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THE BLACK MASS IDEA.

Mystic (?) Rites at a Guinea a Rite.

If you want to have a "sword in your heart" and other peculiar anatomical phenomena, pay five guineas and go to the "Rites of Eleusis," held regularly at the elusive hour of 9 p.m. every Wednesday, at Caxton Hall, Westminster.

It is in this most respectable haunt of whist drives, subscription dances, and Suffragette meetings that Mr. Aleister Crowley, poet, writer, traveller, gnostic, delves into the realms of the Higher Mysticism, etc., is performing what he terms the "Rites of Eleusis."

You may go and "rite" for a guinea a time, or five guineas for the series, but if you pay the five you are entitled to the supreme blessing of Initiation.

The Rites are a most extraordinary mixture of creeds, combining Roman Catholicism with suggestions of the peculiar philosophy of decadent Greece.

Mr. Crowley, General Great Panjandrum of the whole business, makes everybody pay, press men as well.

THE RITES OF SATURN

The series began with the Rites of Saturn, in which a lady referred to on the programme by a title we do not care to reproduce, played a violin solo. There also appeared the Angel of Death, the Hero, the Messenger, likewise willowy youths who looked intensely mystic, and flappers in queer garments, and with their souls in their eyes. The recipe is rather nice, dramatically speaking. Flappers in silken raiment (hired from Willy Clarkson, Wardour Street), souls in eyes, waving lamps, and chanting Aleister Crowleian poetry. Never mind about the poetry, as Omar said, but gaze upon the flappers, which as a matter of fact, the very wise Aleister intends you to do.

Yes, the show is very well staged. Dark house, mystic chanting, eerie lights, Eleusinian patter; but it is a pity that a man of Mr. Crowley's intellectual attainments cannot find a better employment for his time.

There always has been about his writings and preachings an atmosphere of strange perfume, as if he was swaying a censer before the altar of some heathen goddess.

Not having been initiated, we cannot tell but Mr. Crowley's Eleusinian rites do suggest an elusive form of Phallieism or sex worship.

There is, no doubt, a subtle charm about his doctrine which is also expensive enough to become quite fashionable, especially to the dilettante artistic set.

THE BLACK MASS

Unfortunately, this Eleusis business is not new. It has been done in Paris, entitled the Black Mass, on several occasions.

Far be it from us to suggest that the large-footed gentlemen from New Scotland Yard should visit Mr. Crowley's little act without paying the compulsory £1 1s., but the idea undermining the whole business is not healthy.

Mr. Crowley, who is a man of many parts, has already looked upon a certain Deity, according to his own statement, and those who pay five guineas and obey instructions may do likewise.

This is quite a bargain. Pay your money and you will be quite entitled to sing a "Nunc Dimittis."

Mr. Crowley's eyes have already been sanctified if we may believe him.