

**T.P.'S WEEKLY
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THE LETTER BOX

The Poetry of Patriotism.

Sir,—It was quite by chance that I came across Aleister Crowley's letter in your issue of Oct. 17th and the reading of it caused me infinite amusement.

I take it that the writer is a poetaster; otherwise how can one account for the following statement:—"No self-respecting poet would foul his pen with allusions to petty topical trivialities like the war," and also: He never sways to the passions of his generation. They sway to him." Such conceits find place only in the minds of young people trying to be poets.

My amusement, however, soon gave way to a state of feeling bordering on anger. "Petty topical trivialities!" Has Aleister Crowley lost all sense of proportion that he can talk of the horrors of carnage in such term? "Keats," he informs us, "never so far forgot himself as to write of war." In so far as my memory serves me Keats makes no special allusion to war, but at the time of his death he was but a boy. The glamour, the romance, the sorrows of youth had not yet given way to the deep tragedies of life. But Tennyson, who is too great to bestow anything but compassion on the ignorance that would term him a "penny-a-liner," was a man instinct with the depth of feeling that Keats' few years could not know. And the greatest poets are those who feel most deeply.

A man who can be indifferent to the destruction of Belgium is as inhuman as the most barbarous Hun. And the poetry that is to spring from the bloody soil of her desolated cities will rank amongst the greatest of all ages.

Aleister Crowley is evidently quite young. As he grows in manhood he will grow in discernment. The poetry of Keats, exquisite as it is, will be insufficient to nourish his adult mind. He will look then to such poets as Browning and Tennyson for the stronger meat necessary for his intellectual well-being.—Yours, etc.

Ada M. Hudson.
London, W.

**Aleister Crowley's Original Letter from the
17 October Issue of *T.P.'s Weekly***

The Poetry of Patriotism.

Sir,—I have seen your article "The Poetry of Patriotism." There is no such thing. No self-respecting poet would foul his pen with allusions to petty topical trivialities like the war. The poet's throne is in eternity; clouds and thick darkness are under his feet. He may sing, as Homer, Virgil, and many another, the ancient wars of his folk, but he never sways to the passions of his generation. They sway to him.

Did Chaucer, who wrote in the climax of the Crusading spirit, do this yellow work? Did Shakespeare pen a single line about the defeat of the Spanish Armada? Had Milton, the poet, a word to say about the triumph of the cause which he so voluminously defended in [illegible]? Byron and Shelley wrote a little about war, but their enthusiasm was not in any way national. Yet these lived in the Napoleonic wars, and if they attacked any country, it was their own.

Keats, the purest poet of them all, never so far forgot himself. It is only when we [illegible] to penny-a-liners like Sir Walter Scott, and Alfred, Lord Tennyson, that we get "patriotic poetry," which, as I previously remarked, is an oxymoron.—Yours, etc.

Aleister Crowley.

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