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PECULIAR CULTS.

"BAHOMET" AND THE "GREAT ARNOS."

Without some assurance as to the facts the average reader might doubt them. Even with the greatest it is likely that he will think the story overdrawn. But it is not in any way, as it happens to be, as it has been told on oath in two courts of law, one in America, and the other in England. Let the question be asked, what chance a man would have in Sydney if, on going up to the manager of a great business concern, he were to say, "I am Alpha and Omega. Hand me the contents of the safe." A man of peculiar and extraordinary personality visited Detroit some time ago, and saying first to one and then another, "I am Bahomet XI., Supreme and Holy King in the Sanctuary of the Gnosis," persuaded quite a number to fall in behind, with all their wealth and all their enthusiasm. And then he went on to the manager of the biggest publishing company in those parts, and saying, "Here is the Equinox," mesmerized him into printing it and issuing it as the new "Bible." Following this, "Bahomet" said it was necessary to build a Temple which would have fountains spraying jets of perfumed water, and jars of burning incense. And to make a long story short, when the owners of the publishing company thought it wise to intervene, the unhappy manager had paid out thousands of dollars to advance the interests of the cult. And so it came into the court, and also under the notice of the United States Government. With "Bahomet" gone, Albert Ryerson, the manager of the publishing company, had to go into the witness box, and the Government work consisted of seizing all undistributed copies of the new "Bible" under the judgment of the District Attorney that it was one of the most shocking things that had ever been put into type.

The unfortunate Ryerson, speaking in bankruptcy, said that he himself was a spiritualist, The mysterious personage who had announced himself as "Bahomet" had addressed a meeting of adherents. He said on that occasion: "The aims of the Order

are to teach Hermetic Science or Occult Knowledge, the Pure and Holy Magic of Light, the Secrets of Mystic Attainment, Grana Yoga, Bhakta Yoga, and Hatha Yoga." But Ryerson was supported by others. Evidence was given to the effect that "Bahomet" had formed an inner council of priests, and elected a high priestess. There was a very active worker in one Stanfield Jones, described as "Field Organiser." "The Equinox" itself was put in during the hearing. "Worship" was started with an invocation of the "Queen of Space." The words were, "O circle of stars where of our father is but the young brother, marvel beyond inauguration, soul of infinite space before whom time is ashamed, the mind bewildered, and the understanding dark, not unto thee may we attain unless thine image be love. Therefore by seed and root and stem and bud and leaf and flower and fruit do we invoke thee. O Nuit, continuous one of heaven, let it be ever thus: that men speak not of thee as One, but as None; and let them speak of thee at all, since thou art continuous."

The Courts of Detroit have done what was possible. The word is that the shareholders in the publishing company are now attempting to salvage whatever is possible of the 35,000 dollars they allege by their affidavits was misapplied to enable "Bahomet" to erect his Temple and otherwise spread his doctrine.