

# THE ONLOOKER 8 OCTOBER 1910

## The A.:A.:

The revival of the study of occultism, which is a curious and perhaps rather ominous phenomena, has led to many strange manifestations, and among others to the foundation of the mystical society of the A.:A.: What the symbols stand for I have not the remotest idea, but the purpose of the brotherhood apparently is to revive the practice of ceremonial magic as a means of attaining some sort of "religious" ecstasy. Its founder, Aleister Crowley, who is, I believe, a poet of quite exceptional gifts, though his verse is known only to the eclectic, believes that happiness is only to be attained in this life by the cultivation of Ecstasy or Samadhi, which an eminent scientist has defined as "a quasi-spasmodic outstanding of a special tract of the brain." Deeply read in the Eastern magic, he has discarded the meditative methods of the Oriental as unduly tedious, and has adopted in its place the use of mystic ceremonial.

## The Rites of Eleusis.

With a view to bringing within reach of even the humblest homes, the society proposes (at a modest fee) to revive the rites of Eleusis at the Caxton Hall in the course of this month, when the rites of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and the more respectable deities of the Pagan Pantheon will be celebrated with proper ceremonial and archaic solemnity. Those who have had the courage to attend previous séances of the cult report that the experience is interesting and impressive. The music and the dancing, which apparently play an important part in the ceremonial, achieve a very high standard of artistic excellence. They include also the recitation of the ritual of the Pentagram, the pouring forth of libations and the invocation of the greater mystery of the Hexagram. The illuminati are young men and women robed in strange garments, mystic, wonderful, and include such awe-inspiring figures as the Sword Bearer, the Guardian of the Flame, and Frater Omnia Vincam, richly habited and properly accoutered. As one who would not willingly speak disrespectfully even of the equator, it is not my business to

deprecate this quaint revival of the cabbala; but one cannot help wondering by what stretch of the imagination it can be described as "religious."