

THE SAVIOUR.
A DRAMA IN ONE SCENE.
By ALEISTER CROWLEY.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

The Most Venerable Elder: aet. 80.
The Blind Elder: aet. 70.
The Deaf Elder: aet. 60.
The Dumb Elder: aet. 50.
The Palsied Elder: aet. 40.
The Most Reverend Elder: aet. 30.
The Young Plump Elder: aet. 20.
All these are members of the Town Council of the City of Blabre.
The Prophet of the Gods.
The Fool.
The Sentinel of the Council Chamber.
The Herald of the Council.
The Herald of the Gnogues.
A Courier.
The Saviour.
A Standard-bearer.
Soldiers.
A young girl.

The Elders, clad in furred robes of purple with hoods and golden chains, are seated at a long table of carved oak. The Most Reverend Elder wears a definitely ecclesiastical vestment of black and gold, with a golden biretta.

The table occupies the middle of the chamber, near the back of the stage, but allowing plenty of room for passage. The room itself is well lighted from three windows. The west window is curved, and through it are seen one or two spires. The north window shows much of the tall buildings of a fantastic and elaborately beautiful city, such as Duerer or Beardsley might have drawn. The east window shows the towers which surmount the river-gate of the city. Beneath this window is an altar, on which are candles, and images of the gods of Blabre. Beneath the west window are steps, where stands the Herald, gorgeously apparelled, with trumpet and tabard, awaiting the word to proclaim to the people of the city, many of whom are gathered without, the result of the deliberations of the Council.

The chamber itself is decorated with a rich but civilized simplicity.

The table is covered with inkhorns and old parchments. At its east end stands the Fool in motley, blue and yellow, with cap, bells, and bauble.

The door is in the east wall; before it stands the Sentinel, in plate mail, holding erect a fantastically shapen pike. The Elders are seated behind the table, facing the audience, in the following order, west to east: the Young Plump Elder, the Most Reverend Elder, the Palsied Elder, the Most Venerable Elder, the Blind Elder, the Deaf Elder, the Dumb Elder.

At the southwest corner of the table, a little distance away, facing the Elders, is the Prophet of the Gods. He is squatting upon the floor. He is clad in dirty white robes, ragged from long use. His frame is spare, and his face is gaunt and sunken, burnt almost black by the sun. Huge wild eyes glitter be-

neath his matted hair. He is of no particular age; his long and unkempt beard is still black. The robes, torn and open, reveal the breast, with its weals and scars caused by the scourge. There are traces of coagulated blood upon it.

AUTHOR'S NOTE.

It is not desirable that time and place of the play should be too strictly denoted, lest in future ages some historian or other mentally defective person should desire to ruin the design of the author by "accuracy." But the reader may think, and the spectator should be made to think, of some town of delicately-flavored name, in the time of the old chronicles; and he may use the spectacles of Mr. Arthur Machen or Mr. Layton Crippen. But the Gnogues are to be very clearly distinguished from the people of Blabre by their obviously different race, as indicated in the text, by their rude gruff curt harsh brutish manner, and by the simplicity of their rough harness.

(The curtain rises upon the deliberations of the Council.)

The Most Venerable Elder: The doom of Blabre!

The Blind Elder: I see no hope for the city.

The Deaf Elder: There is no news of any succor.

(The Dumb Elder gesticulates. Throughout, he repeats on his fingers all that is said, for the benefit of the Deaf Elder. Managers will wish to change this, on the ground that it will tend to drive the audience mad; but that is the object of the direction.)

The Deaf Elder (*translating*): My colleague says that he has raised his voice again and again in warning; and now it is come upon us.

The Palsied Elder: Cannot we take some action, however desperate?

The Most Reverend Elder: My children, there is no hope save in God, the Almighty, the Merciful and Gracious, the Helper, the Ready to save.

The Prophet: Woe unto Blabre! Woe to the wicked city! *(His is a long wail or howl, like a coyote. It is uttered quite in the same sudden causeless way as one notices often enough in a dog; it is not intended as part of the conversation. In short, he is just a wild beast, like as the Fool is a tame one; and he receives no notice. It is as if he had not spoken.)*

The Young Plump Elder: Why did He not save us before the last extremity was on us? Look at these reports! *(He indicates certain parchments.)* The Gnogues have pushed one salient to within bowshot of the city walls. We are straitly invested. Famine has spread her leathern wings, and sucks the blood of our bravest. Pestilence walks no more by night; under the sun he stalks and smites. We have no necessary thing but air and water; and both are already contaminated with the poison of our own dead.

The Most Venerable Elder: Still, we have water while the river-gate is held.

The Blind Elder: How many days can we hold out?

(The Dumb Elder gesticulates.)