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REVIEW OF *THE SOUL OF OSIRIS*

Verses similar to these have been often written before, but have not the words, simple as they are, the ring of genuine poetry?

Religious poetry is not always poetic. This cannot, however, be said with regard to the volume of verse entitle *The Soul of Osiris*, by Aleister Crowley. There is much in the volume which will excite admiration, and much that will perplex and irritate the uninitiated reader. The poet is, indeed, a mystic, and veils a morbidly exaggerated Catholicism under an ultra-Egyptian passion for death. Take as an example of the sickly mysticism of these poems the following:

"I stood within Death's gate,
And blew the horn of Hell;
Mad laughter echoing against fate,
Harsh groans less terrible,
Howled from beneath the vault; in night the avenging
thunders swell'd."

This is the opening of a poem called "Cerebus."

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

There is a lack of virility in poetry of this sort, but it cannot be denied that Aleister Crowley is a true poet—a poet of the school of Baudelaire and Poe.