THE ACADEMY AND LITERATURE 3 SEPTEMBER 1904

REVIEW OF THE ARGONAUTS

Mr. Alaister [sic] Crowley has before now shown himself to possess a strong imagination and a forceful, though too often confused, power of expression. "The Argonauts," though it has his poetic quality in passages, by no means shows him at his best; and this though it is much clearer than his wont. Indeed, compared with his previous work, it attains actual lucidity. It is carefully modeled on the forms of Greek classic drama. But the Greek spirit is wholly alien from Mr. Crowley's own, and indeed opposed to his native quality, which is essentially Teutonic. The excellences of one are adverse to the excellences of the other. In pursuing the Greek spirit Mr. Crowley has merely weakened and diluted his own style. He is best, because nearer himself, in parts of the dialogue. The choral portions are not strong; they are lacking in sheer poetic substance; they are dilute—a thing one could not say of his previous poems. In some places Mr. Crowley would have been well served by a sense of humour, which is too clearly lacking in him. He would then have cut out or altered certain lines which provoke an undersigned smile.