

**THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT**  
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**DIARY OF A DRUG FIEND**

Mr. Crowley has not the literary fascination of a De Quincey or the power and stark realism of a Zola. His most conspicuous gift is an effervescent imagination, an exuberant diction; and in the rhapsodies, despairs, and regeneration of Sir Peter and Lady Pendragon, ardent devotees of cocaine and "heroin," retailed in a "Paradiso" (by Sir Peter), an Inferno (by his wife), and a "Purgatorio" (by Sir Peter), we certainly do not reach, though he avers it to be a "true story," any impression of a real human experience. They roam about Paris and Europe, palpitating at first with "internal ecstasy and the intoxicating sense that the whole world admired and envied us." They "had sprung in one leap to be coterminous with the Universe," and so on; then they sank into "boundless bliss" but drifting "down the dark and sluggish river of inertia towards the stagnant, stinking morass of insanity"; and through the horrors of despair they reach at last the Abbey of Thelema, where diminution of doses and dissertation on life and its meanings, control of the will, and the 'credo' of a Gnostic and a Catholic Church of Light, Life, Love and Liberty give them mastery of the will and of degenerating emotion; and the belief that there is nothing in nature, even drugs, which cannot be used for our benefit. The book teems both with an immense fertility of incidents and idea; and with an amazingly rich crop of rhetoric. It is impossible to say that at any moment in the career of Peter and his wife do we seem to be in touch with reality. It is all a phantasmagoria of ecstasies, despairs, and above all verbiage.