

OCCULT REVIEW DECEMBER 1913

NOTES OF THE MONTH

Those who have watched the progress of Mr. Aleister Crowley's quarterly magazine, *The Equinox*, with mingled interest and amazement, will learn, perhaps also with mixed feelings, that the present issue, which is just to hand, and actually exceeds in bulk any of its predecessors, is the last number destined to appear, at least for some time to come. Its discontinuance is announced in a manner thoroughly in keeping with its past history. This is stated to be "in accordance with the rule of the Order of the A.A., which prescribes five years of silence alternating with five years of speech." "This silence," says the Editor, "was maintained from the year 0 to the year IV of this era. Speech followed from the year V to the year IX. Silence will therefore be maintained from the year X to the year XIV. There will therefore be no further open publications made by the executive until March, 1918 O.S."

The era to which Mr. Crowley alludes may at first glance prove somewhat puzzling to my readers; but a moment's reflection will reveal the fact that the year One of his era corresponds to the year 1905 (Old Style, as Mr. Crowley would call it); and it will hardly be necessary to remind them that it was in January, 1905, that the first number of the OCCULT REVIEW was given to the world. The implied compliment to the magazine is as delicate as, I am sure, it is sincere, and such testimony to the appreciation with which the Review is regarded goes straight, I need hardly say, to the Editorial heart. Not being subject to the rule of the Order of the A.A., the Editor does not, however, consider it necessary to keep silence for more than the four weeks intervening between one issue of the magazine and the next.

We must not, however, take Mr. Crowley's conception of silence too literally. In his essay on Thomas Carlyle, Lord Morley makes reference in a somewhat sarcastic vein to the sage of Chelsea's "gospel of silence preached in thirty odd volumes." Somewhat similarly we gather that Mr. Crowley proposes to utilize a new magazine *The Oriflamme*, the organ of the O.T.O.—to wit, the Order of Oriental Templars—as the mouthpiece of his own gospel of silence. This, I understand, is to appear monthly, commencing with January, 1914.

Mr. Crowley prefaces the present number of *The Equinox* with a striking, perhaps I should rather say startling, portrait of himself, made bald for the occasion. It can be strongly recommended to all those in search of new methods of self-hypnosis. It is characteristic of the Editor that he takes the opportunity of the last number of *The Equinox* to give himself away completely in the following terms:—"It is, or course, common knowledge that the A.A. and *The Equinox*, and all the rest of it, are a stupid joke of Aleister Crowley's. He merely wished to see if any one would be fool enough to take him seriously. Several have done so, and he does not regret the few thousand pounds it has cost him." Personally I must decline to accept the Editor's disavowal of his own seriousness, and shall continue as heretofore to regard him in the light of a prophet—of sorts. Mr. Crowley is of course a great egoist—what prophet is not?—and possesses that supreme art of the egoist, the art of posing effectively. I accordingly anticipate that he will take rank in due time with the world's greatest and most successful posers, such as, e.g., George Bernard Shaw, G. K. Chesterton, Oscar Wilde, the German Emperor, etc., etc. His magazine, *The Equinox*, has certainly constituted a poster for its readers, and the least he could do now that its five years' course is complete, would be to offer a handsome prize for the most successful solution of the riddle.

From the point of view of the occult student, the most valuable portion of the present number, and one which I hope, by and by, to see reprinted, is the translation of Eliphas Levi's *La Clef des Grands Mystères* (The Key of the Mysteries). This runs by itself to 290 pages—something like half the volume—and is in many ways the great occultist's most illuminative work.