

THE BIRMINGHAM DAILY GAZETTE
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BOOKS OF THE DAY.

The Mother's Tragedy. By Aleister Crowley. (Privately printed.)

It is not long since we reviewed in these columns what we believed to be the first book of a new port. "The Soul of Osiris" possessed the fullest promise, and now we have before us another volume from the same pen. We should say from internal evidence that there is but a small interval of time between the two books: they for all intents and purposes belong to each other, the only difference being one of subject. In "The Soul of Osiris" the subject-matter was very frequently of quite an extravagant character, with now and then poems which were free from any extravagance at all, but full of true poetic fire. In the present volume we likewise find a similar condition of things, but here the subject-matter is even more extravagant, and were it not for its treatment we should say extremely unpleasant. Mr. Crowley has courage, and is not to be deterred from frankness by any possible or impossible demand of conventionality. Most of our great poets, particularly our great dramatic poets, have dealt with subjects with which the subject of "The Mother's Tragedy" is allied; but in this new drama its author has gone much further than either Aeschylus or Shelley even, and the horror of the whole thing is tremendous indeed. We feel, therefore, that our estimate of the quality of Mr. Crowley's poetry is a correct one, for with any treatment short of that to be expected from a true poet, such a subject as that treated of in "The Mother's Tragedy" would be nothing but nauseous. As it is, it is of the essence of great tragedy. We cannot say more of it now; but we still look forward to a still, quiet, and calm volume of poems from Mr. Crowley's pen by which he may be more definitely judged than is possible with these turbulent, fiery efforts of a young poetic ebullience.