

THE KEY TO THE TAROT. By A. E. WAITE. W. Rider and Sons, Limited.

Mr. Waite has written a book on fortune-telling, and we advise servant-girls to keep an eye on their half-crowns. We have little sympathy or pity for the folly of fashionable women; but housemaids need protection—hence their affection for policemen and soldiers—and we fear that Mr. Waite's apologies will not prevent professional cheats from using his instructions for their frauds and levies of blackmail.

As to Mr. Waite's constant pomposities, he seems to think that the obscurer his style and the vaguer his phrases, the greater initiate he will appear.

Nobody but Mr. Waite knows *all* about the Tarot, it appears; and he won't tell. Reminds one of the story about God and Robert Browning, or of the student who slept, and woke when the professor thundered rhetorically, "And what *is* Electricity?" The youth jumped up and cried (from habit), "I know, sir." "Then tell us." "I *knew*, sir, but I've forgotten." "Just my luck!" complained the professor, "there was only one man in the world who knew—and he has forgotten!"

Why, Mr. Waite, your method is not even original.

When Sir Mahatma Agamya Paramahansa Guru Swamiji (late of H. M. Prisons, thanks to the unselfish efforts of myself and a friend) was asked, "And what of the teaching of Confucius?"—or any one else that the boisterous old boy had never heard of—he would reply contemptuously, "Oh, him? He was my disciple." And seeing the hearer smile would add, "Get out you dog, you a friend of that dirty fellow Crowley. I beat you with my shoe. Go away! Get intellect! Get English!" until an epileptic attack supervened.

Mr. Waite, like Marie Corelli, in this as in so many other respects, brags that he cares nothing for criticism, so he won't mind my making these little remarks, and I may as well go on. He has "betrayed" (to use his own words) the attributions of some of the small cards, and Pamela Coleman Smith has done very beautiful and sympathetic designs, though our own austerer taste would have preferred the plain cards with their astro-

logical and other attributions, and occult titles. (These are all published in the book "777," and a pack could be easily constructed by hand. Perhaps we may one day publish one at a shilling a time!) But Mr. Waite has not "betrayed" the true attributions of the Trumps. They are obvious, though, the moment one has the key (see "777"). Still, Pamela Coleman Smith has evidently been hampered; her designs are cramped and forced. I am infinitely sorry for any artist who tries to draw after dipping her hands in the gluey dogma of so insufferable a dolt and prig.

Mr. Waite, I believe, is perfectly competent to produce indefinite quantities of Malted Milk to the satisfaction of all parties; but when it comes to getting the pure milk of the Word, Mr. Waite gets hold of a wooden cow.

And do for God's sake, Arthur, drop your eternal hinting, hinting, hinting, "Oh what an exalted grade I have, if you poor dull uninitiated people would only perceive it!"

Here is your criticism, Arthur, straight from the shoulder.

Any man that knows Truth and conceals it is a traitor to humanity; any man that doesn't know, and tries to conceal his ignorance by pretending to be the guardian of a secret, is a charlatan.

Which is it?

We recommend every one to buy the pack, send Mr. Waite's book to the kitchen so as to warn the maids, throw the Major Arcana out of window, and play bridge with the Minor Arcana, which alone are worth the money asked for the whole caboodle.

The worst of it all is: Mr. Waite really does know a bit in a muddled kind of way; if he would only go out of the swelled-head business he might be some use.

But if you are not going to tell your secrets, it is downright schoolboy brag to strut about proclaiming that you possess them. Au revoir, Arthur.

ALEISTER CROWLEY.