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From Guggle to Zatch it's Magic

The word "magic" has been devalued by amateur critics, and though it is not quite such base metal as the word "gusto," one hesitates to use it. Which makes life difficult when a book which is precisely magical turns up.

You had better hurry to get a copy of *The 13 Clocks*, by James Thurber (Hamish Hamilton, 9s. 6d.). It is a fairy story worthy of the attention of those children who like to play with the facts of love and death, but should not be allowed to fall into the hands of soppy adults.

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Turn from magic to magick. In this spelling the word belongs to Aleister Crowley, christened Alexander, who also used the names of Brother Perdurabo, the Laird of Boleskine, the Master Therion, the Beast 666, and Prince Chioa Khan.

It is no doubt due to some strange concatenation of the stars that he is now being much written about.

The Great Beast, by John Symonds (Rider and Co., 21s.) is a full-dress biography of the son of a Plymouth Brother who earned some reputation as a poet and devoted his life and the lives of anyone whom he could influence to the study and practice of magick.

Crowley was flattered by the Press with the title of "The Wickedest Man In The World." Mr. Symonds has given us all the information about him which the laws of libel and obscenity permit.

It is quite sufficient. There is plenty of sensational stuff in the history—sexual rites, satanic sacrifices, etc.—but Crowley never seems to have said or done anything of any consequence. His "Crowleyanity" reversed Christian morals as mechanically as the Black Mass reverses Christian ritual. Yet he fascinated many good and talented people.

On hearing of the death of Queen Victoria he "flung his hat in the air and danced for joy." Perhaps it was this direct rebelliousness together with a talent for humbug which made him magnetic.

Arthur Calder-Marshall's book, *The Magic of My Youth* (Rupert Hart-Davis, 12s. 6d.). Debunks Crowley. But it is mostly autobiography, half-remembered and half made-up. Calder-Marshall writes very well of the friendships, ambitions and disillusionments of his youth.

Crowley was a friend of a friend, but the names in this book are unimportant. Read as fiction, it is a good, amusing novel.