

THE NEW AGE
29 FEBRUARY 1908

REVIEW OF *KONX OM PAX*

BOOK OF THE WEEK

The Beautiful What.*

(*Konx om Pax. By Aleister Crowley. Publishing Co. Priceless.)

The flamboyant flame of the sun, ardent with aeonpent energy, revolted, turned aside from his immemorial mistress, wandered across the track of the Seven Dials that perpetually revolve amid the cloudless essence of Q.F.D.N.W.

Rejoicing on his way he fell in with the refulgent ray of the moon rising with hyaline glint from an epileptiform seizure in the Tychoic Crater. Behold the fierce flame has nurlled the rorty ray; they have united in the gusty anguish of love. Their passionate embraces reverberate to distant Neptune, transfusing the Dusky Ring of Saturn with a mad violence that would shame the gobbler's gill, who broke from her darling planet and taking the outer rings in her wake fell to erratic vibrations, disturbing enough to weary Astronomer-Royals.

Be glad, O ye earth ; rejoice exceedingly, my tender Pleiades; frolic, leap-frog, O bright-eyed Arcturus; and you Orion (7 = matter vanquished by Spirit), skip, dance adown the Milky-Way. The Moon's Ray is in travail ; her groans re-echo on the earth, the seas roar, the mountains spin, the cities are swallowed like Whitstable Natives.

He is born. The cymbals clash, the oboes peal, the trumpets sound shrill and clear. The Star in the West is born. Aleister Crowley = 50 = 5 = A Magician. Born to misfortune, Trouble, Strife, Fierce burning Anger, Deathless Struggle must be your lot. Lo, is it not so written in the Kabbalah? Yours also is the Reincarnation and the Life, O laughing lion that is to be!

Here you have distilled for our delight the inner spirit of the Tulip's form, the sweet secret mystery of the Rose's perfume; you have set them free from all that is material whilst preserving all that is sensual. "So also the old mystics were right who saw in every phenomenon a dog-faced demon apt only to seduce the soul from the sacred mystery." Yes, but the phenomenon shall it not be as another sacred mystery; the force of at-

traction still to be interpreted in terms of God and the Psyche? We shall reward you by befoulment, by cant, by misunderstanding, and by understanding. This to you who wear the Phrygian cap, not as symbol of Liberty, O ribald ones, but of sacrifice and victory, of Inmost Enlightenment, of the soul's deliverance from the fetters of the very soul itself — fear not: you are not "replacing truth of thought by mere expertness of mechanical skill."

You who hold more skill and more power than your great English predecessor, Robertus de Fluctibus, you have not feared to reveal "the Arcana which are in the Adytum of God-nourished Silence" to those who, abandoning nothing, will sail in the company of the Brethren of the Rosy Cross towards the Limbus, that outer, unknown world encircling so many a universe.

Who would have the invitation general (although it is also not for the elect in any ordinary sense)? These you need scarce repel.

In fine, I have precious little use
For empty-headed Athenians
The birds I have snared shall all go loose,
They are empty-headed Athenians.
I thought perhaps I might do some good,
But it's ten to one if I ever should —
And I doubt if I would save, if I could,
Such empty-headed Athenians.

Since this is a Socialist review, I must be at pains to notice "Thien Tao," a political essay.

Expressed symbolically the main criticism we have to offer is—

$r - t = 0$
where $- = 0$.

With this the empty-headed Athenians will remain unsatisfied, and we should be deprived of the epiphenomenal auxiliaries which sustain us in our search for the master-key which is to unlock the portals of all mystery; this mystery, ever elusive yet syntonically, in its appeal to us. Here then let me quote: "The recent extension of the franchise to women had rendered the Yoshiwara the most formidable of the political organizations, while the physique of the nation had been seriously impaired by

the results of a law which, by assuring them in case of injury or illness of a five-long competence in idleness which they could never have obtained otherwise by the most laborious toil, encouraged all workers to be utterly careless of their health." The disciples of the Rosy Cross held that woman was an accident, an obtrusion upon the ramparts of the world's plan. Virgo-Scipio is a two-fold sign. Si igitur sub serpentis imagine Phallium Signum intelligimus, quam plana sunt et concinna cuncta pictura lineamenta." This conception of the universe as a male one is tenable whole and wholesome, although there was ever a place for woman as virgin freed from the material gross greedy things ere she partook of "the fruit of that forbidden Tree, whose mortal taste, Brought death into the world, and all our woe."

To Mr. Crowley this view, like the Occidental conception towards which we are now thrusting out tentacles of the roles of man and woman furnishes nothing but matter for a jest. Now these views are mutually exclusive, but are equally tenable. What is wearisome stale and unprofitable is just our present-day molluscan attitude. We sit quivering in the dry sand, awaiting the seas that shall never reach us, but which we should go forth to meet, yet afraid to clamber back up the high cliffs. Mr. Crowley does not display his usual courage here, nor that independence of judgment which nearly everywhere, even when he is most wrong, commends our loving admiration. Mr. Crowley should arrive at his own conclusions regarding the question. As to whether his views are shared by the many or the few is equally impertinent.

Does Mr. Crowley seriously regard laborious toil as ever conducive to health? Toil, laborious or not, is all work undertaken without the spirit of joy, ease, irresponsibility, and is the root of all evil; it can never lead to any form of well-being. "The government was well enough in fact, but in theory had hardly a leg to stand upon." This is not obscurity, but nonsense of the most painful and blatant character. Facts and theories do not suggest contradictory opposition. Facts are but the tortured expressions of stupid people who cannot learn to think.

Mr. Crowley becomes the friend and follower of Herbert Spencer, Lord Avebury, Arnold-Forster, and all the rest of parish-council shop-keeping philosophers who conceive that Socialism aims at the equalisation of the individual by furnishing a like environment and like education for all. Or does he satirise our own day by his remark that "The theory of heredity had broken down, and the ennoblement of the cheesemongers

made it not only false, but ridiculous"? How can a theory of heredity ever break down? There is some excuse for Mr. Crowley in the writings of many Socialists, but the philosopher is not guided by the fallacies of others; he dives below and discovers the pearls for himself.

Myself and one or two others can undeceive Mr. Crowley, but he can do it much better himself. He knows that there is no freedom whilst the soul is chained; my Socialism will remove the fetters. Another complaint, and my last. Kwaw devotes some years to the pursuit of philosophy. "In the first year he disciplined and conquered his body and his emotions. In the next six years he disciplined and conquered his mind and its thoughts."

For Mr. Crowley I must recommend that he re-study the sixty-fourth chapter of the Book of the Dead, not in the English translation, however. For our readers, I recommend a study of Mr. Crowley's *The Wake World* and *The Stone of the Philosophers*, the first especially containing all the beauty, the sense of haunting mystery, with an entirely divine prescience that surely distinguishes Mr. Crowley from the common flock of writers. By the way, I should mention that the prose is interspersed with some verse; his rhymes, for instance, "The Suspicious Earl" — are as startling and Frolicsome as any you will find in *Hudibras*, his rhythm is varied, whilst he has a sense of music in words from which even the Irish reascents may learn.

It is Mr. Crowley's pleasure, after soaring in the heights, to suddenly fling himself upon the earth in search of carrion, much as I have watched the condor circling in the Andean ether plump ghoulish through the air as it sniffed some bespattered carcass. However, in a vestryman age we cannot deny even Mr. Crowley his little joke.

— Dr. M. D. Eder