

**THE EVENING DESPATCH  
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(pages 10 & 14)**

**HUMAN SACRIFICE "BEST FOR BLACK MAGIC"  
MR. CROWLEY'S COURT STATEMENT  
DOES NOT APPROVE IT**

People assailed by magic and the efficacy of human sacrifice were mentioned at the resumed hearing to-day before Mr. Justice Swift and a special jury in the King's Bench Division of the libel action by Aleister Crowley, the author, against Miss Nina Hamnett, authoress of a book entitled "Laughing Torso," which, he alleged, imputed that he practiced "black magic."

Other defendants were Constable and Co., Ltd., publishers, and Charles Whittingham and Briggs, printers, the defence being a plea of justification.

At the material time Mr. Crowley had a villa on the mountain side at Cefalu, Sicily, which was known as the "Abbey of Thelema." He denied that he practiced "black magic" there.

**CONGRATULATED.**

Mr. Malcom Hilbery, K.C., for the printers and publishers, to-day read a poem from the book "Clouds Without Water," and asked Mr. Crowley: "Is that Not filth?"

Mr. Crowley: You read it as if it were magnificent poetry. I congratulate you.

Later Mr. Crowley remarked: "I should like to be universally hailed as the greatest living poet. The truth will out you know."

Asked about another poem Mr. Crowley said that the author of those words had been "dead for years."

Mr. Hilbery: Is the Aleister Crowley who wrote that dead?—Do I look like it? It is not Aleister Crowley who wrote that. It is an imaginary figure in a drama—I created the drama. "I created this work of an imaginary author," Mr. Crowley added.

**INFLUENCE OF LOVE.**

Still another poem was mentioned by Mr. Hilbery, who asked: "Is that anything but disgusting and infamous?"

Mr. Crowley: It means, if I may say so, that even the vilest of women can, through the influence of love, become a refining and inspiring influence in a man's life.

Mr. Hilbery read an extract from an article which Mr. Crowley said he contributed to a Chicago magazine before America came into the war. Mr. Crowley said he wrote that against his own country and was proud of it. It was part of the German propaganda in America and what he wanted to do was to over-balance the sanity of German propaganda by turning it into absolute nonsense.

### **ASSAILED IN PRESS.**

He agreed that he wrote "the diary of a drug fiend," which was assailed in the Press. He agreed, too, that in a newspaper article he had written "I have been shot at with broad arrows. They have called me 'the worst man in the world.' "

Mr. Hilbery: Did you say "Horatio Bottomley branded me as a dirty, degenerate cannibal"—Yes.

"I also had the reputation of being the best man in the world," declared Mr. Crowley a few moments later. He agreed that he had been depicted with his thumbs representing the horns of a ram.

In a London flat—which he once had was "a hall of mirrors the function of which was to concentrate the invoked forces."

### **WHITE MAGIC.**

On one occasion he invoked the forces with the result that some people were attacked by unseen assailants.

Mr. Hilbery: Was that your black magic or your white magic?—It is white magic in which you protect yourself from such things.

Mr. Crowley said that because of his magic he had once walked in the street in Mexico in a scarlet robe and with a jeweled crown without anyone seeing him.

As a part of his magic he believed in the efficacy of blood sacrifice, but he did not approve of it at all.

Don't approve it? You say (in his book on magic) "for nearly all purposes human sacrifice is best?"—Yes, it is.

Mr. Justice Swift: Do you say that you don't approve it?—Yes.

## **BOX "ALTAR."**

Mr. Crowley said that at the villa at Cefalu there was "a sort of square box used as an altar." On it were a book purporting to contain the laws and candles for ceremonial purposes. Incense, a dagger and a sword were used, and he wore an appropriate robe.

Mr. Hilbery: In some of the ceremonies were you endeavouring to get concentrated spiritual ecstasy?—Yes.

## **RITUAL OF CIRCLE. Walked Round in "Three Fold Step."**

Mr. Hilbery, referring to the "Abbey" in Sicily, asked: "With your approval an inmate had a razor or knife with which to cut himself if he stumbled into using a forbidden word, whatever it was?"

"Mr. Crowley: They were not gashes but minute cuts. You can see marks of them on my own arm.

Questioned about the ritual of his magic circle. Mr. Crowley said that he walked round the room in "a sort of three-fold step which resembles the waltz. The pace resembled the pace of the tiger stalking the deer."

He had never performed a ceremony naked in the presence of another person.

## **"KING OF DEPRAVITY."**

Mr. Hilbery referred to articles in which Mr. Crowley was described as "the king of depravity," "the wickedest man in the world," "the man we would like to hang," "another traitor trounced," "and "the notorious Aleister Crowley."

Mr. Justice Swift: It is said of you: "It is hard to say whether he is man or beast."

Mr. Crowley: It was said of Shelley that he was sent from hell.

Mr. Justice Swift: I am not trying Shelley. I am only trying your case. When that was said in the public Press did you take any steps to clear your character?—I was 1,500 miles away, I was ill, and I was penniless.

I wrote to my solicitors.

The hearing was adjourned until to-morrow.