

The Charles Williams Society

N E W S L E T T E R

No. 30, SUMMER 1983

MEETINGS OF THE CHARLES WILLIAMS SOCIETY

10 September 1983: The Society will hold a one day conference at the church of St Andrew-by-the-wardrobe in Queen Victoria Street, London EC4, starting at 10.30am and continuing until about 4.15pm. The first half-hour will be an informal gathering at which coffee will be available and at 11am Professor de Mello Moser will speak on the theme of his book 'Charles Williams, A Quest, Vision and Myth'. At about 12 - 12.15 Brian Horne will reply for about 15 minutes and open the discussion to everyone. Lunch will then follow (bring your own food - coffee and tea will be provided) at about 12.45 and for those who feel energetic Joan Wallis will conduct a short walk from about 1.30 to 2.15. The afternoon's programme will start at 2.30 with a reading of Seed of Adam by members present led by Adrian Thomas. The Committee hope that this programme will be of interest to members and friends and that as many as possible will be able to attend. A fee of £1 will be charged to cover expenses.

19 November 1983: Richard Wallis will lead the reading of Many Dimensions by members and friends present - please bring copies if possible.

25 February 1984: William Anderson will speak on Charles Williams and Dante.

All meetings (except the conference) will be held at Liddon House, 24 South Audley Street, London W.1. starting at 2.30pm.

1983 A.G.M.

The Society's 7th AGM was held on 11 June at Liddon House. The full minutes are available from the Secretary, Gillian Lunn, but the main points of general interest were that the Chairman reported on the past year's activities, thanking those who had contributed to the work of the Society and especially the speakers who had addressed the meetings. 114 people are members of the Society, the finances are in the black thanks to the payment of subscriptions and donations. The previous Committee were all re-elected with the addition of Ben Robertson. The most important activity on the Society's horizon is the centenary of CW's birth in 1986 and the Chairman outlined proposals being considered to celebrate this, in London, St Albans, Oxford and the USA. It is hoped that a memorial can be placed on the site of CW's parents' shop in St Albans, and that OUP might publish a volume of Essays on CW by scholars who had expressed their willingness to contribute. An appeal was also made by the Chairman for anyone with a knowledge of publicity to advise the Society on fund raising for the Centenary.

PERFORMANCES OF CRANMER

David Dodds' production of Thomas Cranmer of Canterbury postponed from earlier this year is provisionally scheduled for 25, 26, 27, and 29 October in St Mary Magdalene church, Oxford. Please contact David for confirmation and further details at Merton College, Oxford, or by telephoning him at home on Oxford (0865) 54844.

INKLINGS-GESELLSCHAFT

The Society has received news of the founding of an Inklings Society in Germany which is hoping to produce an annual publication with the aim of 'scholarly investigation into the works of ... C S Lewis, Tolkien and Charles Williams ... or in other works that provoke comparison (e.g. George MacDonald, G K Chesterton, T S Eliot, Dorothy Sayers, David Jones; fantastic painting). We want neither the cult of fans nor aggressive polemics, but critical discussions of the phenomenon of Fantasy and fantastic art, moreover interdisciplinary research in

the philosophical, theological and pedagogical aspects of these works and in their reception. The annual is to contain articles and papers, miscellanies and book reviews, either in German with English abstracts, or in English with German abstracts.' The contact is Dr Gisbert Kranz, Erster Rote-Haag-Weg 31, D-5100 Aachen, W. Germany.

CORRECTION FROM ANNE RIDLER

Anne Ridler has written to the Editor as follows: 'On p.13 of the Spring 1983 Newsletter I read: "Adrian Thomas has unearthed the following notes of Charles Williams' ...". May I shyly point out (as CW himself might have put it) that I printed these notes as an Appendix to my edition of Seed of Adam and other plays, 1948? This edition is out of print, and it is good to have the notes reprinted in the Newsletter; in the book, however, you will also find CW's own synopsis for the programme of the Colchester performance.'

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to:

Dr and Mrs Gene Wheeler, 3833 Stratford, Dallas, Texas, 75205, USA;
Rebecca Scherer, 200 Waterman Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02906, USA.

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On 17 February 1979 Canon Donald Nicholson addressed the Society on the subject of 'Charles Williams and the Art of Historical Biography'. We are delighted to be able to reproduce the talk in this Newsletter.

The re-issue of Charles Williams' James I in 1951 was accompanied by a valuable introduction from the pen of the late Dorothy L. Sayers; she gives a fine explanation of the author's understanding of history; ... "the least known and the least considered part of Williams' output: the purely historical works. He had an acute sense of the living movement of history and never forgot that every age is modern to itself and that this fact, or illusion, links it with our own. Thus to all men in all ages he has the same direct approach; the same readiness to accept their behaviour as human ... the same charity". (1). He himself wrote of the moralizing approach to history in almost scornful terms: "the great Lord Acton once complained that Bishop Creighton treated morals far too lightly in his historical works. No doubt, fundamentally, Lord Acton was right. But it is a question of energy: to exhaust oneself in disapproval wastes so much, and - since all those strange figures are dead - does no good. No living person is likely to be improved by denunciations of phantoms, and as for the phantoms themselves, what purpose does condemnation serve? 'Shrilling on the wind' they go by; there is something a little comic in trying to rebuke them. Besides, it encourages us to think that we are better than they." (2). His understanding of each character in his biographical studies must always be seen in relation to that positive tolerance.

Before we embark on an exemplary examination of one of his biographies - the only one familiar to myself - it would be interesting to ask what circumstances of time and place and what trick of temperament dictated his choice of subjects. It may be that his correspondence in the '30s (1933-37) might illuminate us here: I have no access to it, so I am left with speculation; a speculation, however, not unaided by the detection of a certain unity of type in the four chief studies and I am sure that it is a phrase of Dorothy Sayers which provides the key: James I as "an enigmatic personality whom there have been, generally speaking, 'none to praise, and very few to love'". (3). That last phrase, certainly, does not do justice to the myth of Gloriana, the first Elizabeth ... but that she was (and intended to be) an enigmatic personality none can deny. The same is true of her successor James I, of his Attorney-General and Lord Chancellor, Francis Bacon and it is pre-eminently true of the first Tudor sovereign Henry VII whom few indeed

praised and fewer loved. It is not without interest that the first "official" life of the King was in fact written by Francis Bacon: the learned and subtle scientist and lawyer, that most secret man, tried to smooth out the folded pleats of a personality even more convoluted than his own.

Bacon had written: "He was of high mind, and loved his own will and his own way, as one that revered himself and reign indeed. Had he been a private man he would have been termed proud. But in a wise prince it was but keeping of distance - which indeed he did towards all, not admitting any near or full approach either to his power or to his secrets, for he was governed by none. His queen, notwithstanding she had presented him with divers children, and with a crown also (though he would not acknowledge it), could do nothing with him. His mother he revered much, heard little. To his confederates abroad he was constant and just, but not open. But rather such was his inquiry, and such his closeness, as they stood in the light towards him and he stood in the dark to them." "He was a prince, sad (grave) serious and full of thoughts and secret observations ..." "He was a comely personage, a little above just (average) stature, well and straight limbed, but slender. His countenance was reverend and a little like a churchman, and as it was not strange or dark, so neither was it winning or pleasing, but as the face of one well disposed. But it was to the disadvantage of the painter, for it was best when he spake".(4). This perhaps tells us most of all: humour in the eye, perhaps? affection in the smile? An enigmatic personality, indeed, whom CW brought to life - to the slightly condescending surprise of Alice Mary Hadfield, who can say: "No individual even Henry VII is uninteresting, when known through the medium of CW's observation"(5). Even Henry VII, indeed!

Mrs Hadfield comments on Queen Elizabeth that the author's "presentation of a real woman of past time is as good as in some of the novels, his presentation of an imaginary woman is stilted and awkward" and goes on to say that "The study of Bacon goes beyond imagination almost to the point of an exchanged life ... there was a moment in Bacon's life to which CW was peculiarly sensitive by reason of the movement of his own ..." (6).

Henry, Elizabeth, Bacon and James: enigmatic personalities. It would be relevant - and wholly profitless, of course - to make a list of historical personages of roughly the same period whom CW did not choose to immortalize: Henry VIII, Thomas Wentworth, William Laud, Charles I. Why not? Because, I would maintain, each presented a character of such directness and simplicity - particularly in the case of the two non-royals - that they failed to fascinate. Henry VIII was transparent even in his worst duplicities; his blustering lies had almost an air of innocence about them. The very consistency of Laud and Strafford was their undoing. Charles, again, though devious, was un-subtle and saw his rank, his state, his kingship with a single eye. "There is no evidence that he considered that there could be another loyalty than that which bound men to the anointed King". Mathew goes on to describe "the perfection of his manner: the quiet gait; the entrances which held so much of majesty; that grace so restrained and yet so sumptuous, the angle at which he held his silver cane. He had that taste for ornament which Vandyck valued, the occasional diamond and the Mechlin lace. In general, his taste was sure but too impeccable." (7).

The father, James I, presented a very different picture: affable without charm, erudite but obstinate, without personal pride and totally lacking in aristocratic tastes and manners. "His tastes were not aristocratic. He was the King. (8). He was so convinced of James as the King that he could afford to be careless of James as James. His son, compared to him, took his royal office solemnly, even to himself. But James took it so simply that he did not need to be solemn".(9). James was not proud. He was aware of his mysterious divinity, but he was not proud of it; indeed it would have shocked him to think that he was proud of the miraculous grace of God. He was not even proud of his learning, his theology,

his Latin accent. But he was conceited. He liked to talk of them; he plumed himself on them with a simple, obvious, tiresome and sometimes silly persistence. To the reserved dignity of Sully, the industrious Huguenot minister of Henry of France, he seemed the 'wisest fool' in Christendom".(I0).

The 'wisest fool's' enigmatic personality, its unfolding and its secrecy form the theme of CW's greatest biography. David Mathew, no mean authority, declares it to be "the finest book ever written on the subject".(II). To it we now turn for more detailed consideration; whether we are considering James Stuart or Charles Williams himself may be open to question ...

Charles James Stuart was born on June 19th, 1566, as the only child of Mary, Queen of Scots and Henry Darnley her consort. Within the year, his mother had abdicated and he had been crowned. CW gives him three "birthdays": his natural birthday, his supernatural birthday or baptism and his babyhood's coronation and anointing. "He was man, and Christian, and King. What those three things meant to him is his biography; what they meant to others is history". (I2). The regency was in the hands of the Earl of Moray, "having reached that position by a series of inspired absences from any spot where a murder happened to be taking place. In the history of the world no one else can have been away at the right moment quite so often as the Earl of Moray";(I3) and tormented years ensued, years of plots and education, of a hero-worshipping love-affair with his father's cousin, Esme Stuart, Earl and then Duke of Lennox; his discovery of poetry. That was in 1582. In 1585 he published The Essayes of a Prentise in the Divine Art of Poesie together with The Reules and Cautchis to be observit and eschewit in Scottis Poesie. "The monarchs who have written on prosody have been few" (I4) says CW and as a poet himself he is concerned to examine, not without sympathy yet not blinded by royalty's dazzle, the young King's theories.

Lennox was exiled to France, but from France came "that wonderfully beautiful young man, Patrick, Master of Gray. The Master of Gray kneeling for the first time to James VI is a figure worthy of the wildest melodramatic novel. But it is a mere fact of history" (I5). It is not without significance, however, that CW lingers lovingly on this fact. Why? C S Lewis was to write of him - "Firstly he was a man fitted by temperament to live in an age of more elaborate courtesy than our own. He was nothing if not a ritualist. Had modern society permitted it he would equally have enjoyed kneeling and being knelt to, kissing hands and extending hands to be kissed. Burke's 'unbought grace of life' was in him. But secondly, even while enjoying such high pomps, he would have been aware of them as a game; not a silly game to be laid aside in private, but a glorious game well worth the playing."(I6). In another place and of another incident CW says "like the Stuart that he was, he was always adequate - after his own grotesque manner - to the dramatic condition", (I7). Again the gay diplomatic traitor, the Earl of Gray, is by him and the young King's hand fondly rests on the Master's shoulder or is "flung round his neck for affection, for support, for the indulgence of an aesthetic delight in beauty, for the enjoyment of cerebralized sensual emotion".(I7).

So! The time has come to look at the King's sexuality, charmingly described in Jane Austen's History of England by a partial prejudiced and ignorant Historian (Aged 15) - "His Majesty was of that amiable disposition which inclines to Friendships". He married in 1589 and fathered 7 children upon his queen, Anne of Denmark, and wrote verses about her when she died. "But, much as he sipped the wines, he never drank deep and was never drunk, and it is not impossible that, much as he sipped at this other deep strength of emotion, he never cared to get drunk on that either."(I8). Contemporaries were not inclined to believe this and could express themselves with considerable force.

There were perhaps "strong candidates for the role of royal favourite. It was not, however, until 1607 that there appeared upon the scene a figure whose influence was in any way comparable to that which had been exerted by Lennox in Scotland in the early 1580s, although by now James' affections were taking a far grosser and less retrained form." (19). CW describes the arrival of the new friend - "In 1607, an unpurposed incident at one of the jousts had awakened emotion in the King. The great affection and violent passion of love which was in him (so they said - but he tasted it with his head rather than his heart; he took delight in the apprehension of devotion) had had for long no intense and permanent centre. The Lord Hay, the Lord Montgomery, pleased him, but in his suburbs; and Hay at least knew it. He was as wise as he was magnificent; he was "known to be a cunning observer," and to "comply with all Favourites". He had now a great opportunity. One of his squires, at that joust, fell from his horse, and sustained a broken leg. James, looking from his seat, was touched by the accident and smitten by the young man's good looks. He caused him to be removed and attended; he made inquiries about him. It was Robert Kerr, or Carr, cadet of a Scottish house, whose father had been devoted to Mary Stuart. The King showed an increased sympathy, called on the invalid, talked with him, found him less learned than he might be, and proceeded to enjoy himself in one of the pleasantest way that can be - by instructing a young, docile and handsome inferior. He began to teach him Latin; the Court, openly polite but privately sneering, said that there was need his Majesty should teach him English too, "for he is a Scotch lad, and hath much need of a better language." The King and Carr did not think so; the Scots served them for their growing affection even better than the less intimate and familiar English. James felt that here at last was a harbour "for his most retir'd thoughts" - thoughts which for long he had not shared with any, high thoughts of politics and persons; here was a subject friend"(20).

The appalling scandal which ensued - not a homosexual scandal but one of divorce and re-marriage and conspiracy and murder - need not detain us. The Scottish favourite fell but even before the end the Court was seeking to supplant him in the King's affections by another male beauty, George Villiers ... The Archbishop of Canterbury himself did not scruple to promote his cause. The Queen was persuaded to request for Villiers the appointment as Gentleman of the Bedchamber. The King's Majesty was to be approached through the Queen's. "There was a ritual in such things, and James delighted in it". (21).

Mathew, writing forty years after his first studies of the King, has this late judgement to make. In 1938 he had written of "the impression that paternalism was the essential quality in King James' attitude towards his last and greatest favourite. He had then grown elderly, fatherly in his love and in the wise counsel he bestowed"(22). In 1967 he examines their relationship a little more closely: - "It has always seemed to me that King James's relations with his last favourite were technically innocent. He was certainly the type which attracted the king; but the latter was now in weakening health. There are certain converging arguments ... Archbishop Abbot was not likely to try to supply the king with another lover. He had always been a Puritan and rather stern. Again there was the case of the favourite's mother. Lady Buckingham was an unpleasant woman with a sense of worldly values and in the charge of Jesuit confessors; it does not seem to me that she could have managed the cosy relationship which she worked up with the king if he had seduced her favourite son. But the third instance has much more weight with me. The Prince of Wales had a hard cold purity with verged on prudishness. He was linked with Buckingham by the strongest friendship of his whole life. Surely this development would have been impossible if the favourite had been his father's mignon?" (23).

CW had already come to the same conclusion. He, the King, sipped at his wine but was never drunk; and whatever passion he felt for George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham - as he had certainly felt passion for Robert Kerr, Earl of Somerset - was never consummated, and Williams already has taken up Mathew's last point: "the extreme

friendship which grew up between the last and greatest of the Favourites - George Villiers - and the highly moral Prince Charles. It is difficult to believe that Charles would have accepted Villiers so profoundly and intimately if he had supposed that he was serving, or had served, the King so. But it is more difficult to suppose that, had it been so, some enemy of Villiers would not have seen to it that the Prince was told. Villiers might have explained that it was all over. But ... and so the argument can go on. In effect, we must admit an unusual delight in masculine beauty accompanied by loose behaviour and wanton speech. Beyond that James locks up his coffer. It is one of the most annoying things about James that in everything it is the very last secret which he hid so carefully and so finally away".(24).

The King's marriage introduced (or emphasized) another element into his life. He had enjoyed his long visit to Denmark, drinking, enjoying the intellectual conversation of a renaissance Court, and even visiting an astronomer, Tycho Brahe. "Sonnets by Kings to astronomers are rare" (25), but James perpetuates one on the high authority of the planets:-

"Then great is Tycho who, by this his books,
Commandment doth o'er these commanders brooke" (26)

In May the Queen arrived in Scotland and there was trouble about her Coronation. "The King fixed it for a Sunday; the ministers objected. He demanded that the Queen should be anointed; they objected. The King overruled them and threatened to import one of his bishops into the ceremony. The ministers grudgingly gave way. Oil was less papistical than episcopacy. The Jews had oil, but not bishops, being in this respect closer to the pure Church of Christ than Catholics. The harlequinade swept up to the altar of marriage and majesty - 'the Countess of Mar, having taken the Queen's right arm, and opened the craigs of her gown, Mr Robert Bruce immediately poured forth upon those parts of her breast and arm of quhilk the clothes were removed, a bonny quantity of oil'. It is necessary to remember that Mr Robert Bruce, a great man of God, must have loathed doing it."(27).

"The 'hot and holy matter' of his marriage, as the English agent called it, having been safely established, James turned his attention, while yet his country was in moderate peace, to those who had sought to stay her journeys. For his safe return with her had been a spiritual triumph as well as an earthly, and now there were to be proper reprisals upon the King's enemies. The pardon which James was often willing to extend to the leaders of earthly treason must not reach to the leaders of those who had denied their God. In this he need not fear the hostility of the Kirk; long before he had laid any but a baby's hand on sword and sceptre, the witch hunt had been raised in Scotland. Now in his years of discretion, the King headed it. Witchcraft was an abominable sin. 'I have been occupied', he said in the June of the next year, 'these three quarters of a year for the sifting out of them that are guilty herein'. His activity had been quickened by the activities of the sorcerers against him and his bride at sea. By December certain of them - one warlock and three witches - had been sought out and set in ward. John Fian was a schoolmaster, and it was he who was first brought to trial (28). The King, sitting there with the lords of the Council about him, looked on the wretch and knew what had happened; in that supernatural absence he had met again the supernatural Prince of the abyss and made new covenants. The supernatural evil that James feared and defied lifted itself in that moment in his own soul; vividly it lived in the chamber, no more about John Fian, broken schoolmaster, but in the hearts and faces of his judges, achieving its end (as the habit of supernatural things, good or evil, is) by the apparent rejection of itself".(29).

All this was something very close to James' interests and it must be remarked that it was also close to those of CW himself. Witchcraft appeared in 1941 and

reveals a relish, a curious penchant towards the darkness. Donald MacKinnon is reputed to have said - 'Oh, Charles Williams, a strange man; a strange man with a dark side to him'. ("CW knew something of darkness and knew it intimately" (30).

Williams mentions in James I that the account he gives of Scottish covens was published in 1591 as Newes from Scotland and he asks: did Shakespeare read it? I would diffidently suggest that the witchcraft scenes and descriptions in Macbeth almost presuppose that he did.

In 1603 James VI became also James I of England. "The covens of witchcraft had faded; their nearest image in England was the House of Commons"!!(31) and he must first enter upon a new experience, the Church of England and her bishops. Mathew is authoritative on this. "Everywhere the Anglican episcopate was accepted as an influential, political and social factor. As a body the Bishops had achieved a wide measure of respect due to their administrative competence, their sedate accessibility and their grave proclamation of those maxims in State and Church which in the seventeenth century met with such wide acceptance. They had a profound feeling for their own dignity. William Laud was "ever conscious of his state of prelacy" (32). It was a sphere governed by a code of integrity and courtesy ... The Bishops had the power to unite extreme loyalism with an accommodating temper ... there seems no reason to doubt that their religious reverence for the Crown was as sincere as it was surely fortified by all their learning. Easy manners marked the approach of the Jacobean prelates to their equals and they showed a generous hospitality in their dealings with all persons of low condition ... The portraits in the college halls of their universities give an admirable impression of these churchmen, with the shrewd inquiring eyes and the pursed lips and the hands folded in their great lawn sleeves." (33).

"James in his Scottish years had had experience of the Presbyterian, the Roman, and the necromantic Churches; he had now one other to find. The Roman he still had, and the Puritans instead of the Presbyterians, much the same thing as they were, in spite of the difference in ecclesiastical organisation. The Presbyterians in Scotland were a Kirk of their own; the Puritans in England were but a part of a greater Church. He was free now from any need of conciliating, and he hoped he was free from any difficulty in controlling, those mutual enemies. Politically, he was more firmly seated than ever before, and theologically he had found a new thing, he had discovered the Church of England. (34).

The Church of England had nourished and inspired many poets, saints, and martyrs. It has, however, had few royal children who have taken so intelligent an interest in it as James Stuart. At first that interest was largely self-preservative and tutorial. He delighted to take refuge with his new Bishops under the pretext of allowing them to take refuge under him. Of all classes of men the Bishops of the Church of England were least likely to form conspiracies against his person, as Jesuits and Presbyterians had done. He was in good hope they would not even preach at him, or seize him by the arm and call him 'God's silly vassal', or attach their titular signatures to blanks meant for the King of Spain. Yet they were at once Bishops of as true a faith as those of Rome and of as pure a religion as superintendents in Fifeshire. He and they mirrored themselves in each other. He was disposed to benevolence as they to obedience. The general episcopal mind was as loyal as he was royal. The doctrine of the two kingdoms began to disappear and leave the much pleasanter landscape of the one kingdom of God, the King and the Bishops, dispensing a single supernatural authority. It was therefore

not surprising that he relaxed happily into the cushioned throne which the Church of England appeared to provide" (35)... and so the probing search for finality and actuality, historical and psychological, continues in the hand of a masterly surgeon-historian. He bears comparison with the great: Powicke and Maitland, at least (I could claim) in his view of history and research - not into dead folk but into living characters who matter and who have their rights.

Powicke wrote: "The search after truth plays strange tricks with an historian. He sets out to tell a plain straight-forward story, and he finds himself running about in all sorts of places. Insensible the interest of his story is merged in the excitement of the chase. He cannot bring himself to believe that his readers will not be as interested as he has been in seeing how one point leads to another, how this fact throws light on that, why one clue has to be discarded, and another pursued to the end. As Maitland once wrote - "Out of the thicket may fly a bird worth powder and shot"; but the thicket must be a clue, not any thicket, and bird must be worth powder and shot, not any bird. If this condition is observed, the story becomes more than a story; it breathes a troubled life of its own as part of a living past. The things which first stirred interest, the picturesque, the amusing, the dramatic, are still there, but are no longer the essential things. Sometimes, as I work at a series of patent and close rolls, I have a queer sensation; the dead entries begin to be alive ... These are real people, this casual official letter is telling something that really happened, it was written on the impulse of a real emotion. To be sure that this William is William son of Geoffrey and not William son of Jordan becomes as important as any problem of identity can be in a court of law today. It is necessary to take great care, no longer in the interests of learning, but for their sakes. I fear that the historian is quite incorrigible, when he has once had this experience. He becomes indifferent to insinuations of pedantry; for pedantry is a kind of darkness, and he is trying to let in the light" (36). 'Letting in the light', this is precisely what this man 'with a penchant for the dark' has been doing all along.

The reign goes on and the King grows old. He contemplated a Spanish marriage for Prince Henry, then for Prince Charles. He sees himself as the slandered child of barbaric Stirling becoming the beloved father of Europe's oldest kings. However "no grandchild of James Stuart would ever carry in his veins the mingled Scottish and Spanish blood". (37). Nevertheless, and not through Henry or Charles but through his daughter, Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, he is today the ancestor of the sovereign princes of Belgium, Denmark, Great Britain, Holland, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden and of Spain itself! - both King and Queen alike.

In 1625 he died; absolved, receiving viaticum, conscious, "Veni, Domine Jesu" he murmured - and all was over.

Mrs Hadfield, in speaking of CW's poetry, lays great stress on his appreciation of human form, of the human body and its members, especially of the arm and hand. "The hand and arm were ever his favourite contemplation" (38) and so it is not surprising that he ends his story of the King with the upward spiralling of John Donne's voice evoking the royal hand signing patents and pardons, touching for the Evil, balancing his three kingdoms, locking up and letting out armies - that hand lying dead. "It was not so hard a hand when we touched it last nor so cold a hand

when we kissed it last ... " (39).

So we leave this enigmatic man secure in his kingship, made more secure (one might almost say) by the intense internal un_derstanding of Charles Williams, an understanding of a King and of a Kingdom, finite, actual.

"Its finity, its actuality, were his strength. The purposes of the lords might vary from day to day; they sought their own profit, and their profit was aften changeable. His never was. Had the chance of history ever brought James face to face with any of the great Popes, he might well have gone down. But he hardly met, hardly even saw - save as a child of ten months - another sovereign. His amities and his hostilities with the other members of that unique guild of crowns were - save for a brief knowledge of the King of Denmark - always conducted by correspondence. They were therefore purely mental. He never received the shock of the physical presence of equal or superior royalty. That physical disturbance which is our only salvation from our own dreams and our own interpretations in this respect never touched him. He never beheld the mitred forehead of the Pope, or the vivid eyes of Elizabeth, or the callous smile of the French Valois.

Only at long last there arose from near his Throne the obstinate gravity of his son, and pressed him from his seat". (40).

References

1. D. L. Sayers - Introduction to James I - 1951, XIII;
2. C. Williams - James I - 1934, 1951 ed. 62-3;
3. D. L. Sayers, XII;
4. F. Bacon - The Reign of Henry VII - 1622 - Fol. Soc. ed. 1977, 230 - 5;
5. A. M. Hadfield - An Introduction to Charles Williams - 1959, 93;
6. Ibid, 91 -2;
7. D. Mathew - The Age of Charles I - 1951, 31 - 2;
8. C. Williams, 51;
9. Ibid, 85;
10. Ibid, 200;
11. A. M. Hadfield, 91;
12. C. Williams, 10;
13. Ibid, 20;
14. Ibid, 60;

