

THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW
AUGUST 1903

REVIEW OF *AHAB AND OTHER POEMS*

"Ahab and Other Poems", by Mr. Aleister Crowley is a sumptuous volume, delightful to eyes accustomed to mediaeval script, but puzzling to such as are not. The prettiest poem in the book is "The Dream," from which we give the opening lines:

"Bend down in dream the shadow-shape
Of tender breasts and bare!
Let the long locks of gold escape,
And cover me and fall and drape,
A pall of whispering hair!
And let the starry eyes look through
That mist of silken light
And lips drop forth their honey-dew
And gentle sighs of sleep renew
The scented winds of night."

In "Melusine" Mr. Crowley has caught something of the trick of reiteration of metaphor, which is familiar to all readers of Mr. Swinburne, *e.g.*

And like a devil-fish is ice,
And like a devil-fish is cruel,
And like a devil-fish is hate."

"Thule" is, in the same stanza, made to rhyme with "cruel"! The title-poem, which occupies two-thirds of the book, is a most unsatisfactory performance, but it is superior in technique to the rest.