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"Black Magic" Libel Suit.

ALEISTER CROWLEY'S AMAZING CLAIM.

**"Invisible" Walk in Scarlet
Robe and Crown.**

Amazing claims were made by Aleister Crowley to-day during the resumed hearing of his action for libel against the authoress of a book which, he alleges, imputes that he practised "black magic."

Mr. Crowley claimed that, through magic, he once walked in a street in a scarlet robe and jeweled crown without being seen.

Questioned about some of his poetry, he said he would like to be hailed as the greatest living poet, and added "the truth will out."

QUESTIONS ABOUT DRUGS.

Mr. Crowley is suing Miss Nina Hamnett before Mr. Justice Swift and a special jury in the King's Bench Division, as the authoress of a book, "Laughing Torso," containing the alleged libel.

Other defendants are Constable and Company, Ltd., publishers, and Charles Whittingham and Briggs, printers, the defence being a plea of justification.

At the material time Mr. Crowley had a villa on the mountain side at Cefalu, Sicily, which was known as the "Abbey of Thelema." He denied that he practised "black magic" there.

NUMBER OF THE SUN.

In his cross-examination yesterday Mr. Crowley agreed that he assumed the designation of "Beast 666" and "the Master Therium—the Great Wild Beast."

"666 is the number of the sun and you can call me 'Little Sunshine,' " he added.

He also said he had the distinguishing marks of a Buddha at birth and still had some of them. He claimed to be a "master magician," saying that he took a degree which conferred that title.

Mr. Malcolm Hilbery, K.C., for the printers and publishers, in cross-examination to-day read a poem from the book, "Clouds without Water," and asked Mr. Crowley, "Is that not filth?"

Mr. Crowley: You read it as if it were magnificent poetry. I congratulate you.

"DEAD FOR YEARS."

Later M. Crowley remarked: "I should like to be universally hailed as the greatest living poet. The truth will out, you know."

Asked about another poem, Mr. Crowley said that the author of those words had been "dead for years." Mr. Hilbery: Is the Aleister Crowley who wrote that dead?

Mr. Crowley: Do I look like it? It is not Aleister Crowley who wrote that. It was an imaginary figure in a drama—I created the drama.

"I created this work of an imaginary author," Mr. Crowley added.

Still another poem was mentioned by Mr. Hilbery, who asked, "Is that anything but disgusting and infamous?"

Mr. Crowley: It means, if I may say so, that even the vilest of women can, through the influence of love, become a refining and inspiring influence in a man's life.

GERMAN PROPAGANDA.

Mr. Hilbery read an extract from an article Mr. Crowley said he contributed to a Chicago magazine before America came into the war, and asked, "Did you write that against your own country?"

Mr. Crowley: I did, and I am proud of it.

Mr. Hilbery: Was it part of the German propaganda in America?—Yes.

Mr. Crowley explained that what he wanted to do was to overbalance the sanity of German propaganda by turning it into absolute nonsense.

Mr. Hilbery: That is your explanation after the allied cause is safe and no longer in danger?—Lots of people knew at the time.

Mr. Crowley agreed that he wrote "The diary of a drug fiend," which was assailed in the Press. He agreed too that in a

newspaper article he had written, "I have been shot at with broad arrows. They have called me 'The worst man in the world.' "

Mr. Hilbery" "Did you say, 'Horatio Bottomley branded me as a dirty, degenerated cannibal?' "—Yes.

There was some laughter at this, and Mr. Justice Swift sternly intimated that a repetition of the laughter would cause him to have the court cleared.

HALL OF MIRRORS.

"I also had the reputation of being the best man in the world," declared Mr. Crowley a few moments later. He agreed that he had been depicted with his thumbs in a position representing the horns of a ram.

In a London flat—which he once had was a hall of mirrors, the function of them was to concentrate the invoked forces.

On one occasion he invoked the forces with the result that some people were attacked by unseen assailants.

Mr. Hilbery: Was that your black magic or your white magic?—It is white magic, in which you protect yourself from such things.

Mr. Crowley said that because of his magic he had once walked in the street in Mexico in a scarlet robe and with a jewelled crown, without anyone seeing him.

HUMAN SACRIFICE.

Mr. Hilbery: As a part of your magic you do believe in a practice of bloody sacrifice, do you?—I believe in its efficacy, but I do not approve it at all.

Don't approve it? You say (in his book on magic) "For nearly all purposes human sacrifice is best?"—Yes, it is.

Mr. Justice Swift: Do you say that you don't approve it?—Yes.

Mr. Crowley said that at the villa at Cefalu there was "a sort of square box" used as an altar. On it were a book, purporting to contain the laws, and candles for ceremonial purposes. Incense, a dagger and a sword were used and he wore an appropriate robe.

Mr. Hilbery: In some of the ceremonies were you endeavouring to get concentrated spiritual ecstasy?—Yes.

EFFECT OF HASHISH.

Did you keep hasheesh and other drugs at Cefalu?—There was no hasheesh, but there was opium and strychnine.

Are you skilled to administer hasheesh?—I can get the desired results in 10 minutes.

Mr. Hilbery, referring to the "abbey" in Sicily, asked, "With your approval an inmate had a razor or knife with which to cut himself if he stumbled into using a forbidden word, whatever it was?"

Mr. Crowley: They were not gashes but minute cuts. You can see marks of them on my own arm.

Asked if heroin was used there, he said that it had been prescribed for him for asthma.

MAGIC CIRCLE.

Questioned about the ritual of his magic circle, Mr. Crowley said that he walked round the room in "a sort of three-fold step which resembles the waltz."

"The pace resembled the pace of the tiger stalking the deer," he added.

He had never performed a ceremony naked in the presence of another person.

Mr. Hilbery referred to articles in which Mr. Crowley was described as "The king of depravity," "The wickedest man in the world," "The man we would like to hang," "Another traitor trounced" and "The notorious Aleister Crowley."

Mr. Justice Swift: It is said of you: 'It is hard to say whether he is man or beast.'

Mr. Crowley: It was said of Shelley that he was sent from Hell.

Mr. Justice Swift: I am not trying Shelley. I am only trying your case. When that was said in the public Press, did you take any steps to clear your character?—I was 1,500 miles away. I was ill and I was penniless. I wrote to my solicitors.