

THE SPECTATOR
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FICTION.

The Diary of a Drug Fiend. By Aleister Crowley. (Collins. 7s. 6d. net.)

The story—a true one, the preface informs us—is unsuitable for the nursery, nor would it be welcomed as a birthday present by our grandparents or our aunts. It tells of how Sir Peter Pen-dragon and the lady who early in the book becomes his wife took to cocaine and heroin and lived a wildly hectic life in London, Paris and Naples. Towards the end of the book they are saved—what remains of them—by their mysterious friend, Basil King Lamus, and the symphony ends (as the writers of analytical concert-programmes say) in a mood of high and sustained exaltation. We cannot agree with the author that it is “a story of hope and beauty”; the greater part is too monotonously unhealthy and morbid for that; but it is a story with a fine idea and it is written with considerable vigour.