

TRUTH
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SYDNEY SNAPSHOTS

Leila Waddell, a Bathurst girl, who was a pupil of Henri Staell's for the violin, and after a successful career as an amateur, went to England three years ago in search of professional fame, has come out in a new character as a high priestess of a new religion. She is the star of the Crowleyites—Aliester [*sic*] Crowley has started a creed of Eastern Buddhism in England. The ceremonies are very weird. Every one is clothed in a one-piece robe of white, red, or black; feet are bare. The doorkeeper wears a white robe, and is armed with a drawn sword. After much mystic business and invocation, each drank in turn from a golden goblet, and then three brethren led in a draped woman, who was enthroned on a seat higher than even Crowley. Swinburne's chorus from "Atlanta," beginning "When the Hounds of Spring," was recited by Crowley, and then a young man danced a weird sort of dance till he fell exhausted in the middle of the room. Crowley then made supplication to the enthroned blue-robed lady, who, after a pause, lifted her violin and played. I've seen a portrait of Leila the Priestess sitting in a stiff attitude, with her knees and feet tightly together. Her robe is a neck to toe affair, something like a surplice, and as her feet are bare her ten toes are a feature of the landscape. On her head is a huge helmet, and she holds her violin and bow. Leila is dubbed the Lady of Mystery. She is coming to Australia, probably as a rival to that esoteric lady, Annie Besant.