

**THE SCOTSMAN
EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND
18 JULY 1907**

NEW BOOKS.

The Star in the West. A Critical Essay upon the Works of Aleister Crowley. By Captain J. F. C. Fuller. London: The Walter Scott Publishing Company.

Aleister Crowley's works are caviar to the general, and it does not seem likely that this critical essay upon them will serve in any way to popularize them. One of the points the writer makes is that they are written, not for the vulgar many, but for some discreet and understanding few, who can see through the veil of their egotistical expression to an esoteric meaning which they convey. Naturally, such a contention leads the exposition along a retrograde course, for a simple-minded man, whether in reading poetry or in any other business, can see as far through a milestone as can the most advanced aesthete; but this commentator proceeds to explain the known by the unknown, and, beginning by laying it down that Crowley is the greatest of the English poets since Swinburne, with some of whose works his own has traces of affinity, goes on by successive stages to a conclusion in which all human philosophies are merged into one culminating doctrine of mystical symbolism that finds its fittest expression in the lines of Crowley, here freely quoted in order to illuminate Saint Augustine and the Oriental yogis. All this falls in with the emblems on the title-page and cover of the book—the rose of the world, the flaming star, the disembodied wings, and all the rest of them, and suggests that the book must mean something very deep indeed. Perhaps it may. A prospective reader may be left to discover the Grand Arcanum for himself. Crowley seems to have found it, if his critic is to be believed, in the anthology of the Cabala and in New-Rosicrucianism, where, no doubt, it is as clear as mud.