

**THOTH; A
ROMANCE**

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Thoth; a romance by J. Shield Nicholson

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J. SHIELD NICHOLSON

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ROMANCE**

Some Opinions of the Press on the
First Edition of this Work.

"The beauty of 'Toth' is that you never have the faintest idea what will happen next. This is the glory of romance, to keep up the reader's curiosity from page to page. . . . But what could hardly be bettered is the vivid, yet awful picture of the women, the mothers of the ruling race in this wonderful city. . . . The central and vivifying idea is, to us, absolutely novel."—*Saturday Review*.

"'Toth' has imagination, delicacy, and finish."—*Athenaeum*.

"It is admirably written, many of its passages are not likely to be forgotten."—*Graphic*.

"'Toth' is a well and mysterious romance, manifesting unusual literary skill, and displaying no small amount of imagination."—*Loudon*.

"Very curious and notable little book."—*Daily News*.

"The story is one of great power and of the highest imagination. . . . One of the cleverest things of the day."— *Glasgow Herald*.

"An excellent romance, strongly imagined, and worked out with praiseworthy industry and skill."— *Scotsman*.

"The book is full of imaginative beauty of a rare order."—*Leeds Mercury*.

"The tale is told with such a wealth of imagination and power of graphic description, that it is not only possible to take a lively interest in the fortunes of the heroine, but even difficult to cease following them till the last page is reached."—*Guardian*.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS,
EDINBURGH AND LONDON.

T H O T H

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A ROMANCE



THIRD EDITION

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

I GLADLY avail myself of this occasion to thank my critics for the very friendly reception they have accorded to a book which was issued, in the fullest meaning of the term, anonymously—that is to say, even without the knowledge of a single personal friend. At the same time, I wish to make an explanation which is partly of the nature of a protest.

Post hoc ergo propter hoc may not always be a fallacy, but it was certainly a mistake on the part of several reviewers of 'Thoth' to translate it in their haste, "after 'She,' therefore on account of 'She.'" For, as a matter of fact, 'Thoth' was designed and in part composed more than twelve years ago. In its present form, however, it has been entirely rewritten. It may interest some

of my critics to know the original intention and scheme, and the reasons why I delayed the publication even longer than the classical ninth year.

The original idea was philosophical. I wished to illustrate the power of will and intellect working through generations with a definite design, and to show that this power might be used for the most repulsive object. The object I chose for my purpose was the destruction of the whole human race by means of pestilences, with the intention of replacing it with a race of men who had for generations been trained in the exercise of the highest intelligence. The new rule was to be a tyranny of intellect. The original designer of this scheme was supposed to be an Egyptian, who had discovered a method of suspending animation. His attempt to introduce the government of intellect amongst existing races had failed, and he determined to destroy them, even if it took thousands of years to prepare the means. The defeat of the scheme in the original plan was due to the friendship of the latest Thoth for Philetos. Philetos was, in marked contrast to these haters of men, a man whom every one loved, and who was the *beau idéal* of a philanthropist. Thus the victory over hate in the original plan was gained by friendship.