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"O.T.O.," MYSTIC CULT, EXPOSE IS THREATENED

**Workings of Secret Society Names
in Local Divorce May Become Public**

**SEX, SERPENT WORSHIP
BOOKS SEIZED BY DEPUTY**

**Sensational Disclosures Expected
at Bankruptcy Hearing Today.**

Determined effort to expose the innermost workings of the "O.T.O.," a mysterious secret organization said at one time to have had 500 members in Detroit, which has figured in at least one local divorce suit, and the activities of which are inextricably interwoven with the affairs of the bankrupt Universal Bookstores, Inc., will be made Friday by Grover L. Morden, attorney for the creditors and trustees of the book concern.

Morden will make the attempt at the hearing on the case before Paul H. King, referee in bankruptcy, Friday afternoon.

Sex Worship Books Seized.

A further chapter in the troubles of Albert W. Ryerson, former head of the bankrupt concern, was written Thursday when Otto C. Klanowky, deputy sheriff, seized Ryerson's private library at the latter's apartment at 150 West Larned street. The library, containing among other volumes, a notable collection of works on occultism, sex worship, serpent worship, and allied subjects, was seized under a judgment for \$2,500, granted Harry J. Walker of Cleveland. The judgment was granted Walker following a suit in which he charged he had to pay a note for \$1,500 endorsed by Ryerson.

The library was sealed after having been stored in the custody of the sheriff. Efforts may be made to introduce some of the volumes as evidence in the bankruptcy proceedings.

Holds Ryerson Responsible.

Bankruptcy of the Universal stores, Morden contends, is directly traceable to the publication of "The Equinox", the official organ of

the O.T.O., which Ryerson is alleged to have sponsored. He maintains that Ryerson, and not the book concern, should be held liable for the losses incurred in the publication of this volume, inasmuch as the book, in his opinion, is of such a nature that no prudent business man would have published it.

To prove that he will attempt to expose the doctrines and practices of the order. The letters O.T.O. mean, according to the Equinox, "Order of the Temple of the Orient," and have also a secret meaning for initiates."

While no one can be found who will admit actual membership in the society, it is said to have had meeting places in several different places in Detroit. Efforts to introduce testimony in regard to its alleged unconventional practices was made recently in a local divorce suit.

Erotic Symbolisms Found.

"The Equinox" styled its official organ, which is held responsible for the financial troubles of Mr. Ryerson and his associates, appears to the uninitiated as a weird mixture of ancient religious doctrines and unintelligible gibberish shot through and through with erotic symbolism.

The frontpiece is a picture in three colors illustrating a female figure hanging from a limb with a satyr leering from behind a tree while a nymph frolics about in the distance. The meaning of this is explained in the book as follows:

"From the blasted stump of Dogma the poison oak of 'original sin' is hanged the hag with dyed and bloody hair. Christianity, the glyph thus commemorating 'sa vie horizontale et sa mort vertical.' The satyr . . . represents the soul of the new aeon whose word is 'Do what thou wilt;' for the satyr is the true nature of every man and every woman and every man and every woman is a star."

Hymn Contains Suggestions.

Following this is a "Hymn to Pan" highly seasoned with suggestion. This is followed by an editorial which apparently attempts to set forth the basic principles on which the order is formed. Below are a few extracts:

"Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law."

"Christianity has destroyed the joyful celebrations characterized by music, feasting, dancing and making love and has kept only the melancholy."

"The law of Thelema offers a religion which fulfills all necessary conditions * * * making everyone unique, independent, supreme and sufficient."

The "manifest of the O.T.O.," contained in another part of the volume, which by the way sells for 666 cents, claims for the cult all the wisdom and knowledge of ancient and modern orders. A letter to those who may wish to join the order enjoins the brethren to "be diligent in preaching the Law of Thelema. ("Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law.")

Grant Others No Rights.

"Members of the order," says this epistle, "are to regard those without its pale as possessing no rights of any kind, since they have not accepted the law, and are therefore, as it were, troglodytes, survivals of a past civilization and to be treated accordingly. Kindness should be shown toward them as toward any other animal and every effort should be made to bring them into freedom."

Several paragraphs are devoted to the duties of the members of the order toward women of which one will suffice.

"If the mother that is to be have asserted her will to be so in contempt and defiance of the Tabus of the slave-gods, she is to be regarded as especially suitable to our order, and the matter of the lodge in her district shall offer to become, as it were, godfather to the child."

Plans are outlined also for the training of children in the laws of the order.

A large part of the book is devoted to the exposition of the ceremonies of the "Eccesiate Gnosticae Catholicae," describing adorations performed before an unrobed priestess.

Printing of Book Arranged.

The author of the Equinox is Aleister Crowley, also said to be head of the O.T.O. He is now said to be in Baltimore.

In July 1918, Ryerson, in company with William A. Gibson, treasurer of the Universal firm, which had been organized a short time previously, went to New York to purchase books. There Ryerson met Crowley and the alleged head of the "O.T.O." it is said, made the proposal to Ryerson to bring out Volume III, No. 1 of "The Equinox."

Gibson quit the bookstores in November, 1918, following some altercation over the management of the business. He is expected to take the witness stand Friday to tell what he knows of the order.

Aleister Crowley came to Detroit early in 1919. He was entertained at various clubs in the city, and was successful, it is said, in establishing the Detroit chapter of the order of the "O.T.O."

Author Spent Month Here.

In September, 1919, Crowley returned to this city, bringing with him the manuscript of "The Equinox." He spent a month with

Ryerson in his former home on Vinewood avenue. The publication of "The Equinox" followed shortly after.

Mr. Morden charges that 2,000 volumes of the book were contracted for by the Universal firm, but that only 1,100 copies were received. The books were placed on sale, despite the efforts of several prominent clubwomen to suppress the document.

Early in 1921 stockholders in the Universal firm inquired about dividends. As a meeting of the stockholders the advisability of establishing a hall at 104 Woodward avenue was questioned. The hall, it is charged, was to be used in the discussion of various "isms."

Receiver Was Appointed.

In March, 1921, the Universal Bookstores, Inc., filed a trust mortgage wherein Bela J. Lincoln was appointed trustee with power of sale. The sale was advertised for May 20. Several stockholders filed a bill of complaint in circuit court the day preceding, restraining the sale of the stores and asking the appointment of a receivership.

The court names Bela J. Lincoln and Richard A. Pratt, receivers.

An involuntary petition in bankruptcy was filed in August and the corporation adjudicated a bankrupt. The examination of the books, ledger, journal entries, cancelled checks and notes revealed the purchase of the 1,100 volumes of "The Equinox."

Ryerson organized the Universal Bookstores, Inc. in 1918, shortly after he purchased a small store from Homer Adair on Grand River avenue. The Universal concern was capitalized at \$25,000, \$15,000 common and \$10,000 preferred stock.

The incorporators of the firm were Rev. Dr. Hugh Jack, Dr. Gordon Hill and Albert W. Ryerson. Ryerson held \$15,000 of the common stock, Hill \$1,000 and Jack \$1,000. Ryerson was made president of the firm, Jack, vice-president, and Hill, secretary and treasurer. All of the stock, it is said, was paid in cash, except that held by Dr. Jack, who was given \$1,000 of the stock.

Ryerson Denies Affiliation.

Shortly after the firm was formed Dr. Jack returned his stock and severed his connection with the concern.

Ryerson, in a statement issued Thursday night, said he was not a member of the O.T.O., and said that so far as he knew a chapter had never been established in Detroit. He said an effort had been made to form a chapter but that he believed some of the promoters had withdrawn after an examination of the work of the order. He said the publication of the book was purely a business venture. He denied that it caused the failure of the bookstores.

Although the "Equinox" on its title page bears the statement that it is the official organ of the O.T.O., Ryerson, who's an authority on various cults, declares that it is not the handbook or guide of the society, but a literal translation of the ritual of the gnostics as practiced some 2,000 years ago. The gnostics were a sect which believed that the greatest of all sins consisted in opposing the appetites and passions.