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THE ROSICRUCIANS.

**TRIAL THAT WAS LIKE
"ALICE IN WONDERLAND."**

PLANETS AND SPIRITS.

The doings of the Rosicrucians formed a feature of an action for libel concluded yesterday before Mr. Justice Scrutton and a common jury.

Mr. George Cecil Jones, a consulting and analytical chemist, sued a weekly paper called "The Looking Glass."

The plaintiff contended that in a series of articles dealing with the career of a Mr. Aleister Crowley he was charged with immorality.

The defence was that the articles did not libel the plaintiff, but referred solely to Mr. Crowley.

Mr. Samuel McGregor Mathers, a witness, said he assumed the name of McGregor.

Counsel: That name is of great antiquity, and in 1603 was forbidden to be used under pain of death. Your name in 1603 was McGregor?—Yes, if you put it that way. (Laughter.)

Have you ever suggested to anybody that you had some connection with James the Fourth of Scotland?—I do not understand what you mean. Of course every Scotsman of ancient family must have some connection with James IV. and other Scottish Kings.

Are you asserting that James Fourth of Scotland never died?—There is an old tradition about that in Scotland.

Do you assert that James Fourth is in existence to-day?—I refuse to answer that question.

The Flying Dutchman.

Have you ever asserted that Cagliostro was one and the same person as yourself?—No. You are confusing me with Mr. Crowley's aliases.

Questioned as to other people long since dead, witness said he was not responsible for traditions.

His Lordship. The Flying Dutchman is another instance if you want to pursue the subject further. (Laughter.)

Witness: The Wandering Jew is another. (Laughter.)

Witness said he had no profession or occupation, but that for a man of no occupation he was probably the busiest man alive. (Laughter.)

What work is that?—The establishment of the Rosicrucian Order. It required a knowledge of many languages, and an enormous amount of work.

There are others who assert that theirs is the true Rosicrucian Order?—Yes; that is why you have two other forms of it.

In answer to further questions, witness said that there were secret chiefs, and he was the external head of the Order, and exercised administrative powers. He was in communication with the secret chiefs, but he was sworn not to reveal their names. (Laughter.)

His Lordship: This is getting a long way from the issue the jury have to try. The jury are not here for amusement. They are here to do their business.

The witness said he had known the plaintiff for some time and was on terms of friendship with him until he backed up Crowley on the latter's expulsion from the Order.

Counsel was proceeding to question witness with regard to Alan Bennett, a Buddhist monk, and also a member of the order, when his Lordship intervened with the remark that the trial was getting very much like the trial in "Alice in Wonderland." (Laughter.)

Five-Guinea Performance.

Mr. William Migge, a merchant of Eastcheap, said he attended the first séance conducted by Crowley at the Caxton Hall, which had been described in the "Looking Glass." He paid five guineas for a series of seven performances. He did not like the performance, and asked for his money back. The performances were supposed to be rites and rituals based on mysticism and planetary spirits. The performance he attended had something to do with the planet of Saturn.

His Lordship: What was Saturn being invoked for?—I do not know, my Lord, but I think each performance had a bearing on a particular planet.

Witness, continuing, said there was a mixed audience, but there was so much incense used that he could not see everything. The account in the "Looking Glass" was tolerably accurate as far as it described the rites.

Cross-examined, witness said he was induced to pay his five guineas by a clairvoyant. He did not think the rites were worth the money. (Laughter.)

In further evidence witness said he did not expect to see anything immoral.

Dr. Berridge, of Gloucester Terrace, Hyde Park, who was called, was severely reprimanded by the Judge for tacking some words on to the oath by which he was sworn. "Don't invent oaths of your own," said the Judge acidly. "Parliament has invented the oath for me."

The witness was asked about an interview which he has with Crowley. He said it was rather unpleasant for the ladies in court, but the Judge said that probably the ladies in court were beyond scruples of that sort. The witness then gave what he asserted was the whole of the conversation.

In the end the jury returned a verdict for the defendants, and judgment was entered accordingly with costs.