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**IMPROPER PAINTINGS**

**Libel Case Allegations**

LONDON, April 14—"Never have I heard such dreadful, horrible, blasphemous and abominable stuff as that produced by a man who described himself as the greatest living poet," said Mr. Justice Swift, summing up in an action in the King's Bench Division, in which Aleister Crowley sued an authoress, Nita Hamnett, for libeling him in a book entitled "Laughing Torso."

Allegations were made that Crowley practised black magic in a temple in Sicily, which had improper pictures on the walls and a magic circle on the floor.

A verdict was returned for the defendant.

Mr. Justice Swift added: "I have been, 40 years engaged in the administration of law. I thought I knew of every conceivable form of wickedness, but I now know I can always learn something more."

Crowley alleged that Hamnett imputed that he practised black magic at a temple at Cefalu, Sicily, where a baby was once reported to have mysteriously disappeared. Crowley was formerly at Cambridge University.

He denied that he practised black magic, stating he had fought it all his life, because it was suicidal. He had travelled all over the world studying religions. His temple was decorated only with frescoes similar to the religious paintings of Notre Dame.

He denied that he advised his associates to cut themselves with razors as a punishment, and denied that he had forced men to shave their heads, except for a symbolic curl. He denied that he had forced women to dye their heads red. He explained that he took the designation, "the beast," because it meant sunlight.

He added, amid laughter: "You can call me 'Little Sunshine!' "

## **SONNETS ON BLACK MASS**

Crowley denied that he had sacrificed animals and invited people to drink blood. He denied obscenely invoking Pan, and denied publishing filth advocating unrestricted sexual freedom. He said he had contributed pathological works for circulation among students. He denied that his magic, like poetry, involved eroticism.

He added: "When I wrote sonnets about the Black Mass I was denouncing it."

Counsel read from a book Crowley wrote, stating that a bloody sacrifice was the most efficacious way of practicing magic, while human sacrifice was best.

Crowley explained that he was expounding a scientific theory.

He denied that a baby disappeared at Cefalu.

Mrs. Betty Sedgwick, authoress of "The Tiger Woman" and formerly Epstein's model, gave evidence that the temple at Cefalu had a magic circle on the floor and improper paintings on the walls.

Crowley presided at ceremonies at which his "spiritual wife," also named the Scarlet Woman, participated.

Once, after a three hours' invocation, a cat was killed and her husband had to drink its blood.

## **PREYED ON WEAK-MINDED**

Counsel for the defense said Crowley had preyed on weak-minded persons for years. He hoped the proceedings would end his hypocritical activities.

The jury returned a verdict for the defendant.

Crowley says: "The judgment is the verdict of the gods, who are particular about dealing with my soul. I am considering an appeal."