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FOR THE THELEMITES

ROSE AND ALEISTER CROWLEY'S STAY IN EGYPT IN 1904

A STUDY OF THE CAIRO WORKING
AND WHAT IT LED TO

BY
PERDURABO ST

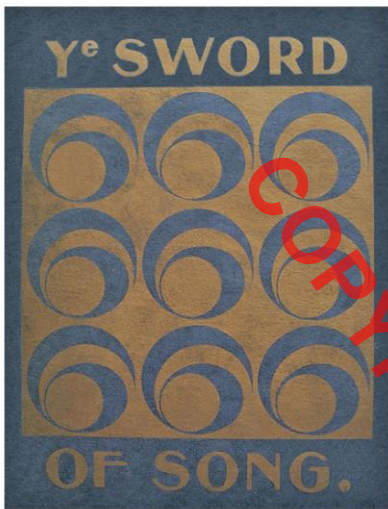


FRATER PERDURABO, to whom this revelation was made with so many signs and wonders, was himself unconvinced. He struggled against it for years. Not until the completion of His own initiation at the end of 1909 did He understand how perfectly He was bound to carry out this work. (Indeed, it was not until his word became conterminous with Himself and His Universe that all alien ideas lost their meaning for him). Again and again He turned away from it, took it up for a few days or hours, then laid it aside. He even attempted to destroy its value, to nullify the result. Again and again the unsleeping might of the Watchers drove Him back to the work; and it was at the very moment when He thought Himself to have escaped that He found Himself fixed for ever with no possibility of again turning aside for the fraction of a second from the path.

The history of this must one day be told by a more vivid voice. Properly considered, it is a history of continuous miracle.

THE EQUINOX OF THE GODS, 1936 E.V.

PART II.



The Sword of Song – 1904 E.V.
Front wrapper

The Sword of Song. Called by Christians *The Book of the Beast*, discussed in the first part of this chapter, was a tasteful book with a unique design, printed by the Parisian master printer and scholar Philippe Renouard (1862-1934), of the young firm of Typographie Philippe Renouard.⁴²²⁴ The book was, as mentioned, issued as the second book from the S.P.R.T. in October 1904 E.V. It had gold-printed navy-blue wrappers and on the front wrapper between its title's upper "Y° SWORD" and lower "OF SONG." was a square comprising a spectacular design printed in gold and which by use of the wrapper's blue colour gave the number "666" thrice.⁴²²⁵ In *Confessions* we find Crowley saying:

*The Wrapper of the original edition has on the front a square of nine sixes and the back another square of sixteen Hebrew letters, being a (very clumsy) transliteration of my name so that its numerical value should be 666.*⁴²²⁶

The "clumsy" transliteration read אלהי סטערן הכרע וולהי and was written in a golden square placed between two small golden semicircles apparently drawn to symbolize the sun-disc revealing both Crowley's name (Aleister E. Crowley) and the number 666.⁴²²⁷ As to the title of the book, I notice that Crowley's great poetical inspiration Charles Algernon Swinburne in 1880 had written in a stanza of "*Song for the Centenary of Walter Savage Landor*":

*Like the sun's rays that blind the night's wild beasts
The sword of song shines as the swordsman sings;*⁴²²⁸

So perhaps Crowley took inspiration from these lines.

⁴²²⁴ Typographie Philippe Renouard was located at 19, rue des Saints-Pères, Paris. • For *The Sword of Song* and Philippe Renouard, see: *Confessions*, p. 359. • Renouard also printed *Why Jesus Wept* (1904 E.V.) and *Rosa Mundi* (1905 E.V.) • See: *Aleister Crowley. The Collected Works of Aleister Crowley*. Foyers, Inverness, Scotland: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, Volume III, 1907, pp. 238-9. (*Appendix A. Notes Towards an Outline of a Bibliography of the Writings in Prose and Verse of Aleister Crowley*, pp. 233-9.) • See also note²⁵⁴³ above.

⁴²²⁵ Duncombe-Jewell's description of the book in Vol. III. of *Collected Works* says: "with design in centre "666" thrice repeated". • *Aleister Crowley. The Collected Works of Aleister Crowley*. Foyers, Inverness, Scotland: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, Volume III, 1907, p. 238. (*Appendix A. Notes Towards an Outline of a Bibliography of the Writings in Prose and Verse of Aleister Crowley*, pp. 233-9.) • For *The Sword of Song*, see also note¹⁶⁹⁸ above.

⁴²²⁶ *Confessions*, p. 387. • See also note⁴⁰⁷² above.

⁴²²⁷ The transliteration also appeared in *Why Jesus Wept* in 1905 E.V. as signature of "*Dedicatio Extraordinaria*". • *Aleister Crowley. Why Jesus Wept: A Study of Society and of the Grace of God*. [Paris]: Privately printed, 1904, p. [xviii]. (*Dedicatio Extraordinaria*, pp. [xvii]-[xviii]). • Facsimile reprint (B/W): First Impressions Series. Vol. N^o. 18. [Essex House, Thame, Oxon, UK: Mandrake Press Ltd and Edmonds, WA, USA: Holmes Publishing Group], 1993.

⁴²²⁸ *Algernon Charles Swinburne. Studies in Song*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1880, p. 9, Stanza 5. (*Song for the Centenary of Walter Savage Landor*, pp. [1]-65.)

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Illustration on the back of *The Sword of Song* with Crowley's name (Aleister E. Crowley) in Hebrew characters adding up to 666.

The title printed on the book's front cover was "Y^e SWORD OF SONG" but the title page had "The Sword of Song" and the same had the book's spine. Why did Crowley write "Y^e SWORD OF SONG" on the front wrapper instead of "THE SWORD OF SONG"? 'Ye' is a so-called graphic variant of 'the' and can also be used as graphic variant of 'thee', however, there was enough space to write "THE" instead of "Y^e", so why use this spelling? Most surprisingly, it turns out that "Y^e SWORD OF SONG" happens to be an anagram of 'Foyers's own God'! Coincidence or intentional?! A most remarkable fact that came to me one early morning after having asked myself why the title was written in this particular way on the front wrapper as part of a design showing "666" – I thought that it was a broad hint that it had a special meaning. The variant title "Y^e SWORD OF SONG" is apparently only referred to in the description of the book in *Appendix A* in the end of Vol. III of *Collected Works* – a bibliography compiled by L. C. R. Duncombe-Jewell.⁴²²⁹ Nevertheless, as mentioned in another chapter, G. K. Chesterton noted the variant title on the upper cover and drew his own conclusions about its origin and correctness in the review of *The Sword of Song* in *The Daily News*, September 24, 1904 E.V.:

He [Mr. Aleister Crowley] publishes a work, "The Sword of Song: Called by Christians 'The Book of the Beast,'" and called, I am ashamed to say, "Ye Sword of Song" on the cover, by some singularly uneducated man.⁴²³⁰

The review's title was "Mr Crowley and the Creeds" and Chesterton, calling Crowley a good poet, made reservations about his Buddhist faith and, of course, also his obvious attacks on Christianity. Previous to this, Chesterton had written what Crowley in *Confessions* styles "a long congratulatory criticism"⁴²³¹ of his poetical volume *The Soul of Ostris* in the Charles Dickens-founded *The Daily News* in June 1901, but had commented on Crowley's "passionate devotion" to what in Chesterton's universe clearly were unauthorized deities with foreign names. Crowley quoted a part of the more than 1500 words review in *Collected Works*, however, here is the full review which was headed "THE CONVERSION OF THE POETS":

⁴²²⁹ Aleister Crowley. *The Collected Works of Aleister Crowley*. Foyers, Inverness, Scotland: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, Volume III, 1907, p. 238. (*Appendix A. Notes Towards an Outline of a Bibliography of the Writings in Prose and Verse of Aleister Crowley*, pp. 233-9.) • See also note¹⁷⁵⁵ above.

⁴²³⁰ *The Daily News*. London, UK: Daily News. ♦ Saturday, September 24, 1904, p. 6. ("MR. CROWLEY AND THE CREEDS., p. 6.") • Crowley printed the last part of G. K. Chesterton's "MR. CROWLEY AND THE CREEDS." as "Mr. Crowley and the Creeds, and The Creed of Mr. Chesterton. With a Postscript Entitled A Child of Ephraim; Chesterton's Colossal Collapse", an eight-page pamphlet inserted at the end of the first edition of *Why Jesus Wept: A Study of Society and of the Grace of God*, Privately printed in 1904 E.V. • *Why Jesus Wept; A Study of Society and of the Grace of God*; By Aleister Crowley. NP [Foyers, Scotland]: Privately Printed, 1904. ♦ Facsimile reprint: Aleister Crowley. *Why Jesus Wept: A Study of Society and of the Grace of God*. Facsimile reprint of 1904 first edition: First Impressions Series. V^ol. N^o. 18. [Essex House, Thame, Oxon, UK: Mandrake Press Ltd and Edmonds, WA, USA: Holmes Publishing Group], 1993, p. [3]. (*Mr. Crowley and the Creeds (By G. K. Chesterton)*, pp. [3]-4.) • Also printed in "TIME: A Dialogue Between a British Sceptic and an Indian Mystic." ♦ Aleister Crowley. *The Collected Works of Aleister Crowley*. Foyers, Inverness, Scotland: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, Volume II, 1906, pp. 269-70. (*TIME: A Dialogue Between a British Sceptic and an Indian Mystic*, pp. 267-82.) • For Chesterton's full review, see note¹⁷¹⁴ above. • For the review, see also: *John Sullivan*. *G. K. Chesterton: A Bibliography*. London, UK: University of London Press, 1958, p. 125. • See also note¹⁷¹¹ and note³⁸⁹⁰ above.

⁴²³¹ *Confessions*, pp. 384-5.

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Y E S W O R D O F S O N G

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

F O Y E R S ' S O W N G O D

9 5 1 2 6 3 10 8 4 12 13 11 7

As seen above, the title printed on the front cover, "YE SWORD OF SONG", happens to be an anagram of "FOYERS'S OWN GOD"! Was it hidden there by the 'Beast 666' of Boleskine, Foyers, perhaps in order to be used in an expected communication with G. K. Chesterton about the book?

For the Thelemites

The more anarchic poets of the early parts of the century devoted themselves largely to the exhilarating task of attacking the supernatural wholesale. With Mr. Swinburne at their head, they quoted whole passages of the Old Testament, with negatives and irreverent applications interspersed, and by this commodious method succeeded in combining the advantages of being original and profane with the advantages of drawing on an old and excellent stock of literary images. Like Mr. Swinburne, they set Paganism against Christianity: like him they could not tolerate a single Deity, but seemed, for some singular reason, to get on very comfortably with a great many. The same remarkable idiosyncrasy was to be remarked in their attitude towards the ladies whom they tragically and ecstatically adored. But the dominant note of Swinburnianism, beyond all question, was the attack upon religion; the vast and incredible conception which has been swallowed by the secularist school, that the religious sentiment, which stretches from one end of history to the other, is one vast hereditary malady and unbroken nightmare. This view seems to us to-day as hard to believe as any fable in the legends of the saints.

But the remarkable story has been the story of the conversion of the poets. Whoever else is satisfied with the age of science, they clearly are not. They have divided the human soul by every conceivable scientific number, and they find there is always something over. Philosophers may draw the boundary of human knowledge and of human utility in one place or another, as they please; but to the poets it will always be the tree or hedge that is just beyond the boundary that is beautiful, alluring, and imperative. Thus it has happened that the poets have gradually faced round, and are now, in most cases, thoroughly fanatical upholders of the supernatural. The new school of mystics, rather than be for one single moment degradingly connected with common sense, will maintain that the changes and adventures of their lives are really traced out in the rotation of colossal planets or the common creases in their hands. The poets exaggerate it, as they exaggerate everything, since exaggeration is the definition of art. But the great fact remains. Swinburne, at the period of "Poems and Ballads," would certainly have used the words "saint" and "artist" as antagonistic, with some very fine lines about tyrannous praises and pallid, and also about songs made sweet of desire. Mr. W. B. Yeats uses "saint" and "artist" as almost interchangeable.

Mr. Yeats is, of course, the most striking example of this transition. So far is he from thinking the spirit world illusory, that it would appear to be the actual world about which he has his doubts. He hears of green grass with well-bred humour, and is informed that the sun is in the sky with the air of one who is not to be taken in. But there are more definitely minor poets (if the appalling double comparative may be permitted) who are even more decided examples of the extent to which the poets have "got religion." One of these is Mr. Aleister Crowley, whose book "The Soul of Osiris" seems to us to show a power and promise above the average of minor poetry. Frequently, no doubt, there are painful examples of the affectations of his school; but while there are some who are too old to be natural, there are others who are too young to be natural, and we fancy Mr. Crowley is of the latter class. An instance of this elaborate and perverse way of doing things may be found in a fine eulogistic sonnet to Wagner, which is headed "Before hearing 'Siegfried.'" The Philistine cannot help asking if Mr. Crowley felt less agreeable after hearing "Siegfried."

Mr. Crowley follows the old Swinburne tradition in all the externals. The most irresistible trait he can find in a maiden is that she should bite like a mad dog. When he wishes to eulogise a friend he indicates that the friend's garden is full of sunset-coloured sins (we make Mr. Crowley a present of this phrase), and then everyone is happy. In the poem of "Jezebel" he again obtains a somewhat cheap effect of unconventionality by creating a scandal between the Queen and Elijah. We can only say that if those characters whose acts are recorded in the Book of Kings really did feel a tender affection for each other, they both adopted a thoroughly Swinburnian mode of expressing it. It may be an imaginative defect in ourselves, but we have never been able to understand the peculiar poetry which appears to attach in the decadent mind to the sex element in persons who have not only desecrated, but almost certainly exhausted it. Jezebel appears to us merely prosaic.

For the Thelemites

But though Mr. Crowley, whom we have taken as a type of the converted decadent, is thoroughly Swinburnian in his odd taste in "painting lips" and such things, he exhibits in the most startling form the great return to the shrine of the præter-natural of which we have spoken. His whole book, "The Soul of Osiris" is devoted to the conception of the gradual return of a passionate and fickle spirit to holiness. He offers a remarkable tribute to the almost forgotten truth that man is never genuinely at home except in goodness, that artistic emotions can no more refresh the nature than a liqueur can quench the thirst. His last poem, the "Litany," at the end of the section called "The Holy of Holies," is a very powerful lyric, expressing in lines that have all the smoothness of true force and all the lucidity of true mysticism, the cry of man in his last and worst agony, the agony of desolate frivolity and hopeless freedom:

Nature is one with my distress,
The flowers are dull, the stars are pale;
I am the Soul of Nothingness,
I cannot lift the golden veil.
O, Mother Isis, let thine eyes
Behold my grief and sympathise!

To the side of the mind concerned with idle merriment there is certainly something a little funny in Mr. Crowley's passionate devotion to deities who bear such names as Mout and Nuit, and Ra and Shu, and Hormakhou. They do not seem to the English mind to lend themselves to pious exhilaration. Mr. Crowley says in the same poem:

The burden is too hard to bear,
I took too adamant a cross;
This sackcloth rends my soul to wear,
My self-denial is a dross.
O, Shu, that holdest up the sky,
Hold up thy servant, lest he die!

We have all possible respect for Mr. Crowley's religious symbols, and we do not object to his calling upon Shu at any hour of the night. Only it would be unreasonable of him to complain if his religious exercises were generally mistaken for an effort to drive away cats.

Moreover, the poets of Mr. Crowley's school have, among all their merits, some genuine intellectual dangers from this tendency to import religions, this free trade in gods. That all creeds are significant and all gods divine we willingly agree. But this is rather a reason for being content with our own than for attempting to steal other people's. The affectation in many modern mystics of adopting an Oriental civilization and mode of thought must cause much harmless merriment among the actual Orientals. The notion that a turban and a few vows will make an Englishman a Hindu is quite on a par with the idea that a black hat and an Oxford degree will make a Hindu an Englishman. We wonder whether our Buddhistic philosophers have ever read a florid letter in Baboo English. We suspect that the said type of document is in reality exceedingly like the philosophic essays written by Englishmen about the splendours of Eastern thought. Sometimes European mystics deserve something worse than mere laughter at the hands of Orientals. If there ever was one person whom honest Hindus would have been justified in tearing to pieces it was Madame Blavatsky.

That our world-worn men of art should believe for a moment that moral salvation is possible and supremely important is an unmixed benefit. But to believe for a moment that it is to be found by doing to

particular places or reading particular books or joining particular societies is to make for the thousandth time the mistake that is at once materialism and superstition. If Mr. Crowley and the new mystics think for one moment that an Egyptian desert is more mystic than an English meadow, that a palm tree is more poetic than a Sussex beech, that a broken temple of Osiris is more supernatural than a Baptist chapel in Brixton, then they are sectarians, and only sectarians, of no more value to humanity than those who think that the English soil is the only soil worth defending, and the Baptist chapel the only chapel worthy of worship. But Mr. Crowley is a strong and genuine poet, and we have little doubt that he will work up from his appreciation of the Temple of Osiris to that loftier and wider work of the human imagination, the appreciation of the Brixton chapel.⁴²³²

Chesterton's review is like many of his writings intelligent and witty, however, when he speaks of 'mystics' he has clearly no knowledge of, for instance, Kabbalah, and on writing his review he had probably also forgotten that the newspaper that he was writing for was founded by a novelist whose literary style was a mixture of fantasy and realism.⁴²³³ Nor was he aware of that the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.) in the beginning of the next decade (1910 E.V.) would publish a book titled *The Book of the Dead*, which, among other things, would state on the comparison of Egyptian religion with Christian religion:

*It remains now for us to consider the effect produced on the morality of the nation by this myth of Osiris. For a high standard of morality it is necessary to have a personal imitation of some great and good being who becomes the personification of all that is right; we find this in the Christian and Buddhist religions as well as in that of ancient Egypt. It was Osiris who supplied this need to the old inhabitants of the Nile; he was the prototype of virtue and of virtue persecuted; he was both human and divine, a man born into this world to instruct and to serve other men both by his life and by his death; a god who received all into his kingdom after death, on condition that they were identified with him, and had followed his example in leading a blameless life on earth.*⁴²³⁴

This book written by Helen Mary Tirard, which I have mentioned in a previous chapter together with its authoress⁴²³⁵, had an introduction by the Swiss archaeologist, Egyptologist, and Biblical scholar Edouard Naville. Unfortunately, as far as I know, Chesterton never reviewed the book, it

⁴²³² The Daily News. London, UK: Daily News. ♦ Tuesday, June 18, 1901, p. 6. (Review of "*The Soul of Osiris.*" Aleister Crowley. *Kegan Paul*" signed "G. K. CHESTERTON.")(*THE CONVERSION OF THE POETS*, p. 6.) • See also: Aleister Crowley. *The Collected Works of Aleister Crowley*. Foyers, Inverness, Scotland: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, Volume II, 1906, note 80 (*Mr. Chesterton.*) to verse 767 (p. 163) of "*Ascension Day*", pp. 202-3. (*Notes to Ascension Day and Pentecost*, pp. 185-211.) • Also: P. R. Stephensen. *The Legend of Aleister Crowley; Being a Study of the Documentary Evidence Relating to a Campaign of Personal Vilification Unparalleled in Literary History*. London, UK: Mandrake Press Limited, 1930, pp. 44-5. (*Chapter II. EARLY PERIOD, 1896-1907 – THE SOUL OF OSIRIS*, pp. 43-6.) • See also note³⁴¹ and note¹⁹²⁵ above. • For the review of the book in *The Westminster Review*, see note¹⁸⁴¹ above. • For the review of the book in *The Nation*, see note¹⁸⁵¹ and note¹⁸⁴⁸ above. • For the review of the book in *The Critic*, see note¹⁸⁵² above.

⁴²³³ I.e. the English novelist Charles John Huffam Dickens (1812-1870), who founded the paper in 1846 and also served as its first editor.

⁴²³⁴ Helen Mary Tirard. *The Book of the Dead*. With an Introduction by Edouard Naville, D.C.L., Ph.D. London, UK: Society For Promoting Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.), 1910, pp. 134-5. (*CHAPTER V; Morality of the Book of the Dead, and the Myth of Osiris*, pp. [110]-37.) • See also note²⁰⁸⁹ above.

⁴²³⁵ For Helen Mary Tirard and the publication of her book, see note²⁰⁸⁸ above.

would have been interesting reading! As to 'Brixton' and its chapel, Chesterton wrote in 1925 E.V. in *The Everlasting Man*:

*It is no more transcendental for a man to remember what he did in Babylon before he was born than to remember what he did in Brixton before he had a knock on the head.*⁴²³⁶

Crowley had responded to Chesterton's review of *The Soul of Osiris* in the annotations to *Ascension Day* and *Pentecost* in *The Sword of Song* printing a part of the review together with his answers to Chesterton's comments.⁴²³⁷ Later in 1904 E.V. he reprinted the review of *The Sword of Song* together with his rebuttals in a pamphlet issued as a loose inset in *Why Jesus Wept*. At the end of the review Chesterton had written:

*Next week I hope to make a fuller study of Mr. Crowley's interpretation of Buddhism, for I have not room for it in this column to-day.*⁴²³⁸

But the promised article never came out. Instead Chesterton's weekly column the next Saturday was headed "THE RETURN OF THE GREAT IDEA." and its initial lines stated:

*I am impelled to turn aside from all such subjects as Buddhism for certain reasons, and for one reason especially, that a thing has appeared upon the political horizon which is immeasurably more urgent and poignant for us than all the Japs and Russians put together. I mean the movement of many Tories towards the idea of Home Rule for Ireland.*⁴²³⁹

Some have wondered at Crowley's conduct in this matter, nevertheless, very interestingly, Chesterton biographer Joseph Pearce (1961-), draws in his book *Wisdom and Innocence: A Life of G. K. Chesterton* from 1996 E.V. attention to that Crowley, as a matter of fact, wrote to Chesterton seeking an open debate on *The Sword of Song* and the issues raised in the review:

⁴²³⁶ Gilbert Keith Chesterton. *The Everlasting Man*. New York, NY: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1925, p. 152. (*Part I; Chapter VI; The Demons and the Philosophers*, pp. 129-57.)

⁴²³⁷ See: Aleister Crowley. *The Collected Works of Aleister Crowley*. Foyers, Inverness, Scotland: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, Volume II, 1906, note 80 (*Mr. Chesterton.*) to verse 767 (p. 163) of "Ascension Day", pp. 202-3. (*Notes to Ascension Day and Pentecost*, pp. 185-211.)

⁴²³⁸ The Daily News. London, UK: Daily News. ♦ Saturday, September 24, 1904, p. 6. ("MR. CROWLEY AND THE CREEDS., p. 6.") • Crowley printed the last part of the review in "Mr. Crowley and the Creeds, and The Creed of Mr. Chesterton. With a Postscript Entitled A Child of Ephraim; Chesterton's Colossal Collapse", inserted at the end of: Aleister Crowley. *Why Jesus Wept: A Study of Society and of the Grace of God*. Facsimile reprint of 1904 first edition: First Impressions Series. V^{ol}. N^o. 18. [Essex House, Thame, Oxon, UK: Mandrake Press Ltd and Edmonds, WA, USA: Holmes Publishing Group], 1993, p. 4. (*Mr. Crowley and the Creeds (By G. K. Chesterton)*, pp. [3]-4.) • Also in: *TIME: A Dialogue Between a British Sceptic and an Indian Mystic*. ♦ Aleister Crowley. *The Collected Works of Aleister Crowley*. Foyers, Inverness, Scotland: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, Volume II, 1906, pp. 270. (*TIME: A Dialogue Between a British Sceptic and an Indian Mystic*, pp. 267-82.) See note⁴²³⁰ above.

⁴²³⁹ The Daily News. London, UK: Daily News. ♦ Saturday, October 1, 1904, p. 6. ("THE RETURN OF THE GREAT IDEA. (By G. K. Chesterton.)", p. 6.)

Dear Sir,

I was very disappointed, after risking a whole halfpenny on the Daily News of Saturday [October 1, 1904 E.V.], to find that your promised article on Buddhism had suffered from Gladstonian 'Ireland blocks the way'. If I am right in surmising that the 'certain reasons' of which you speak refer to the exigencies of journalism, not those of controversy, and that therefore the digression is likely to be permanent, perhaps it would be a pleasant suggestion to you that the affair should be transferred to some other journal.

I am anxious to meet you in fair fight...⁴²⁴⁰

Chesterton refused resolutely a debate. Joseph Pearce sees this as both surprising and out of character since Chesterton was usually more than eager to accept such challenges.⁴²⁴¹ The refuse of debating the issues raised obviously displeased Crowley. It clearly made him more eager to fight and explain his views and thus gave rise to the pamphlet. As stated by me in another chapter, the great question is where G. K. Chesterton got the copy of *The Sword of Song* from apparently before it was sent out to others for review!⁴²⁴² One possibility is that G. K. Chesterton had something to do with the statement given by Hereward Carrington:

I have spoken of Crowley's poetry. Typical of this unforgettable man's attitude is the following incident. He published a volume of verse of such spiritual quality that many of his poems were set to music and sung in a certain church. Then someone pointed out that all these poems represented merely veiled sex-symbolism. Horrified, they were rejected and his books publicly burned. Crowley was delighted at this, and the title-page of his next book bore the legend, 'Published by the Society for Promoting [sic] Religious knowledge [sic].'⁴²⁴³

If this is the case then Crowley/S.P.R.T. probably had sent the copy of *The Sword of Song* to Chesterton in hope of enticing him to start the debate about Christianity and 'religious truth' that Crowley wanted, the reason for his founding of the S.P.R.T.! It would explain why Chesterton suddenly refused to debate, fearing that Crowley would refer to the incident preserved in the words of Hereward Carrington!

The Sword of Song has the following significant dedication:

⁴²⁴⁰ Letter from Crowley, 1904 E.V. Chesterton Study Centre, Bedford. • Quoted in: *Joseph Pearce. Wisdom and Innocence: A Life of G. K. Chesterton*. London, UK: Hodder & Stoughton, 1996, p. 96. (*Heretics and Orthodoxy*, pp. 94-111.

⁴²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 96-7. • See also note²⁰⁶³ above, for a memory of Chesterton's and Crowley's talks in Cambridge around 1910 E.V.

⁴²⁴² See note¹⁷¹⁵ above.

⁴²⁴³ *The Kalpaka; An Occult Quarterly*. Coimbatore, S. India: The Latent Light Culture. ♦ Vol. XXXI, No. 4, October, November, December, 1946, p. 147. (*The Strangest Man I Have Ever Known; Dr. Hereward Carrington*, pp. 143-50.) • *Hereward Carrington*. *Psychic Oddities: Fantastic and Bizarre Events in the Life of a Psychical Researcher*. London, UK: Rider and Company, 1952, pp. 57-8. (*3. Famous Researchers I Have Known*, pp. 54-61.) • See also note¹⁶⁹³ and note¹⁹⁶¹ above.

For the Thelemites

To my old friend and comrade in the Art

BHIKKHU ANANDA MAITRIYA

and to those

FOOLS

*who by their short-sighted stupidity in
attempting to boycott this book
have witlessly aided
the Cause of Truth*

I dedicate these my best words.⁴²⁴⁴

Bhikkhu Ananda Maitriya is of course Allan Bennett or 'Allan MacGregor'⁴²⁴⁵ who had been ordained a bhikkhu (Buddhist monk) at Akyab on May 21, 1902.⁴²⁴⁶ As mentioned briefly in another chapter, Crowley wrote a sonnet in *The Soul of Osiris* to Allan Bennett titled "TO ALLAN MACGREGOR"⁴²⁴⁷, a sonnet that in *Collected Works* had been retitled "TO ALLAN BENNETT MACGREGOR" and now had a note saying:

Now a Buddhist recluse in Burma. In England he was a martyr to spasmodic asthma, which, however, could not quench, could hardly dull even, the fire of his soul.⁴²⁴⁸

Regarding Crowley's use of the name 'MacGregor', it has been ignored that he was not the only one to use this name and there was in fact a 'G.D. clan MacGregor' – Samuel Liddell "MacGregor" Mathers, a.k.a. Comte de Glenstrae, Allan MacGregor and Aleister MacGregor.⁴²⁴⁹ As mentioned in a foregoing chapter, Crowley in *Confessions* stated in connection with his and Rose's arrival in Egypt in 1904:

⁴²⁴⁴ Aleister Crowley. *The Sword of Song*. Called by Christians *The Book of the Beast*. Benares [Actually Paris]: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, 1904, Dedication printed after title-page. • See also note¹⁷¹⁷ above.

⁴²⁴⁵ For Charles Henry Allan Bennett, a.k.a. Allan Bennett MacGregor (1872-1923), see: *Confessions*.

⁴²⁴⁶ See: The Maha-Bodhi; *Journal of the Maha Bodhi Society*. Calcutta: Maha Bodhi Society of India. ♦ Vol. 50, No. 3, March, 2485 B.E. - 1942 C.E., p. 120. (*Burma – The Land of Pagodas – By Senator U. Tha Zan U. B.A., B.L., K.S.M., A.T.M.*, pp. 115-21.) • Allan Bennett returned in 1908 E.V. to England to head the Buddhist Society of Great Britain, which survived until his death in 1923 E.V. • See: *Dharmachari Subhuti (Alex Kennedy)*. *Buddhism for Today: A Portrait of a New Buddhist Movement*. Salisbury, UK: Elements Books in association with the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order, 1983, p. 25. (*PART I; THE BIRTH OF A NEW MOVEMENT; 4. Growth of a Western Buddhist Movement*, pp. 24-44.) • For Allan Bennett, see also note³⁰² above.

⁴²⁴⁷ Aleister Crowley. *The Soul of Osiris. A History*. London, UK: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Company, Ltd., 1901, p. 111. (*THE HOLY OF HOLIES, "TO ALLAN MACGREGOR"*, p. 111.)

⁴²⁴⁸ Aleister Crowley. *The Collected Works of Aleister Crowley*. Foyers, Inverness, Scotland: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, Volume I, 1905, (*The Temple of the Holy Ghost; III. The Holy Place; The Holy of Holies, "To Allan Bennett MacGregor"*, p. 207, note 1.) p. 132.

⁴²⁴⁹ See note¹⁶³, note¹⁶⁵, note^[254], and note⁸⁰⁷ above.

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**Bhikkhu Ananda Metteya, Charles Henry Allan Bennett,
a.k.a. Allan Bennett MacGregor (1872-1923)**



The spelling "*Bhikkhu Ananda Maitriya*" was used by Aleister Crowley in the 1904 E.V. publication of *The Sword of Song* – a spelling also found in several Buddhistic publications – however, when he published *The Sword of Song* in the second volume of *The Collected Works of Aleister Crowley* in 1906 E.V., he wrote "*Bhikkhu Ananda Metteya*" in his dedication.

For the Thelemites

*I had called myself Count Svareff and Aleister MacGregor for quite definite and legitimate reasons;*⁴²⁵⁰

a funny wording that must have a special meaning. Samuel Liddell "MacGregor" Mathers took the motto 'S Rioghail Mo Dhream, (Gaelic) 'Royal is my Tribe'. The Scottish Clan MacGregor, who held lands in, among other places, Glenstrae, was according to legend descended from an ancient Celtic royal family and therefore the clan's motto was 'S rioghail mo dhream'.⁴²⁵¹ Mathers had a great passion for Celtic lore and had around 1885 added "MacGregor" to his name and also started to use the title "Comte de Glenstrae." That Aleister Crowley belonged to the 'G.D. clan MacGregor', headed by Mathers, the MacGregor, the chief of the MacGregors, probably explains why he in 1900 postponed the Operation of Abramelin the Mage for Mathers's sake and fought for the MacGregor and his clan against the members of the Golden Dawn who wished to suspend him from the order. However, Crowley would soon break with Mathers, and as he stated about Mathers and the Operation of Abramelin the Mage in *The Equinox of the Gods*:

*That the Master proved to be no Master, and the order no Order, but the incarnation of Disorder, had no effect upon the good Karma created by this renunciation of a project on which he had set his heart for so long.*⁴²⁵²

In 1901 Allan Bennett left England for Ceylon on account of his health. Seven years later he returned to England as the Buddhist monk Bhikkhu Ananda Metteyya. He arrived on April 22, 1908 E.V., at Albert Docks (East London) with the S.S. Ava, which had left Rangoon on March 21.⁴²⁵³ The *Scottish Evening Telegraph and Post* quoted a reporter from the *London Express* who met Bennett in his cabin on the Ava:

Bhikshu [sic] Ananda Metteyya, a Buddhist monk – the first to visit the Occident – held a reception in his cabin on the steamship Ava at the Albert Docks last night.

He was greeted by old friends – he is an Englishman by birth, long residence and education – as "Allan" but he refused to recognise his baptismal name, which he has renounced for ever. This name in full is Allan Bennett MacGregor. He is not a Scotsman, however, but a Londoner. The last name was adopted in early childhood.

The Bhikshu [sic] – the monks' official title – shivered in his cabin, warm and comfortable though it was. He was smoking asthma cigarettes to drive away the cold and damp of London's weather. He was lightly clothed in pink robes – with a yellow lining – which were wrapped loosely around his gaunt frame, and his feet were unshod.

Though he is only thirty-five years old his hair is white and is closely shaven. His eyes are large, brilliant, and soulful. He speaks in low unimpassioned tones, but with a musical softness that charms the

⁴²⁵⁰ Confessions, p. 387. • See note ⁸⁰⁷ and note ⁸⁰⁸ above.

⁴²⁵¹ See e.g.: *Frank Adam; Sir Thomas Innes of Learney* (Revised by). *The Clans, Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands*. 8th Edition. Edinburgh: Johnston and Bacon, 1970, p. 246. (*The Clans of the Scottish Highlands; MacGregor*, pp. 246-8.)

⁴²⁵² *Ankh-af-na-khonsu [Aleister Crowley]*. *The Equinox of the Gods*. Vol. III, No. III. September MCMXXXVI E.V. London: Issued by the O.T.O. BM/JPKH London, W.C.1, 1936, p. 56. (*CHAPTER IV. The Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage. The Birth of FRATER ——— 5°=6° A.:A.:*, pp. 55-8.)

⁴²⁵³ *The Homeward Mail From India, China and the East*. London, England: The Homeward Mail. ♦ April 25, 1908, p. 528. (*Buddhist Mission to England*, p. 528.) • *Shipping Gazette and Lloyd's List*. London, England. ♦ Wednesday, March 25, 1908, p. 7. ("**RANGOON** Mar 21 sailed Ava (s), London")

listener. His face is full of expression. One instinctively gains the impression that he is a man who has suffered long and intensely.

This is what he said to an Express representative who saw him in his cabin last night.

"I am the first Buddhist monk to come to England. I have come to teach this country the tenets of Buddhism.

"I cannot go out of doors because of my strange dress, and the impossibility otherwise of keeping inviolate the 272 rules of my order.

"My mission is not opposed to Christianity or any other religion – Buddhism is supplementary, and leads to the highest of all."

The 272 rules referred to mainly concern the "meditation," which forms an essential part of the Buddhist system. Some of them are strange, however. Here are five: –

Celibacy.

Holding only eight possessions – three parts of the yellow robe, one begging bowl, one filter, an umbrella, a rosary, and a razor.

Never to eat after noon, and only a vegetarian diet.

Abstention from dancing, music, and all ceremonies.

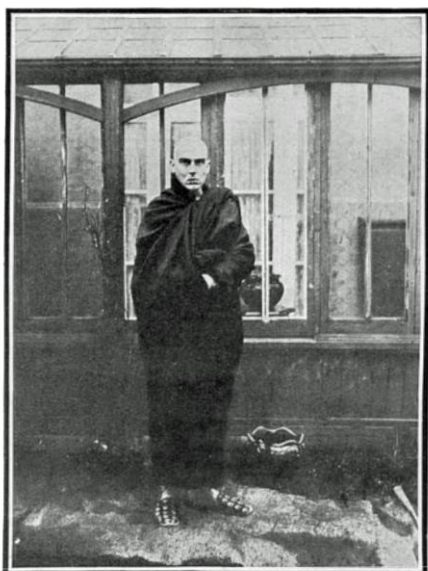
Refusal to look on any woman.

Bhikshu Ananda has had a remarkable career. He is a scientist of great attainments, and he has made several wonderful discoveries. He was at one time an assistant in the laboratory of Dr. Dyer, the famous analytical chemist.

Seven years ago he went to China hoping to cure a severe attack of asthma. He there came into personal contact with several Buddhists and determined to become a monk.

There was one pathetic incident amid the quiet and distant greetings which the Bhikshu permitted. A lady who had known him in the old days approached – "Allan, welcome," she said.

The monk's eyes fell on his rosary. He bowed, and turned quickly away. – Express.⁴²⁵⁴



Bhikkhu Ananda Metteyya
London 1908 E.V.

In March 1908 E.V. Rose and Aleister Crowley had moved into a new residence at Warwick Road, London, and we find not Crowley mention that he went to see his old friend on the Ava. The statement found in the article that Bennett had adopted MacGregor in early childhood is strange, if this was the case, we should expect to find Crowley mention it in *Confessions* or in other places, and there is not a word about it. Crowley himself adopted the name MacGregor in the Golden Dawn and it is most likely that Bennett did the same.

Allan Bennett had returned to England to head the Buddhist Society of Great Britain, which survived until his death in 1923 E.V. He died on March 9, 1923 E.V., and was buried (without any gravestone) at Morden Cemetery, in Morden, London Borough of Merton.

As to Chesterton's work as a critic of English literature, in 1913 E.V. his association with the *Daily News* ended after

⁴²⁵⁴ The Evening Telegraph and Post. Dundee, Angus, Scotland. ♦ Thursday, April 23, 1908, p. 4. (*ENGLISH BUDDHIST. A MACGREGOR WHO IS NOT A SCOT. – A Strange Incident, p. 4.*)

twelve years. He had become more a critic of English society than of English literature and his outspoken views were becoming too controversial for the columns of the paper and he was informed that his services as a weekly columnist were no longer required. Chesterton stopped writing about Crowley and his books after *The Sword of Song* but he continued to write about Buddhism, the creed that had a central place in *The Sword of Song*. For instance, in 1929 E.V. at the time when *Magick in Theory and Practice* was in the press in Paris, a Buddhist (or rather two) happened to cross his path provoking him to write a long article in *The Illustrated London News* about Buddhism and Christianity. The reason for the article was that 'a distinguished military gentleman' had written to *The Illustrated London News* – the weekly which Chesterton contributed to in some thirty years – to announce that a Chinese Buddhist was shortly to visit England, with the firm intention of finally abolishing war. And as the military gentleman explained so was Buddhism a word that meant Enlightenment and only Enlightenment could abolish war:

*A DISTINGUISHED military gentleman recently wrote to the newspaper to announce that a Chinese Buddhist is shortly to visit England, with the firm intention of finally abolishing war. He – I mean the military gentleman – explained that Buddhism is a word that means Enlightenment, and that only Enlightenment can abolish War. This seems in itself a simple process of reason and reform. But I should not be moved to criticize anything so excellent in intention, if the writer had not dragged in the dreary old trick of comparing the enlightened condition of Buddhists with the benighted conditions of Christians. It is true that, like most men in this modern confusion of mind, he needlessly muddles himself by using the same word in two senses and on both sides, and setting Christianity against itself. Buddhism is Christianity, and Buddhism is better than Christianity, and Christianity will never be itself until it is enlightened enough to become something different. But this mere logomachy does not alter the essentials of the opinion. which most of us have seen in one form or another for a great many years past. The key of the situation is that the military critic says that "Christians have failed" to abolish War; and that this is due to the lamentable fact that Christians are not enlightened; or, in other words, to the curious fact that Christians are not Buddhists.*⁴²⁵⁵

– the article ended by saying:

*[...] I hope we have heard the last of the muddled discontent of wordly people, who curse the Church for not saving the world that did not want to be saved, and are ready to call in any other theory against it – even the wild theory by which the world would be destroyed.*⁴²⁵⁶

At the time when Chesterton wrote this he was no longer an Anglican but had in 1922 E.V. converted to Roman Catholicism. Nevertheless, I notice that Bernard Shaw two years before, in 1920 E.V., had written in a letter to Frank Harris:

*[...] Chesterton is not a Roman Catholic. His brother Cecil actually converted; but Gilbert is at the core not even Anglican, but a sound Protestant, as you will find if you ever get him into a corner.*⁴²⁵⁷

⁴²⁵⁵ The Illustrated London News. London, UK: Illustrated London News and Sketch. ♦ Vol. CLXXIV, No. 4688, Saturday, March 2, 1929, p. 338. (OUR NOTE BOOK; By G. K. Chesterton, p. 338. (Buddhism and Christianity))

⁴²⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁴²⁵⁷ See: *George Bernard Shaw; Frank Harris; Stanley Weintraub*. The Playwright and the Pirate: Bernard Shaw and Frank Harris, A Correspondence. Edited With an Introduction by Stanley Weintraub. Philadelphia, PA:

For the Thelemites

Bernard Shaw, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1925 E.V., had himself been raised in a Protestant home in Dublin.

Crowley never quite forgot Chesterton, but it is strange that he and his co-reviewers at *The Equinox* abstained from reviewing G. K. Chesterton's books! However, Chesterton turns up in Crowley's writings a few times after *Why Jesus Wept*, as, for instance, in *Glazier's Houses* in *The Equinox*, September 1910 E.V., where Crowley besides referring to him as "god Gilbert" also remembers his reviewing by the words:

And, like Balaam, too, I have been reviewed by G. K. Chesterton. To pass from this painful subject.
...⁴²⁵⁸

– Balaam was the Midianite prophet in the Old Testament who was summoned by the king of Moab to pronounce a curse upon the Israelites during the Israelite wanderings in the wilderness but instead (since commanded by an Angel of the Lord) blessed them. Later *Diary of a Drug Fiend* had a quote from Chesterton's first novel *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*, a political fantasy from 1904 E.V.:

As G. K. Chesterton says, "You cannot argue with the choice of the soul."⁴²⁵⁹

Another quote by Chesterton from *The Flying Inn* from 1914 E.V. appears in the 'New Comment' to *Liber Legis*, III, v. 60, "There is no law beyond Do what thou wilt.", and following after the essential text of *Liber OZ*, the "RIGHTS OF MAN":

This statement must not be regarded as individualism run wild. Its harmony with statecraft is demonstrated in the Chapters of Liber Aleph already quoted – see comment on Chapter II, verse 72.

*Modern thought, even that of the shallowest, is compelled by Aiwaz to confirm His Law, without knowing what it is about. For instance: "God's wind from nowhere which is called the Will; and is man's only excuse upon this earth," was written by so trivial a Fat Man as Gilbert Keith Chesterton in *The Flying Inn*.⁴²⁶⁰*

Crowley evidently read some of Chesterton's books and Chesterton probably continued reading some of Crowley's as the mention of *The Book of Lies* in his brother Cecil's book from 1914 E.V. could suggest where Cecil Chesterton writes:

Pennsylvania State University Press, 1982, p. 159. (*Shaw to Harris [H/4]*, 10 Adelphi Terrace September 15, 1920, pp. 155-60.)

⁴²⁵⁸ [Aleister Crowley, et al.] *The Equinox*. Vol. I., No. IV. London, UK: Printed for Aleister Crowley and published by him at the office of the Equinox, September MCMX o.s. (1910 E.V.), pp. 348-9. (*Glazier's Houses: Or, the Shaving of Shagpat*. By A. Quiller, Jr. [Crowley], pp. 346-51.)

⁴²⁵⁹ Aleister Crowley. *The Diary of a Drug Fiend*. London, UK: Collins, 1922, p. 71. (*Chapter V. A Heroin Heroine*, pp. 63-75.) ♦ G. K. Chesterton. *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*. London, UK & New York, NY: John Lane, 1904, pp. 46. (Book I. Ch. II.); 70. (Book II. Ch. I.)

⁴²⁶⁰ Aleister Crowley. *The Law is for All. The Authorized Popular Commentary on Liber AL vel Legis sub figura CCXX, The Book of the Law*. Edited by Louis Wilkinson and Hymenaeus Beta. Tempe, AZ: New Falcon Publications, 1996, pp. 185-6. • The quote is from: G. K. Chesterton. *The Flying Inn*. London, UK: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1914, p. 210. (*Chapter XVII. The Poet in Parliament*, pp. 205-20.)

A friend of mine once showed me an insane and entertaining book called Breaks which bore the even more entertaining subtitle: "Being the Falsifications of the One Thought of Frater Perdurabo, which Thought is Itself Untrue."⁴²⁶¹

If this unnamed friend was his brother Gilbert then he probably also would have fastened on the words of an initiated sceptic:

*I slept with Faith, and found a corpse in my arms on
awaking; I drank and danced all night with Doubt,
and found her a virgin in the morning.⁴²⁶²*

During the war G. K. Chesterton and Crowley, in fact, appeared side by side in *The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse*, published in 1917 E.V., however, this 'literary collaboration' was due to the alphabetical arrangement. A single poem by G. K. Chesterton, "*The Holy of Holies*", was followed by three poems by Crowley, "*The Quest*"; "*The Neophyte*" and "*The Rose and the Cross*".⁴²⁶³ Nevertheless, it seems that the book's two editors, the English author, poet and librettist Daniel Howard Sinclair Nicholson (1883-1923), and the English Reverend Arthur Hugh Evelyn Lee (1875-1941), somehow had linked the four poems together – both Nicholson and Lee had been members of A. E. Waite's Golden Dawn.⁴²⁶⁴ The Chicago fortnightly journal *The Dial* had in September 1917 E.V. a review of the anthology written by the American literary scholar and authority on Robert Burns John DeLancey Ferguson (1888-1966), and where DeLancey Ferguson wrote about Crowley and his poem "*The Quest*":

*The thought of Chesterton awakens us to a realization of the most remarkable feature of most of the poems in this collection – their clarity. Their mystical quality is due to elevation of thought, not to woolly-mindedness. Some poets are vague and mysterious simply because they cannot or will not think clearly, but most of the writers here represented are as lucid and unconfused as St. Paul himself. Only rarely – notably in Aleister Crowley's "*The Quest*," every stanza of which requires at least one footnote to explain its symbolic meaning – do we feel that the poet is overdoing the thing. The true mystic can make his vision plain without footnotes.⁴²⁶⁵*

⁴²⁶¹ Cecil Edward Chesterton. *The Prussian Hath Said in His Heart*. London, UK: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1914, p. 97. (IV. *The Nemesis*, pp. 97-124.) • See also note³¹²¹ and note³²¹³ above.

⁴²⁶² [Aleister Crowley] Liber CCCXXXIII. *The Book of Lies. Which is Also Falsely Called BREAKS, The Wanderings or Falsifications of the One Thought of Frater Perdurabo Which Thought is Itself Untrue*. London, UK: Wieland and Co., 1913, p. 59. (*ΚΕΦΑΛΗ ΜΕ, CHINESE MUSIC*, pp. 58-9.) • Aleister Crowley. *Liber CCCXXXIII. The Book of Lies. Which is Also Falsely Called BREAKS, The Wanderings or Falsifications of the One Thought of Frater Perdurabo (Aleister Crowley) Which Thought is Itself Untrue. A Reprint with an additional commentary to each chapter.* [Editors: Karl J. Germer and Gerald Yorke.] Ilfracombe, Devon, UK: The Haydn Press, 1962, p. 100. (45, *ΚΕΦΑΛΗ ΜΕ, CHINESE MUSIC*, pp. 100-1.)

⁴²⁶³ *The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse*. Chosen by D. H. S. Nicholson and A. H. E. Lee. Oxford, UK: At the Clarendon Press, 1917, pp. 519-20; 520-4.

⁴²⁶⁴ For Nicholson and Lee in E. A. Waite's Golden Dawn, see: Robert A. Gilbert. *The Golden Dawn Companion: A Guide to the History, Structure, and Workings of the Hermetic Order of The Golden Dawn*. Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, UK: Aquarian Press, 1986, pp. 171; 173. (5. *The Members of the Golden Dawn. – The Independent and Rectified Order (2)*, pp. 170-5.)

⁴²⁶⁵ *The Dial; A Fortnighly Journal of Literary Criticism, Discussion, and Information*. Chicago, IL: The Dial Publishing Company. • Vol. LXIII, No. 749, September 13, 1917, p. 208. (Review of "*THE OXFORD BOOK OF ENGLISH MYSTICAL*

For the Thelemites

The poem was from *The Song of the Spirit* (1898)⁴²⁶⁶ and when it appeared in the first volume of *Collected Works* in 1905 E.V. Crowley had added eight short footnotes which explained its cabalistic symbolism.⁴²⁶⁷ DeLancey Ferguson was clearly not aware of that the poem originally was published without any footnotes and that the 'version' from *Collected Works* was the choice of the two G. D. members! Five years before, in 1912 E.V., had *The Oxford Book of Victorian Verse* appeared. The poems were chosen by the British author Sir Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch (1863-1944), and on reviewing the book the *Pall Mall Gazette* wrote, among other things:

*No lover of the undulating variety of mankind would intentionally have omitted Mr. Aleister Crowley, or Mr. Alfred Williams, or Mr. Alfred Cochrane. Several of those included do not make as good a display as they might.*⁴²⁶⁸

Just a word on gematria and humour. In 1971 E.V. an uncut and unopened presentation copy of the "second" edition of "*Ye Sword of Song*" appeared for sale. Crowley had inscribed it with the words: "*To the Butcher (69) from the Beast (666)*"⁴²⁶⁹ – the name of this "Butcher" thus adding to 69! Was this copy sent to a reviewer who never read it?

VERSE. Chosen by D. H. S. Nicholson and A. H. E. Lee. (Oxford University Press; \$2.) signed "J. DELANCEY FERGUSON.", pp. 207-8.)

⁴²⁶⁶ Aleister Crowley. *Songs of the Spirit*. London, UK: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., MDCCCXCVIII (1898), p. 9-11. (*THE QUEST*, pp. 9-11.)

⁴²⁶⁷ Aleister Crowley. *The Collected Works of Aleister Crowley*. Foyers, Inverness, Scotland: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, Volume I, 1905, pp. 31-2. (*THE QUEST*.) (*SONGS OF THE SPIRIT; (1898)*, pp. 29-56.)

⁴²⁶⁸ *Pall Mall Gazette*. London, UK: *Pall Mall Gazette*. ♦ Tuesday, December 17, 1912, p. 10. ("*All Sorts and Conditions of Verse. "The Oxford Book of Victorian Verse." Chosen by Arthur Quiller-Couch. (Oxford: Clarendon Press.) 6s. net.*")(*BOOKS OF THE DAY*., p. 10.)

⁴²⁶⁹ *Book Collecting & Library Monthly*. Brighton, Sussex: *Book Collecting & Library Monthly*. ♦ No. 41, September 1971, p. 149.



Boleskine House on Loch Ness

**"SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH.
Letters and Telegrams: BOLESKINE, FOYERS, is sufficient address.
Parcels and Goods: INVERFARIGAIG PIER, LOCH NESS." ***
(Words on the official letter paper of the Society)

As to the naming 'Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth', the British statesman William Ewart Gladstone (1809-1898), whom Aleister Crowley had disliked as a seventeen years old schoolboy, had in 1838 written the book *The State in its Relations with the Church* †, a book that through a famous fifty-page review of it by the Whig politician Thomas Babington Macaulay, 1st Baron Macaulay, PC (1800-1859) in *The Edinburgh Review* had been immortalized. Macaulay, who some months after the review was made Secretary of War, stated about the work:

Mr Gladstone's whole theory rests on this great fundamental proposition, – that the Propagation of Religious Truth is one of the principal Ends of Government, as government. ‡

– W. E. Gladstone assuming, of course, that religious truth was embodied purely in the doctrines and teachings of the English Church. W. E. Gladstone's political enemies often recalled the book's doctrines to mind, and Crowley of course knew the above and probably also took some inspiration from it when he went to war and named his publishing house 'Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth'!

[The above is mentioned in Chapter 11 of *For the Thelemites* – See the extract "*The Method of Science – The Aim of Religion*", found on the page "*Fill and Kill*"]

* Truth; "Cultores Veritatis Fraudis Inimici." – Cicero. London, UK: "Truth" Buildings. ♦ Vol. LVII, No. 1482, Thursday, May 25, 1905, p. 1330. (AN APOSTLE OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH, pp. 1330-1.)

† William Ewart Gladstone. *The State in its relations with the Church*. London, UK: John Murray, 1838.

‡ The Edinburgh Review, or Critical Journal. London and Edinburgh: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, & Longman, London; and Adam and Charles Black, Edinburgh. ♦ Vol. LXIX, No. CXXXIX, April, 1839, p. 235. (Review; "ART. X. – *The State in its relations with the Church*. By W. E. Gladstone, Esq., Student of Christ Church, and M. P. for Newark. 8vo. Second Edition. London: 1839", pp. 231-80.)



G. K. Chesterton's last column in the London *Daily News* in fact appeared on February 1, 1913 E.V. As I have stated, after working as a critic of English literature for twelve years his association with the *Daily News* suddenly ended. He had become more a critic of English society than of English literature, and his outspoken views were becoming too controversial for the columns of the paper, and he was informed that his services as a weekly columnist were no longer required. However, something happened at the very same time as Chesterton's last column was printed in the paper, namely that they received Aleister Crowley's new book, *The Book of Lies*, for review. On February 4, appeared the following on the list of "Book Received":

*"The Book of Lies." Wieland £1 1s.**

It is a strange coincidence that Chesterton stopped writing as a critic of literature at the very same time as Wieland & Co. had sent the new book to them for review, and although Chesterton had stopped reviewing Crowley's books back in 1904 E.V., he had presumably seen the new volume! After Chesterton had stopped reviewing Crowley's books other took over at the paper – for instance, in 1910 E.V. had the English poet and literary critic, who was associated with Georgian poetry, Lascelles Abercrombie (1881-1938), reviewed *Ambergris*, and in this review, which is one of the most significant reviews of Crowley's poetry Lascelles Abercrombie had stated about the poem "Invocation to Hecate.", that it was "one of the most notable magical poems ever written".[†]

As to *The Book of Lies*, most of the other newspapers and magazines that received the book also received the first part of *Book Four*, which was published by Wieland & Co. at the same time as *The Book of Lies*. However, the London *Daily News* only received *The Book of Lies*, and perhaps Crowley had hoped that this very special book could create a review from Chesterton after all these years of silence. That G. K. Chesterton knew *The Book of Lies* is strongly suggested by his brother Cecil's mentioning of the book in a 1914 E.V. publication:

A friend of mine once showed me an insane and entertaining book called Breaks which bore the even more entertaining subtitle: "Being the Falsifications of the One Thought of Frater Perdurabo, which Thought is Itself Untrue."[‡]

Perhaps this 'friend' was his brother Gilbert!

* Daily News. London, England: Daily News. ♦ Tuesday, February 4, 1913, p. 4. ("The Book of Lies." Wieland. £1 1s.)(LITERATURE; BOOKS RECEIVED, p. 4.)

† Daily News. London, England: Daily News. ♦ Monday, May 16, 1910, p. 3. (Review of "Ambergris." A selection from the poems of Aleister Crowley. Elkin Mathews. 3s. 6d. net.; By LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE.)(LITERATURE; BOOKS OF THE DAY; SYMBOLS AND LIFE, p. 3.)

‡ Cecil Edward Chesterton. The Prussian Hath Said in His Heart. London, UK: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1914, p. 97. (IV. The Nemesis, pp. 97-124.)



THE SWORD OF SONG – FOUR EDITIONS IN LESS THAN 24 HOURS!

Although *The Bookseller – The Organ of the Book Trade* had *The Sword of Song* on their 'List of the Principal English Publications for the Month of November, 1904'* , so was the book officially published in October, 1904 E.V.

However, the SPRT had apparently planned to use a joking strategy that showed that the book was so popular that it had reached its 'Fourth edition' in less than 24 hours! *The Sword of Song* was apparently first sent out for review to two newspapers in London. The publication of the new book appeared in *The Daily News* and *The Westminster Gazette* on October 14th.[‡] The London papers *The Standard* and *St. James's Gazette*, listed the book as received the day after, October 15th.[‡] Nevertheless, at the same date *The Manchester Guardian* listed the book, but now it was the book's 'Fourth Edition', and it therefore appeared in the column of 'New Editions and Reissues'![§] And the day after, October 16th, appeared the 'Fourth Edition' also on the list of 'New Editions and Reissues' in the London paper *The Observer*![¶]

Nobody knew that the book only had been printed in 103 copies, and that Aleister Crowley to start with had ordered the printing of three title-pages, which stated "SECOND EDITION"; "THIRD EDITION"; and "FOURTH EDITION"! The book thus appeared in four editions – the first edition had, of course, no edition stated, and was, as a matter of fact, issued, not in blue paper wrappers like the other editions, but in red paper wrappers.[‡]

- * *The Bookseller; The Organ of Book Trade*. London, UK: J. Whitaker & Sons, Limited. ♦ December 9, 1904, p. 1152. ("ORIENTAL; Crowley (Aleister) *The Sword of Song*. Called by Christians *The Book of the Beast*. Imp. 8vo, pp. 194. Soc. Prop. Rel. Truth (Benares) 10/") ♦ *Ibid.*, p. 1185. ("Crowley (A.) *Sword of Song* 10 [s] 0 [d] S.P.R.T.") (*Alphabetical List of the Principal English Publications for the Month of November, 1904*, p. 1185.)
- ‡ *The Daily News*. London, England: Daily News. ♦ Friday, October 14, 1904, p. 4. ("The *Sword of Song*, called by Christians *the Book of the Beast*." By Aleister Crowley. Pp. 195. 10s. *The Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth*.) (TO-DAY'S BOOKS; THEOLOGY, p. 4.) • *The Westminster Gazette*. London, England: The Westminster Gazette. ♦ Friday, October 14, 1904, p. 12. ("CROWLEY, ALEISTER. *The Sword of Song*, called by Christians *The Book of the Beast*. (Benares: *Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth*.) (BOOKS RECEIVED TO-DAY, p. 12.)
- ‡ *The Standard*. London, UK: The Standard. ♦ Saturday, October 15, 1904, p. 2. ("The *Sword of Song*, called by Christians *The Book of the Beast*." By Aleister Crowley. *Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth*.) (YESTERDAY'S NEW BOOKS, p. 2.) • *St. James's Gazette*. London, UK: St. James's Gazette. ♦ Saturday, October 15, 1904, p. 19. ("Ye *Sword of Song*." By A. Crowley. 10s. *The Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth*.) (TO-DAY'S BOOKS, p. 19.)
- § *The Manchester Guardian*. Manchester, England: The Guardian. ♦ Saturday, October 15, 1904, p. 6. ("From the *Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth*: THE SWORD OF SONG. Called by Christians "The *Book of the Beast*." By Aleister Crowley. *Fourth Edition*. 10s.") (BOOKS RECEIVED, p. 6.)
- ¶ *The Observer*. London, England: The Observer. ♦ Sunday, October 16, 1904, p. [8]. ("THE SWORD OF SONG: Called by Christians *the Book of the Beast*. By Aleister Crowley. (*Society for the Propagation of Religious* [sic] *Truth*. – *Fourth edition*.) (THE WEEK'S BOOKS; *New Editions and Reissues*, p. [8].)
- ‡ See: *Timothy d'Arch Smith*. *The Books of the Beast*. Revised and enlarged edition. Oxford, UK: Mandrake, 1991, p. 13; Note 22 on p. 120. • Aleister Crowley. *The Sword of Song: Called by Christians The Book of the Beast*. Edited, Annotated and Introduced by Richard Kaczynski. London, UK: Kamuret Press, 2021, p. xl.

WITHOUT THE RIGHT KNOWLEDGE YOU ARE LOST



Some have found it strange that Aleister Crowley in *The Sword of Song* has mentioned a "the Book of the Law" in 'Ambrosii Magi Hortus Rosarum' (p, 87.), before he had received *Liber L vel Legis* – *The Book of the Law* – in Cairo in 1904 E.V.. However, as some will know, it is logical to find it predating the reception of *Liber Legis*, since the words have been used for several centuries by scholars et al. when speaking of the *Deuteronomy* of the Old Testament – something taught at A.C.'s old University, together with that it was published by the University in several publications. It was knowledge from his time at Cambridge. If it had been written without the mentioning of "Elohim", it would have been 'striking', and somehow 'strange'! Some have also noticed his use of "One, and one, and one" in *Ambrosii* (p. 81.), which clearly is knowledge from his GD days, and something taken from the Kabbalah – and words that are naturally used by Nuit in *Liber L vel Legis* when addressing the 'fools': "My prophet is a fool with his one, one, one; are not they the Ox, and none by the Book?" (I,[48.]

The Book of the Law DEUTERONOMY XXXI. 11. *carefully kept, and publicly read.*

years, in the solemnity of the 'year of release,' in the feast of tabernacles, s ch. 15. 1.
t Lev. 23. 34.
11 When all Israel is come to "appear before the LORD thy God in the place u ch. 16. 16.

vii. 6. *Joseph.*, Ant. iv. 8. 12. *Hengstenberg*, *Authentic*, ii. pp. 163–163, and the remarks in *Graves* on the Pentateuch, Lect. i.; and *Hövernick*, *Einleitung*, Erlangen, 1836, i. pp. 17–22: see also the observations, to the same effect, of *Schultz*, *Deuteron.* pp. 91, 92. 646; and of *Keil*, p. 531.

This delivery of the Law to the *Priests*, and to all the *Elders* of Israel, was tantamount to a delivery of the Pentateuch to the whole Hebrew Nation, to be guarded carefully by them.

To this delivery it is that the Apostle St. Paul refers, when he asks, "What advantage hath the Jew?" and answers, "Much every way: chiefly, because unto them were committed the oracles of God" (Rom. iii. 1, 2).

This Book of the Law was not only delivered to them: the *Priests* were also commanded to deposit the sacred Original by the side of the Ark, which was enshrined in the Holy of Holies

the Coming of the Messiah, to proclaim release from debts, that is, the forgiveness of sins (Luke iv. 19: see *S. Cyril*, *Glaph.* p. 432. Cp. *Bähr*, *Symb.* ii. 608), and to prepare for the Sabbath of Eternity.

Here was another proof of its Truth and Inspiration.

If the people of Israel had not been convinced that it was true and inspired, they never would have received and read, and listened to, a Book which gives such an *unfavourable* character of themselves: see above on ix. 1; and *Graves* on the Pentateuch, Part i., Lect. ii. and pp. 33, 34; and the present Editor's Lectures on Inspiration, pp. 42, 43. This divine provision for preserving Holy Scripture in its integrity; and this provision also of an external testimony to the Integrity, Truth, and Inspiration of Holy Scripture, have been continued from the times of Moses to our own day.

(The Holy Bible; In the Authorised Version; With Notes and Introduction; By Chr. Wordsworth, D.D.. Vol. I.; Part II. London, Rivingtons, 1869, p. 273.)

In 621 BC, the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah, the "Book of the Law" was discovered in the temple, and this book, probably the earliest form of the present book of Deuteronomy, outlined the reform that Josiah tried to put into practice for all of Israel. For the first time, a book was accepted as the rule or norm of the community's life. *

* See: *Joseph T. Lienhard*. *The Bible, the Church, and Authority*. Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1995, p. 62.

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For the Thelemites

The London *Daily News* had a review of *The Argonauts* entitled "PLEASANT HARMONY", September 14, 1904 E.V. (the book had been received by them, July 20.¹⁷⁰⁸):

We have received a curious volume, by Mr. Aleister Crowley, in form of a poetic and lyrical drama in five acts. Mr. Crowley has written several volumes of verse, and has a fair poetic equipment, especially in the matter of technique. He has a smooth sweetness, a pleasant harmony, which he appears to have acquired by a study of the methods of Mr. Swinburne. His drama, in our opinion, is remarkable, less for its action than for its lyrics and for its dedications. Its lyrics are good, through we praise them with the reserve due to imitations. They are gentle flatteries of distinguished modern writers. No man has ever paid a more subtle tribute to the beauty of "Ave atque Vale" than the following, the Orpheus song, from Act IV.:

*Light shed from seaward over breakers bending
Kiss-wise to the emerald hollows: light divine
Whereof the sun is God, the sea His shrine;
Light in vibrations rhythmic; light unending;
Light sideways from the girdling crags extending
Unto this lone and languid head of mine;
Light that fulfils creation as with wine,
Flows in the channels of the deep: light rending
The adamantine columns of the night,
Is laden with the lovesong of light.*

A page or two further on Mr. Crowley gives Orpheus a second lyric, which is less derivative, more individual, and more beautiful, though too long to quote in its entirety. We quote the first two stanzas:

*I hear the waters faint and far,
And look to where the Polar star,
Half hidden in the haze, divides
The double chanting of the tides;
But, where the harbour's gloomy mouth
Welcomes the stranger to the south,
The water shakes, and all the sea
Grows silver suddenly.*

*As one who standing on the moon
Sees the vast horns in silver hewn,
Himself in darkness, and beholds
How silently all space unfolds
Into her shapeless breast the spark
And sacred phantom of the dark;
So in the harbour horns I stand
Till I forget the land.*

¹⁷⁰⁸ The Daily News. London, England: Daily News. ♦ Wednesday, July 20, 1904, p. 4. ("The Argonauts." By Aleister Crowley. Pp. 103. Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, Boleskine, Foyers, Inverness.)(TO-DAY'S BOOKS, p. 4.)

For the Thelemites

We have mentioned the remarkable dedications in this volume. Each act is dedicated, for stated reasons, to some person or persons, though as yet we have failed to discover the hidden, and perhaps religious, truth these dedications would convey. Their symbolism escapes us, though we think them, on the whole, the most successful portions of the book. What could be subtler than the following:

To
Whomsoever
And
The British Army
ON
The occasion
OF
reading "Man and Superman."¹⁷⁰⁹

The review stated, in fact, that the publisher was "Society for the Propagation of Christian [sic] Truth, Inverness."! Two weeks later, September 28, the following letter from Crowley to the Editor appeared in the paper:

Poet and Reviewer.

Sir, – I am glad to deduce from a recent issue of your paper that your reviewers are too busy reading books to spend their time upon newspapers, for surely no one who had heard of Mr. Adolf Beck would have so rashly asserted an identity between the Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth and Aleister Crowley; the Society, on his own showing, but an infant less than a year old, if born at all; and the poet, grown grey in the service of every kind of vice!

Can it be that Mr. Chesterton has reconverted London to the "broad and comforting doctrine of original sin" (unless I misquote) in such wise as to stamp the newest-born infant as the Worst Woman in London?

No! my imagination, inured to horror in every degree, could never have invented anything so pure and pastoral as the Society (with the excellent purpose); it is a concrete fact, and I doubt not will long live and prosper.

Your reviewer is surprised that my "Argo" does not appear to propagate religious truth. But there are those who believe that the best way of achieving this laudable object is to preserve a profound silence on the subject.

It is unlucky that so brilliant a retort should lay itself open to the criticism that the "Sword of Song," of which you will receive a copy in a few days, contains nothing but a disquisition on religion in all conceivable shapes, and it is the same Society (the Benares branch) which is responsible for the publication.

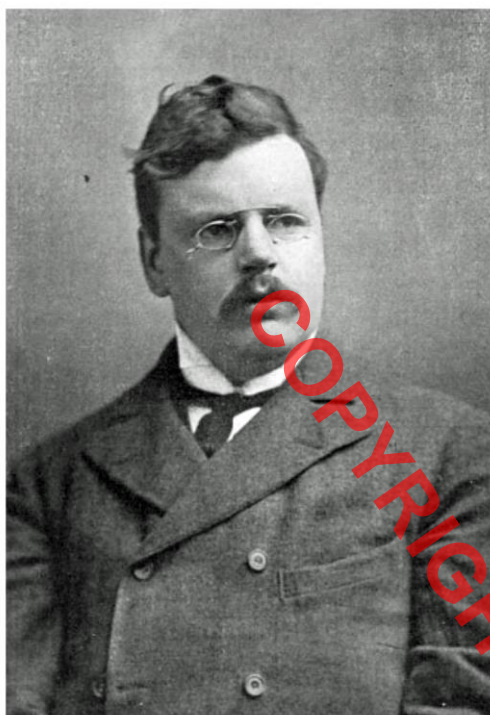
I cannot conclude without a word of sincere thanks for the praise you have bestowed upon my art. – Yours, etc.,

ALEISTER CROWLEY

Savoy Hotel, W.C.¹⁷¹⁰

¹⁷⁰⁹ Ibid. ♦ Wednesday, September 14, 1904, p. 4. (Review of "The Argonauts." By Aleister Crowley. Society for the Propagation of Christian [sic] Truth, Inverness.)(PLEASANT HARMONY, p. 4.)

¹⁷¹⁰ Ibid. ♦ Wednesday, September 28, 1904, p. 3. (Letter from Aleister Crowley headed "Poet and Reviewer.")(THE EDITOR'S POST-BAG, p. 4.)



Gilbert Keith Chesterton c. 1904 E.V.

As a matter of fact, G. K. Chesterton had reviewed *The Sword of Song* in the paper September 24, only four days before the letter was published, a long review of some 1500 words entitled "MR. CROWLEY AND THE CREEDS," however, only about a third of the review mentioned Crowley's book!¹⁷¹¹ The Anglican G. K. Chesterton used *The Sword of Song* in connection with an article of him, which had appeared in the paper the week before entitled "THE RELIGION OF JAPAN."¹⁷¹² As mentioned already, the war between Russia and Japan had started some seven month before on the very day of the Crowleys arrival in Port Said, February 8, 1904 E.V. Crowley would later print the part of Chesterton's review dealing with *The Sword of Song* in a pamphlet entitled "Mr. Crowley and the Creeds, and The Creed of Mr. Chesterton. With a Postscript Entitled A Child of Ephraim; Chesterton's Colossal Collapse", a pamphlet that also was inserted in the back of *Why Jesus Wept* in 1904 E.V.¹⁷¹³ However, here is the full review from *The Daily News*, September 24:

MR. CROWLEY AND THE CREEDS.
(By G. K. CHESTERTON.)

With reference to my article last week I have received further reproaches, but in nearly every case the letter divides itself into two parts; first, a series of fiery taunts at my confessions of "abysmal ignorance," and second, a more solemn remonstrance with me for my "lack of charity." Now I think this places me in a somewhat pathetic position. I am not prepared adequately to define charity, or any other purely mystical virtue. But I should have thought that charity might, roughly, be described as being "a confession of abysmal ignorance" – about abysmal things. The only quite abysmal things are human beings. Charity might, I think, be called an attitude of reverent agnosticism towards the individual soul. If I said that a Jap loved nothing but evil in his heart I should be uncharitable; I should be equally uncharitable if I said it about Mr. Harry Marks. But I cannot conceive in what possible way this charity can have anything to do with our political sympathies or our favourite causes. For this charity is due to all men: therefore, it cannot involve wishing success to the Japanese. Unless it also involves wishing success to the Russians.

And now there lies in front of me a book which is at once a good example of what I have been saying and a good opportunity of passing to something larger and more permanently interesting. It is a poem, with gargantuan notes and introductions, by Mr. Aleister Crowley, and it deals chiefly with his view of Christianity and Buddhism. Before I discuss it in detail I should like to explain why I think it very relevant to our recent discussions.

¹⁷¹¹ For G. K. Chesterton's review of *The Sword of Song*, see also note⁴²³⁰ and also note³⁸⁹⁰ below.

¹⁷¹² The Daily News. London, UK: Daily News. ♦ Saturday, September 17, 1904, p. 6. ("THE RELIGION OF JAPAN; By G. K. Chesterton, p. 6.")

¹⁷¹³ See note⁴²³⁰ below.

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MR. CROWLEY AND THE CREEDS
AND
THE CREED OF MR. CHESTERTON
WITH A POSTSCRIPT
ENTITLED

A CHILD OF EPHRAIM*

CHESTERTON'S COLOSSAL COLLAPSE

* The Children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned them back in the day of battle.

There are, I think, three classes of people who are annoyed with Mr. Hales and myself for feeling a philosophical or ethical distrust of Japan. The first class are the jelly people who simply have an idea that Japan is a little thing tackling a big one. To these people I have only to say that I drink their healths. Their sentiment is quite irrational; it is quite right; and it is, moreover, peculiarly European and decidedly mediæval. I would only remind them that hitherto in the field of war Japan has been the large Power and Russia the small one. The second class of people are those with whom I have hitherto been arguing. They hold something like this, as far as I can make out. They think that all men have by the light of Nature a certain scheme of morality, and that this scheme of morality is the Ten Commandments as understood in West Kensington. This covers the whole earth. Then on top of that come a number of fussy people with religions who want them, for no reason in particular, to believe in the oracle of Delphi, or the Wheel of the Buddhists, or the coming of the Messiah. These religions, they think, have nothing to do with ethics, and, apparently, do not even effect them. Men's religion may be anything; they may be worshipping Christ or Silenus, or a crocodile, or the stars, or nothing at all, but if you go to their conduct you will find it the same as that of an American Ethical Society. This, I say, is unhistorical nonsense. Almost every moral code differs not in its first moral need, perhaps, but in very important matters – in its view of monogamy, wine, suicide, slavery, caste, duelling, decency, the limits of endurance, the seat of authority. And nearly every moral code on earth arose from a religion, even if some of its followers have dropped the religion out of it. If a high-minded and pious Turk (of whom there are a great many) were to see Mr. Blatchford, say, addressing an American Ethical society, he would, feeling his own traditions on monogamy, wine, suicide, etc., say with perfect truth, "This is a sect of Protestant Christians."

But there is a third class of the passionately Pro-Japanese. The first class are those who sympathise with Japan through a chivalry towards small nations: that is, they love an Eastern people for a Western reason. I drink their healths again. The second class consists of those who do not admit that reasons are Eastern or Western at all. They say that religion does not matter. But the third class consists of those who think that religion does matter very much, but who do honestly prefer Buddhism – or, perhaps, Islam or Confucianism – to Christianity. They feel there is a Western and an Eastern philosophy; but they like the Eastern philosophy. To them it is idle to say that Orientalism may contain pessimism: for they are already pessimists. To them it is useless to say that it may undermine the Christian idea of free-will or the Christian idea of marriage, for they do not believe either in free-will or in marriage. Their position is perfectly clear and honest; but it is not any more tolerant than mine. For they are only (with a superb effort) tolerating the things they agree with.

Among these are a great number of my correspondents: but they do not know it. Among these is Mr. Aleister Crowley; but he does know it. He publishes a work, "The Sword of Song: Called by Christians 'The Book of the Beast,'" and called, I am ashamed to say, "Ye Sword of Song" on the cover, by some singularly uneducated man. Mr. Aleister Crowley has always been, in my opinion, a good poet; his "Soul of Osiris," written during an Egyptian mood, was better poetry than this Browningsque rhapsody in Buddhist mood; but this also, though very affected, is very interesting. But the main fact about it is that it is the expression of a man who has really found Buddhism more satisfactory than Christianity.

Mr. Crowley begins his poem, I believe, with an earnest intention to explain the beauty of the Buddhist philosophy; he knows a great deal about it; he believes in it. But as he went on writing one thing became stronger and stronger in his soul – the living hatred of Christianity. Before he has finished he has descended to the babyish "difficulties" of the Hall of Science – things about "the plain words of your sacred books," things about "the panacea of belief" – things, in short, at which any philosophical Hindoo would roll about with laughter. Does Mr. Crowley suppose that Buddhists do not feel the poetical nature of the books of a religion? Does he suppose that they do not realise the immense importance of believing the truth? But Mr.

Crowley has got something into his soul stronger even than the beautiful passion of the man who believes in Buddhism; he has the passion of the man who does not believe in Christianity. He adds one more testimony to the endless series of testimonies to the fascination and vitality of the faith. For some mysterious reason no man can contrive to be agnostic about Christianity. He always tries to prove something about it – that it is unphilosophical or immoral or disastrous – which is not true. He can never say simply that it does not convince him – which is true. A casual carpenter wandered about a string of villages, and suddenly a horde of rich men and sceptics and Sadducees and respectable persons rushed at him and nailed him up like vermin; then people saw that he was a god. He had proved that he was not a common man, for he was murdered. And ever since his creed has proved that it is not a common hypothesis, for it is hated.

Next week I hope to make a fuller study of Mr. Crowley's interpretation of Buddhism, for I have not room for it in this column to-day. Suffice it for the moment to say that if this be indeed a true interpretation of the creed, as it is certainly a capable one, I need go no further than its pages for examples of how a change of abstract belief might break a civilization to pieces. Under the influence of this book earnest modern philosophers may, I think, begin to perceive the outlines of two vast and mystical philosophies, which if they were subtly and slowly worked out in two continents through many centuries, might possibly, under special circumstances, make the East and West almost as different as they really are.¹⁷¹⁴

The great question is where G. K. Chesterton got the copy of *The Sword of Song* from? As stated by Crowley to the Editor of *The Daily News*: "you will receive a copy in a few days", and the paper first listed the book in "TO-DAY'S BOOKS" (under "THEOLOGY"), October 14, and the same date it was also received by *The Westminster Gazette*, and both *The Standard* and *St James Gazette* had the book the day after, October 15.¹⁷¹⁵ In his review G. K. Chesterton only mentions the

¹⁷¹⁴ The Daily News. London, UK: Daily News. ♦ Saturday, September 24, 1904, p. 6. ("MR. CROWLEY AND THE CREEDS., p. 6.")

¹⁷¹⁵ The Daily News. London, England: Daily News. ♦ Friday, October 14, 1904, p. 4. ("The Sword of Song, called by Christians the Book of the Beast." By Aleister Crowley. Pp. 195. 10s. The Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth.)(TO-DAY'S BOOKS; THEOLOGY, p. 4.) • The Westminster Gazette. London, England: The Westminster Gazette. ♦ Friday, October 14, 1904, p. 12. ("CROWLEY, ALEISTER. The Sword of Song, called by Christians The Book of the Beast. (Benares: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth.)(BOOKS RECEIVED TO-DAY, p. 12.) • The Standard. London, UK: The Standard. ♦ Saturday, October 15, 1904, p. 2. ("The Sword of Song, called by Christians The Book of the Beast." By Aleister Crowley. Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth.)(YESTERDAY'S NEW BOOKS, p. 2.) • St. James's Gazette. London, UK: St. James's Gazette. ♦ Saturday, October 15, 1904, p. 19. ("Ye Sword of Song." By A. Crowley. 10s. The Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth.)(TO-DAY'S BOOKS, p. 19.) • The Manchester Guardian. Manchester, England: The Guardian. ♦ Saturday, October 15, 1904, p. 6. ("From the Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth: THE SWORD OF SONG. Called by Christians "The Book of the Beast." By Aleister Crowley. Fourth Edition. 10s.")(BOOKS RECEIVED, p. 6.) • The Observer. London, England: The Observer. ♦ Sunday, October 16, 1904, p. [8]. ("THE SWORD OF SONG: Called by Christians the Book of the Beast. By Aleister Crowley. (Society for the Propagation of Religous [sic] Truth. – Fourth edition.)(THE WEEK'S BOOKS; New Editions and Reissues, p. [8].) • The Scotsman. Midlothian, Scotland: The Scotsman. ♦ Monday, October 17, 1904, p. 2. ("THE SWORD OF SONG. By Aleister Crowley. Inverness: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth.)(NEW BOOKS; POETRY, p. 2.) • The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art. London, UK: The Saturday Review. ♦ Vol. 98, No. 2556, 22 October, 1904, p. 528. ("The Sword of Song (Aleister Crowley) Banares: S.P.R.T. 10s.", p. 528.)(THIS WEEK'S BOOKS – Continued., p. 528.) • The Daily Express. Dublin, Republic of Ireland: The Daily Express. ♦ Monday, October 24, 1904, p. 7. ("Ye Sword of Song." London [sic]: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth.)(LITERATURE; BOOKS RECEIVED, p. 7.) • The Sheffield Daily Independent. South Yorkshire, England: The Sheffield Daily Independent. ♦ Friday, October 28, 1904, p. 4. ("Ye Sword of Song." By Aleister Crowley [sic]. (Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, Banares.)(BOOKS RECEIVED, p. 4.) • The Bookseller; The Organ of Book Trade. London, UK: J. Whitaker & Sons, Limited. ♦ December 9, 1904, p. 1152. ("ORIENTAL; Crowley (Aleister) The Sword of Song. Called by Christians The Book of the Beast. Imp. 8vo, pp. 194. Soc. Prop. Rel.

title of the book together with its author, and there is no mentioning of its publisher, The Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, nor is there any price stated! It is very thought-provoking that G. K. Chesterton's review apparently is the very first place where the publication of the book is mentioned, or, rather the forthcoming publication of it! Only 103 copies of *The Sword of Song* were printed¹⁷¹⁶ and not many copies were apparently sent out for review, however, the book was dedicated to his old friend and comrade "IN THE ART", BHIKKHU ANANDA METTEYA, Allan Bennett, and was, of course, sent to the British quarterly review *Buddhism*, whose editor was Allan Bennett, and the book appeared in the review's "Books Recieved" in the issue of October, 1904 E.V., but it was never reviewed.¹⁷¹⁷

The mentioned Adolf Beck in Crowley's letter to the editor of *The Daily News* had been mistaken for a con man going by the name of John Smith and in 1896 he had been convicted of fraud and sentenced to seven years in prison for defrauding a fashionable London prostitute. Adolf Beck had, in fact, been arrested outside 135 Victoria Street, London, not far from Crowley's later address, 124 Victoria Street. However, in 1904 E.V., Adolf Beck was re-arrested, convicted of identical crimes and served another four months before John Smith was arrested. Adolf Beck was in July, 1904 E.V., given a free pardon by the King together with a compensation.

As we shall see later, Crowley tried to begin with to give the impression that he not was the founder of The Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth or its "Honoured Secretary," but that the Society only published his works – this was clearly done as a parody of the 'religious truth' that he had experienced on several occasions. I shall return to *The Sword of Song* and G. K. Chesterton's review of it in a later chapter.¹⁷¹⁸

Truth (Benares) 10/") ♦ Ibid., p. 1185. ("Crowley (A.) *Sword of Song* 10 [s] 0 [d] S.P.R.T.") (Alphabetical List of the Principal English Publications for the Month of November, 1904, p. 1185.) • See also note⁴²⁴² • For *The Sword of Song*, see Chapter 15. (Note⁴⁰⁵⁵) below.

¹⁷¹⁶ See: Timothy d'Arch Smith. *The Books of the Beast*. Revised and enlarged edition. Oxford, UK: Mandrake, 1991, p. 13; Note 22 on p. 120. • Aleister Crowley. *The Sword of Song: Called by Christians The Book of the Beast*. Edited, Annotated and Introduced by Richard Kaczynski. London, UK: Kamuret Press, 2021, p. xl.

¹⁷¹⁷ *Buddhism*. An Illustrated Quarterly Review. Edited by Bhikkhu Ananda Metteyya. Rangoon, Burma: Printed and published for the International Buddhist Society by The Hanthawaddy Printing Works. ♦ Vol. I, No. 3, October, 1904, p. [696]. ("The *Sword of Song*, by Aleister Crowley, from the author;")(BOOKS RECIEVED; BOOKS IN EUROPEAN LANGUAGES, p. [696].) • For the book's dedication, see note⁴²⁴⁴ below. • For Allan Bennett, see note⁴²⁴⁶ below.

¹⁷¹⁸ See note⁴²³⁰ below.

Appendix.

'The Soul of Osiris' and the 'Seat of Hoor'



As to *The Soul of Osiris*, very interestingly, we happen to know from a notice in *The Belfast News-Letter*, June 1, 1899, that the poem "*The Palace of the World*," from "*The Holy of Holies*" appeared in the *Cambridge Magazine* of May 25, 1899.¹ When the poem later, in 1905 E.V., appeared in the first volume of *Collected Works* (where *The Soul of Osiris* was titled *The Temple of the Holy Ghost*)² Crowley had added a large notice to the title explaining about it that it: "*Describes the spiritual aspect of the "Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram," which we append, with its explanation.*"³ and furthermore in another note to the first stanza's first line, "*The fragrant gateway of the dawn*", that: "*This ritual was given to Neophytes of the Order of the Golden Dawn.*"⁴ The note with the appended "*Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram*" from the Golden Dawn was thus published by Crowley in this volume not long after the Equinox of the Gods had taken place in March, 1904 E.V., and it recalls the statement written by him in the essay "*Qabalistic Dogma*" in the back of the same volume, which has been mentioned already, namely: "*Before what is known as the Equinox of the Gods, a little while ago, there was an initiated Formula [IAO] which expressed these Ideas to the Wise. Truth is not eternal, any more than God; and it would be but a poor God that could not and did not alter his Ways at his Pleasure.*"⁵; and also the statement from the notebook containing "*The Book of Results*" (Yorke MS Book 27), which had been omitted from *TSK1912* and *EG*, that the G.:D.: was to be destroyed, i.e. that "*its history & its papers*" should be published – something already mentioned in a foregoing chapter.⁶ Interestingly, the founder and editor of the *Cambridge Magazine* was in fact W. E. H. Humphrys of the Golden Dawn whose motto was "*Gnothi Seauton*" ('Know Thyself')!⁷ However, W. E. H. Humphrys's initiation into the order took first place some six

¹ The Belfast News-Letter, Antrim, Northern Ireland: The Belfast News-Letter. • Thursday, June 1, 1899, p. 6. ("*In the fifth number of the "Cambridge Magazine" [Thursday, May 25, 1899] there is a plea for athletics, and articles on "Kipling & Co." "A Classical Discovery," by G. F. Abbott; "A New Poet," by E. H. Lacon Watson; and "The Palace of the World," by Aleister Crowley.*")(*NEW BOOKS AND MAGAZINES*, p. 6.) • I have not been able to examine a copy of the fifth number of this ultra-rare magazine that only appeared from April 27, 1899 - November 30, 1899. • Cambridge Magazine. Cambridge, UK: Printed at the office of the Cambridge Gazette. • Vol. 1, No. 5, Thursday, May 25, 1899.

² In a note to "*THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST*." in the first volume of the *Collected Works* Crowley stated: "*At the publisher's [i.e., Kegan Paul's] suggestion, this volume was split up into "The Soul of Osiris" and "The Mother's Tragedy." The original design of the poet is now restored [by the S.P.R.T.].*" • Aleister Crowley. *The Collected Works of Aleister Crowley*. Foyers, Inverness, Scotland: Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth, Volume I, 1905, p. 166, Note * to the title "*THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST*." (*THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST*. 1901, pp. 166-213.)

³ *Ibid.*, p. 204, Note 1. (*THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST*. 1901, pp. 166-213.)

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 204, Note 2.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 193. (*APPENDIX; QABALISTIC DOGMA*, pp. 265-9.)

⁶ Manuscript Notebook OS27, Yorke Collection, Warburg Institute, University of London.

⁷ For W. E. H. Humphrys and the Golden Dawn, see: *Robert A. Gilbert*. *The Golden Dawn Companion: A Guide to The History, Structure, and Workings of the Hermetic Order of The Golden Dawn*. Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, UK: Aquarian Press, 1986, p. 160. (5; *The Members of the Golden Dawn; Isis-Urania from September 1897*, pp. 159-60.)

month after the publication of Crowley's poem, November 21, 1899⁸, and Crowley probably played a role in his joining of the order, I think. The short-lived weekly magazine of which only fifteen numbers appeared (April 27, 1899 - November 30, 1899) was founded by W.(illiam) E.(vans) H.(ugh) Humphrys (1876-1950)⁹ of Downing College in April, 1899, and Crowley's poem appeared in the new weekly's fifth number.¹⁰ According to *The Belfast News-Letter*, May 6, 1899, Crowley also supplied the "Ballade of a Far Country," apparently printed in the first number of the *Cambridge Magazine*, April 27, 1899.¹¹ The publication of the weekly stopped just after W. E. H. Humphrys's initiation into the Golden Dawn, and he probably chose to use his spare time on magic and mysticism instead of editing the magazine. "The Palace of the World" was also among the ten poems by Aleister Crowley that were chosen by Aelfrida Tillyard for her anthology *Cambridge Poets 1900-1913: An Anthology* (1913 E.V.).¹² Another weekly magazine entitled "The Cambridge Magazine" was founded in 1912 E.V. by the British writer and Cambridge linguist Charles Kay Ogden (1889-1957).¹³ Crowley also contributed to another Cambridge magazine *The Granta*; "A College Joke to cure the Dumps.", which appeared in January, 1889, founded and edited by the English writer and Liberal Party politician R.(udolph) C.(hambers) Lehmann (1856-1929) of Trinity College.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ For his full name and year of birth, see: *Arthur Charles Fox-Davies. Armorial Families; A Directory of Gentlemen of Coat-Armour. Fifth Edition. Edinburgh, Scotland: T. C. & E. C. Jack, 1905, p. 703. ("REVEREND HUGH HUMPHRYS [...] has Issue – (I) William Evans Hugh Humphrys, Gentleman, b.[orn] Feb. 11, 1876;")* • According to England & Wales deaths 1837-2007 he died at the age of seventy-five in Hendon, Middlesex, in 1950 E.V. • W. E. H. Humphrys went to Queen's College, Cambridge, in 1895. In 1898 he moved over to Downing College, wherefrom he graduated in 1899. (See: *Alumni Cantabrigiensis.*)

¹⁰ See note¹ above.

¹¹ *The Belfast News-Letter, Antrim, Northern Ireland: The Belfast News-Letter. ♦ Saturday, May 6, 1899, p. 6. ("The Cambridge Magazine" is the title of a new periodical, which is published at sixpence. It has articles on "Shall I Learn Shorthand?" by T. P. O'Connor, M.P.; "Mr. Gladstone," by the late Sir Frank Lockwood; and "Ballade of a Far Country," by Aleister Crowley.)*(*NEW BOOKS AND MAGAZINES*, p. 6.) • Cambridge Magazine. Cambridge, UK: Printed at the office of the Cambridge Gazette. ♦ Vol. 1, No. 1, Thursday, April 27, 1899.

¹² *Cambridge Poets 1900-1913; An Anthology. Chosen by Aelfrida Tillyard. Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd., 1913, pp. 62-5. ("THE PALACE OF THE WORLD")*(Aleister Crowley, pp. 46-66.)(*Bibliography; Aleister Crowley, Trinity*, pp. 222-4.)

¹³ *The Cambridge Magazine; Edited and Controlled by Members of Cambridge University. Published Every Sunday during Term. Cambridge, UK: Printed for the Proprietors.*