Mr Carpenter is excellent in charting the course of these relationships. He has the gift of being able to examine details in the private lives of his subjects without giving the impression of someone prying in order to satisfy a vulgar curiosity (either of himself, or of his readers). This discretion is, perhaps, the most engaging quality of his writing, and nowhere does it appear to greater advantage than in the story of C. S. Lewis. He was a puzzling man, but he was, as the author shows, the *raison d'être* of the Inklings, so the major part of the book is his.

Only two of the Inklings were writers: Owen Barfield and Charles Williams. It is true that both held other jobs, but both considered themselves to be writers, and when Williams died his tombstone bore the epitaph: 'Charles Williams. Poet. Under the Mercy.' In dealing with Williams, Mr Carpenter cannot help moving into the territory of literary biography and here, despite the sympathy with which the portrait is painted, I feel the familiar sensation of disappointment. The intimate, sometimes unpleasant details of Williams's life do little to help us towards a deeper understanding of the prose and poetry. Mr Carpenter would, for example, like his readers to believe that Williams's exploration of the 'Troilus experience' grew out of his love for the librarian at the Oxford University Press, Phyllis Jones, and her consequent rejection of him as her feelings changed. This may, or may not have been the case, but this new fact does not throw any light on Williams's apprehension of this experience; all that he understood is already contained in the writings themselves. When it comes to Mr Carpenter's criticism of Williams's work I find he exaggerates Williams's concern with the occult (indeed, sometimes there seems to be a confusion in the biographer's mind between the occult and the supernatural) and his belief in the 'reality' of evil. Charles Williams was the very antithesis of the Christian dualist: time after time in his theological essays he propounds the view of Augustine that evil has no existence of itself, but is merely - however terribly the sense of it may afflict us - the absence of good. When discussing some of the early novels Mr Carpenter contends that Williams was not 'principally concerned with moral issues' but with 'differentiating their (the characters) attitudes to the supernatural.' Either Mr Carpenter has not made his point clearly, or I have a different definition of morality, but this concern seems to me to be profoundly moral.

At the centre of the book is a long chapter which is an imagined reconstruction of an Inklings meeting in Lewis's rooms during the second world war. Members of the Charles Williams society who attended the conference at Pinner last June will remember Mr Carpenter's highly entertaining reading of an edited version of this chapter. I found it almost as entertaining here on the printed page, and it has made me wonder if Mr Carpenter should turn away from biography to the writings of novels or even, perhaps, of drama.

SUFFERING AND THE COINHERENCE by Elizabeth Moberly

A reviewer of my book Suffering, Innocent and Guilty (Michael Paternoster in Fairacres Chronicle, December 1978) commented that my study seemed to owe as much to the thought of Charles Williams as to other, more evident, sources. This strikes me as true. And, at the suggestion of Alice Mary Hadfield, I should like to make some comment on this link. Suffering, Innocent and Guilty includes only one specific reference to Charles Williams (p.4), though the bibliography should in any case indicate that my debt to him is more profound. However, the fundamental theme underlying the book is that of interdependence or coinherence. And, if I were to recommend any one writer on the theme of coinherence - a writer to kindle both intellect and imagination - my thoughts would turn at once to Charles Williams.

Charles Williams did not, of course, invent the concept of coinherence. What he illustrates so strikingly is in fact a basic concept of Christian theology - though one that has tended to receive more attention in the Christian east than in the Christian west. Man is created "in the image and likeness" of God (Genesis 1:27) - God whom we know as Trinity. The interdependence of humanity has traditionally been interpreted by the Christian east as an essential characteristic of this "image and likeness". Our human vocation is to be coinherent, united in love, even as God One-in-Trinity is united in love. But the tragedy of the human situation is precisely that we are not thus united. Although not all suffering involves human culpability, much of the problem of suffering does presuppose the concept of human interdependence, and is - I suggest - logically incoherent on the basis of a merely individualist philosophy. We take for granted the fact that we are able to help each other and to hurt each other. But this is to assume our mutual accessibility, i.e. our interdependence. Moreover, we cannot opt out of our interdependence - the only choice for the human race is between the fulfilment of interdependence or, alternatively, its misuse. Interdependence is the essential condition of personal existence. Thus we are linked, for better and for worse, so that the possibility of suffering - though not suffering itself - is an integral characteristic of the human condition. Thus, too, the goal is not the cessation of suffering per se, but - positively - the restoration of interdependence, so that we may truly attain the divine "image and likeness" in and for which we were created.

The understanding of human coinherence proves to have significant practical implications for the organisation of society. However, it must be noted that this is not a plea for collectivism as distinct from individualism. If one returns to the analogy of trinitarian theology, there are two possibilities of 'heresy' or falling short of the full truth. One is to emphasise the individual at the expense of the corporate; the other is its obvious converse, to lay stress on the corporate at the expense of the individual. The latter is not true coinherence, but its parody. The individual is not to be swallowed up by the corporate, but to find true personal fulfilment in the closest possible interdependence: union-in-differentiation, to use Teilhardian terms. Solidarity is vital, but any form of solidarity that abrogates rather than fulfils the individual, is merely a corporate heresy and untrue to the fundamental nature of mankind.

As a member of the Russian Orthodox Church, I would particularly value this concept of interdependence or sobornost; and it was to my great delight that I discovered it so lucidly illustrated in the work of the western Christian, Charles Williams. He is not, of course, in any sense "crypto-Orthodox". It is simply that in this particular respect his work comes very close, not to Orthodoxy as distinct from western Christian tradition, but to the deep centre where the truth of Christ is shared by all who bear the name of Christian. It is a matter for regret that as yet Charles Williams' significance as a theological writer has been underestimated. To be known as a literary figure with theological interests is insufficient. Here is a theologian, who should be noted as such in the annals of twentieth-century Christian thought.

*

Dr Elizabeth Moberly is a Guest Member of Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge. Her book Suffering, Innocent and Guilty was published by SPCK in 1978.

STOP PRESS

OXFORD SUMMER CONFERENCE

The Charles Williams Exhibition is opening on 14 May and will stay open all summer in the Divinity School building of the Bodleian Library in Oxford.

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