

IS ALEISTER CROWLEY A SAINT ?

☆ James Douglas has described him as a "monster of wickedness." Horatio Bottomley has described him as a "dirty degenerate." The successors of Horatio Bottomley (*John Bull*, May, 1929) have described him as "England's worst man." Crowley describes himself as the Master Therion, and terms his *Confessions* an "Autohagiography."

☆ The facts about Aleister Crowley, as distinguished from journalistic blackguarding, have never been known. He is a scholar and a gentleman—a poet, a mystic, a big-game hunter, a practiser of magical ritual, a chemist, a chess-player. He has climbed (amongst other declivities) Beachy Head, the Alps, the Himalayas, and the Mexican volcanoes—not, one imagines, the pastimes of a complete degenerate. He has walked across the Sahara and across Spain and China on foot. He has lived as a Yogi in an Indian village, as a laird in Scotland, and as a "Bohemian" in London, Paris and New York. He has visited Moscow, and has been expelled from Italy by the Fascisti. . . .

☆ His literary output is enormous and completely distinguished in manner. Practically all his publications have been issued privately with all the unction of fine amateur printing, and are now almost unobtainable. His only work issued normally to the public, *The Diary of a Drug-Fiend*, was withdrawn after the second edition. Even his enemies will not deny the dramatic force, humour, elegance, scholarship and virility of his literary style. His short stories in particular are models of construction in drama and narrative, though characteristically he has never issued them for general circulation.

☆ This astonishing man has also painted over 200 canvases which will cause an artistic furore if he can be persuaded to exhibit them.

☆ Is Aleister Crowley a saint ? Readers of his *Confessions* will be able to judge for themselves. And whatever their conclusions, they will not deny the tremendous energy and versatility of the man, or that he is a subtle and unique personality who has lived colourfully in our drab age.

P. R. S.