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**MORE ABOUT "MAGIC"
WHEN AUTHOR "WALKED UNSEEN"
COUNSEL'S ATTACK ON POEMS**

More about "magic" was heard when the evidence was resumed in the King's Bench Division yesterday of the libel action by Aleister Crowley, the author, against Miss Nina Hamnett, authoress of a book entitled "Laughing Torso," which, he alleges, imputed that he practised "black magic."

Other defendants are Constable & Co., Ltd., publishers, and Charles Whittingham & 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.

Mr. Malcolm Hilbery, K.C., for the printers and publishers, in cross-examination yesterday, 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.

"Greatest Living Poet"

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

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.

Mr. Hilbery read an extract from an article which 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.

"Worst Man in World"

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 degenerate 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.

"I also had the reputation of being the best man in the world," declared Mr. Crowley a few moments later.

In a London flat which he once had was "a hall of mirrors," the function of which 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.

Walked About Unseen

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.

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 of it at all.

You say in your book of magic, "For nearly all purposes human sacrifice is best"—Yes it is.

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.

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

Ritual of Magic Circle

Questioned about the ritual of his magic circle, Mr. Crowley said he walked round the room in "a sort of threefold 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."

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 trying your case. When that was said in the public press did you take any steps to clear your character?—I was 1500 miles away. I was ill and I was penniless. I wrote to my solicitors.

The hearing was adjourned until to-day.