

THE LITERARY GAZETTE
circa 1899

Review of *Songs of the Spirit*

Mr. Crowley (who should drop the dreadful fore-name with which he has been afflicted) sings almost melodiously, if not always intelligibly and sometimes nonsensically. There is too much of the cant of a contest between earthly and heavenly love in his pages. Why any such contest? Cannot the rose and the lily bloom side by side? A book of wandering cries such as this we cannot regard as of much significance. But we may hope that the author's indubitable singing power may gain an assured note with his further development. We would advise him to be less introspective and subjective and more objective and dramatic, to seek less to express directly his own thoughts than to present man and world in the light of his thoughts. This Spenserian stanza is not unworthy of the author of "Adonais":

So I press on, fresh strength from day to day
Girds up my loins and beckons me on high,
So I depart upon the desert way,
So I strive ever toward the copper sky,
With lips burnt black and blind in either eye.
I move for ever to my mystic goal,
Where I may drain a fountain never dry,
And of Life's guerdon gather in the whole,
And on celestial manna satisfy my soul.