

SCORPIO, K.C. Is it meant to be taken seriously?

MATHERS. Yes.

SCORPIO, K.C. Members of the Order, were, in fact, afraid of the penalty?

MATHERS. Yes.

SCORPIO, K.C. On April 2nd, 1900, you write to the revolting members, saying: "I shall for the first time be compelled to formulate my request to the Highest Chiefs to prepare the Punitive Current."

MATHERS. Yes.

SCORPIO, K.C. If they refused to obey you, you would cause them "to fall slain or paralysed, as if blasted by the Lightning Flash"?

MATHERS. They deserved it, and worse.

SCORPIO, K.C. Is it a threat of assassination?

MATHERS. Of occult assassination, yes.

SCORPIO, K.C. You did actually rattle peas in a sieve, ceremonially?

MATHERS. It is a well-known practice of Sympathetic Magic.

SCORPIO, K.C. Like sticking pins in a wax figure?

MATHERS. Exactly. One identifies the rebels with the peas, and rattles them.

SCORPIO, K.C. That explains their subsequent débâcle?

MATHERS. Yes.

SCORPIO, K.C. But you expected them to "fall slain or paralysed"?

MATHERS. I hoped so.

SCORPIO, K.C. Actually, not in a figure of speech?

MATHERS. Actually.

SCORPIO, K.C. It is attempted assassination?

MATHERS. Occult assassination, yes.

SCORPIO, K.C. And in any event, if they were really afraid of it, the threat amounted to black mail?

MATHERS. I am not a lawyer.

SCORPIO, K.C. Now then, let us get back to James IV. You say you are James IV?

MATHERS. "I refuse to answer the question."

SCORPIO, K.C. James IV was killed on Flodden Field?

MATHERS. "Tradition asserts that he escaped."

SCORPIO, K.C. A lady of unblemished reputation, Mrs. Markham, has gone into that box, and sworn that he was so killed.

MATHERS. One must not contradict a lady.

SCORPIO, K.C. Well, what happened to him?