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Diary of Drug Fiend Paints Narcotic Evil.

The Diary of a Drug Fiend. By Aleister Crowley. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York. \$2.

One who is not expert in the effects of cocaine, heroin and morphine completes the reading of this book in some doubt as to how to pass judgment upon it.

For while in the form of fiction The Diary of a Drug Fiend is primarily a picture of the effects of narcotics upon the human body and mind: the first part of it being concerned with the acquiring of the habit: the second with the almost satiable demands, and the third with the cure.

And here another doubt enters. The cure here is effected in an ancient monastery supposedly somewhere in Italy. The author assures the reader that all the facts in the volume are true.

Is it then only a disguised tract for King Lamus, the master mind of the book, and the head of this cult?

Certainly the author has omitted nothing in his descriptions of the luridness and excitement of the experiences of Peter Pendragon and Lou on their wild cocaine honeymoon in Paris. It is a narcotic debauch—nothing more nor less.

They rush from one excitement to another. Hours, days, weeks mean nothing to them while they take increasingly heavy doses of "snow." Wilder and wilder become their experiences.

But then comes the inevitable time when no amount of heroin can stir the jaded nerves or fill the mind with masterful dreams. Back to London our young people go, and sodden and hopeless indeed is the misery which overtakes them.

Hovering in the background, however, is the figure of King Lamus, both kindly and sinister, but at all times masterful and with an uncanny ability to read the minds of others. An exotic atmosphere accompanies him wherever he goes, as well as predominates in his home.

It is he who comes to the rescue of the Pendragons when life has become an insupportable and desperate quest for more and still more narcotics.

In the quiet of the monastery, far removed from the hurry and complexities of modern civilization, Peter and Lou are able again to build life on a normal basis and see the possibility for real happiness open to them.

This bare outline of the book does not do justice to the interest which *The Diary of a Drug Fiend* arouses.

But one cannot escape the feeling that much of it is unreal: perhaps because most of its characters are living in an unreal world.

The book is said to have caused a sensation in London. Perhaps that was because of its open charge of the prevalence of the narcotic habit in high social circles there. It gives the impression that the hunt for these stimulants is now the great social outdoor sport.