

**THE FITCHBURG SENTINEL  
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**WOMEN'S INTERESTS**

**"BLACK MAGIC"**

Not long ago Scotland Yard received a request from the Finnish police to assist in tracking down a man wanted in connection with alleged secret ritual in which graves had been disturbed.

In the Middle Ages such fantastic proceedings were commonplace. That they are still indulged in, in the age of electricity, flying and the radio seems completely astonishing, says the Boston Herald.

But Black Magic has not died out. It still flourishes all over the world. England is not exempt. Behind the shuttered windows of sedate houses, in secret cellars, in the rooms of ancient cottages, strange practices are being indulged in by neurotic people of both sexes.

Some of these secret ceremonies may be passed over as merely fantastic and absurd.

For example, there were the weekly attempts made by a woman to raise the minors of the father of evil by means of magic incantations performed at midnight.

She held the strange theory—quite sincerely—that while the almighty makes no terms with humanity, the lesser devils of the underworld are prepared to strike bargains.

It is hard to believe that a woman of culture and high social standings in the greatest city in the world could abandon herself to such practices as the sacrifice of cats. Yet such a case has been revealed.

There are misguided people who foregather in secret to conjure up evil spirits, with all the fantastic ritual of the middle ages.

There are worse things afoot. Black Magic, with its nauseating ritual known as the Black Mass, still has its votaries.

The men and women who indulge in these rites are to be found in every capital and large city in the world. They are decadents who will go to any length for a new sensation to

stimulate nerves and mental reactions long since jaded into torpor by lives of hectic self-indulgence.

This horrible ritual started with the cult of Aleister Crowley, surnamed the beast, on an island in the Mediterranean—the last place where one might have expected horror and evil.

It is not suggested that the Black Mass is a commonplace among these modern necromancers. Its incidents are too horrible to appeal to any but the insane.

Yet that it is sometimes held was proved some time ago, during the hearing of a murder trial in San Francisco. The details were so terrible that that part of the evidence had to be taken in camera.

The ritual ended in the electric chair for its central figure, a popular member of the youngest set, who had stooped to actual murder in his quest of sensation.

In England, most of these manifestations of the primitive cults take a less revolting form. Even so, some startling facts have come to light.

For instance, in one Scottish town a number of aggrieved men and women foregathered about a wax effigy of a hated landlord recently and proceeded to stab it with needles.

They believed this ridiculous performance would result in the hated one's death.

These cults range from the Black Mass to the ritual

of the disappointed girl who, to bring her swain back, waits for Friday night to burn gumdragon and go through preposterous incantations. Most villages in the remoter part of the country can show one old woman who is the repository of strange and alluring secrets of this kind.

They counsel the burning of the ritual's effigy to shivering clients in the throes of bitter jealousy, promising that death will reward their efforts and bring the straying lover back. They do many other absurd and wicked things besides.