



VOL. XI. NO. 10.

OCTOBER, 1917

PRICE 15 CENTS

## COCAINE

BY ALEISTER CROWLEY.

"There is a happy land, far, far, away."

Hymn.

[We disagree with our gifted contributing editor on some points, but nevertheless we regard this article as one of the most important studies of the deleterious effects of a drug that, according to police statistics, is beginning to be a serious menace to our youth.—Ed.]

### I.

Of all the Graces that cluster about the throne of Venus the most timid and elusive is that maiden whom mortals call Happiness. None is so eagerly pursued; none is so hard to win. Indeed, only the saints and martyrs, unknown usually to their fellow-men, have made her theirs; and they have attained her by burning out the Ego-sense in themselves with the white-hot steel of meditation, by dissolving themselves in that divine ocean of Consciousness whose foam is passionless and perfect bliss.

To others, Happiness only comes as by chance; when least sought, perhaps she is there. Seek, and ye shall not find; ask, and ye shall not receive; knock, and it shall not be opened unto you. Happiness is always a divine accident. It is not a definite quality; it is the bloom of circumstances. It is useless to mix its ingredients; the experiments in life which have produced it in the past may be repeated endlessly, and with infinite skill and variety—in vain.

It seems more than a fairy story that so metaphysical an entity should yet be producible in a moment by no means of wisdom, no formula of magic, but by a simple herb. The wisest man cannot add happiness to others, though they be dowered with youth, beauty, wealth, health, wit and love; the lowest blackguard shivering in rags, destitute, diseased, old, craven, stupid, a mere morass of envy, may have it with one swift-sucked breath. The thing is as paradoxical as life, as mystical as death.

Look at this shining heap of crystals! They are Hydrochloride of Cocaine. The geologist will think of mica; to me, the mountaineer, they are like those gleaming feathery flakes of snow, flowering mostly where rocks jut from the ice of crevassed glaciers, that wind and sun have kissed to ghostliness. To those who know not the great hills, they may suggest the snow that spangles trees with blossoms glittering and lucid. The kingdom of faery has such jewels. To him who tastes them in his nostrils—to their acolyte and slave—they must seem as if the dew of the breath

of some great demon of Immensity were frozen by the cold of space upon his beard.

For there was never any elixir so instant magic as cocaine. Give it to no matter whom. Choose me the last losel on the earth; let him suffer all the tortures of disease; take hope, take faith, take love away from him. Then look, see the back of that worn hand, its skin discolored and wrinkled, perhaps inflamed with agonizing eczema, perhaps putrid with some malignant sore. He places on it that shimmering snow, a few grains only, a little pile of starry dust. The wasted arm is slowly raised to the head that is little more than a skull; the feeble breath draws in that radiant powder. Now we must wait. One minute—perhaps five minutes.

Then happens the miracle of miracles, as sure as death, and yet as masterful as life; a thing more miraculous, because so sudden, so apart from the usual course of evolution. *Natura non facit saltum*—nature never makes a leap. True—therefore this miracle is a thing as it were against nature.

The melancholy vanishes; the eyes shine; the wan mouth smiles. Almost manly vigor returns, or seems to return. At least faith, hope and love throng very eagerly to the dance; all that was lost is found.

The man is happy.

To one the drug may bring liveliness, to another languor; to another creative force, to another tireless energy, to another glamor, and to yet another lust. But each in his way is happy. Think of it!—so simple and so transcendent! The man is happy!

I have traveled in every quarter of the globe; I have seen such wonders of Nature that my pen yet splutters when I try to tell them; I have seen many a miracle of the genius of man; but I have never seen a marvel like to this.

### II.

Is there not a school of philosophers, cold and cynical, that accounts God to be a mocker? That thinks He takes His pleasure in contempt of the littleness of His creatures? They should base their theses on co-