

A Ridiculous Accusation

*Originally published in the 31 December
1933 edition of the Empire News.*

I Couldn't Do It!

TRUTH ABOUT MAGIC TEMPLES

"It should not be difficult for an agent of the police to gain admission to one of these places, and this is what he would find."

By ALEISTER CROWLEY

The Most Blasphemous and sensuous ceremonial in Black Magic is being celebrated to-day in London, Liverpool, and other British towns.

I have myself been accused of celebrating it, but how ridiculous the suggestion is may be gathered from the fact that none but a priest—an apostate priest—can carry out the ritual. And I am not and never had been a priest.

A gathering of workmen for a harmless little gamble is raided quickly enough, as are night clubs at which silly boys and girls are dancing and drinking at fancy prices in prohibited hours.

Yet who has ever heard of a Black Magic Temple being surrounded and the names taken of generals, barristers, ex-clergymen, ladies of title, and well-known men and women writers, members of some Black Lodge, responsible for a celebration of the Black Mass, with all its appalling orgies?

IN KENSINGTON

Mr. Harry Price, the psychic investigator and director of the National Laboratory of Psychical Research, who is well-known to *Empire News* readers, recently stated that the Black Mass is being held to-day.

There is actually a Black Magic "temple" in Kensington not far from where Mr. Price has carried out some of his valuable researches in psychical phenomena, and in that "temple" not only the Black Mass but other gross profanities are frequently carried out.

It should not be difficult for an agent of the police to gain admission to one of these places and this is what he would find.

The floor of the temple is covered with the earth garnered from the filthy mire edging a stagnant pool in which there have been several suicides.

The devotees attend in bare feet so that their naked flesh shall touch this filth.

Upon it is sprinkled sulphur giving off its acrid fumes, and in the sulphur dust the magic circle is drawn, the grooves being filled with charcoal powder.

Within the circle is a triangle—with the point directed downwards, away from the table swathed in somber black hangings, above which is hung the figure of Lucifer.

Except for the dim, unholy light from black candles the place is shrouded in a forbidding eerie gloom.

HYPNOTIC ODOUR

When all the devotees are in their places, the soft strains of music can be heard swelling through the temple. Usually it is some sacred music, for the whole ceremony is one of profanation.

There enters a girl clad in the vestments of an acolyte, swinging a censer from which the pungent fumes of burning herbs arise, filling the air with hypnotic odour.

Following he may come another woman—preferably a young girl, for the act of despoiling innocence is yet another sop to their master, the Devil.

She is dressed in a long black cloak, revealing the outline of a beautifully formed figure.

Immediately behind her comes the high “priest,” a man who has forsaken his church to enter into a pact with the Devil.

He takes the hand of the girl in the cloak, and leads her to the dais, at the same time chanting a conjuration.

The devotees fall upon their knees in token of their reverence for their Satanic master, and join in the chant.

There is a pause whilst the girl is made to raise her hands in adoration to the figure of Lucifer.

At the same time the woman acolyte advances, and with a swift movement strips the cloak from the body of the girl.

It is impossible to set down here what is said and done during the ceremony.

BLOOD UNITY

When the devotees are in a condition of wild hysteria, they give themselves up to the orgies in order to please their “master” by heaping the vilest insults upon all that their hideous mass has outraged.

Sometimes the devotees lacerate themselves with knives, letting the flowing blood drip down on to the body of the girl on the altar so that they may be even more identified with the Devil by a blood unity.

There are other masses, devoted to the working of some evil against an enemy, which are every bit as loathsome and revolting in their ritual.

One case which came to my knowledge was that of a young and beautiful girl who was beloved by two men, one a very fine youth of good family, the heir to vast estates, the other his elderly cousin who would inherit

the estates in the event of the death of the younger man.

For a long time the elder man had been dabbling in Black Magic under a well-known master.

The girl married the younger man, whom she loved very dearly. The cousin was almost insane with despair. He went to his Black Master, and sought his help.

A few months went by, and the young couple were gladdened by the knowledge that a child was to be born to them.

It was then the master held a ghastly ceremonial in which curses were called down upon the unfortunate couple and their unborn child.

The skeptical may scoff at the sequel and say it was pure coincidence. But there are many serious investigators who believe that those black magicians have very real powers for evil.

THE CURSE

At any rate, I can only add that the husband soon after died mysteriously or a tropical disease although he had never been in the tropics.

His widow—some months after the birth of a son who also died very suddenly—married the cousin. I know her and—she is one of the unhappiest women in the world.

The powers of magic can be, and indeed often are employed with entirely good and proper motives.

My good friend Allan Bennett had his life extended by 30 years through an amazing ceremony and he was thus able to perform very valuable work in magical science.

At the time Bennett was almost dying from asthma and complications of other diseases. We who were working with him in his magical investigations felt that his life was a valuable asset to humanity, and we decided to save his life by magical means.

It was agreed that we should invoke the spirit of Buer, a shadowy intelligence well known to magicians as possessing the power of performing miracles of healing.

Buer is so remote that only the highest faculties of man are able to get in touch with him, and then only on rare occasions.

GIANT'S HELMET

Our job was to make our case for interfering with the material condition of Bennett. We knew that Buer would have to be evoked under the strictest control, and that the most careful control would be essential if we were to succeed and not cause harm to Bennett.

With a man named Jones, I myself carried out the ceremony with all its solemn ritual. We chanted the evocations, performed the various rites, and—as the ceremony proceeded, the fumes of incense gradually collected themselves in the part of the room where the magical triangle had been marked.

It rose in thick columns of smoke which slowly appeared to take form.

We continued with our ritual, and the smoke form gradually resolved itself into the shape of a man. A vague shadowy shape, but distinct and clear. On the head could be seen a helmet, and the form was some ten feet in height—gigantic and powerful.

As time went on it became more and more clear, and the Temple seemed dominated by the presence of the spirit of some powerful agent.

At the proper moment I issued commands that Bennett's life should be spared, and his illness abated, and at once there was a great agitation throughout the temple. One could feel that something was happening.

From that moment Bennett made a miraculous recovery and, as I have said, lived on for over 30 years.

If magical science concentrated only on what is wholesome and good, what a force it might be for the betterment of mankind!