

THE CAMBRIDGE REVIEW 27 OCTOBER 1904

NEWS OF THE WEEK AND NOTES.

Some years ago Mr Aleister Crowley, 'a Gentleman of the University of Cambridge,' was hailed in the Cambridge Review, by an ecstatic reviewer, as holding 'the first place among the latter day poets.' And we ourselves can remember a time when we surreptitiously preferred the vigour of his 'Tannhauser,' to the Attic monotone of a Classical Master. But the promise of bygone days is far surpassed by the contents of the circular which is included with his latest work, 'The Star and the Garter.' Here we read not only that Mr G. K. Chesterton has devoted a column and a quarter of the *Daily News* to praise of one work, but that all problems that ever troubled the soul of man have been finally settled and disposed of by this extraordinary genius. We are however left somewhat in the dark as to what is the final solution. It is true that 'he has said the last word possible on Regeneration,' that he has 'provided a complete solution of the problem of Creation.' But while in one poem 'his creed is a singular mixture of belief in Osiris and in Christ,' we discover that in another 'masterpiece of learning and satire, in light and quaint or graceful verse all philosophical systems are discussed and dismissed, all religions in turn are condemned or laughed out of court, from Mohammedanism to Christian Science, and the great Agnostic conclusion stated and proved.' But no room is left for wonder that the competition, in which a prize of £100 is held out to him who will buy, and excel in writing an essay on, his works, is described not only as the 'chance of the year, or the century, but as the 'chance of the Geologic period.' The price of Mr Crowley's works varies from a guinea for the most wonderful productions, to one shilling for the lesser lights; there are many of them. It may be mentioned that Mr Crowley is a master in dedication—Jason, a play in five acts, is dedicated in bits to Dr Verrall, Mr Rudyard Kipling, the British Army, several ladies, and finally to Common Sense, and the Qabalists, Clergymen, Peers, Alchemists, Subalterns, Sorcerers, Thieves, Necromancers, Missionaries, and other worthies among whom Mr Crowley says he has lived (being in England), but from whom he now departs. These works are published by the 'Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth.' One is al-

most driven to wonder whether Mr Crowley is related to that 'Saint homme' of the Himalayas, whose habits were mentioned last week. And yet his literary and poetic power are by no means contemptible.