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MYSTIC RITUAL AND INCENSE.

INVOCATION OF SATURN.

FIVE GUINEA SPECTATOR.

Strange rites were described in the King's Bench Division on April 26 by a city merchant who paid five guineas to witness them.

This evidence, with much more of a diverting sort, including the cross-examination of the head of the Rosicrucian Order, was heard in the course of a libel action in which Mr. George Cecil Jones, consulting chemist, sued the publishers of the "Looking Glass" Company, Messrs. Love and Malcolmson, and the editor, Mr. Fenton, for a reference to him in a series of articles called "An Amazing Sect."

In these articles charges were made against Mr. Aleister Crowley, who had been expelled from the Rosicrucian Order. The "Looking Glass" accused Crowley of immorality, and said that his aliases would grace an Old Bailey criminal.

"Two of Crowley's friends and introducers," continued the article, "are still associated with him—one, the rascally sham Buddhist monk, Allan Bennett, whose imposture was shown up in 'Truth' some years ago; the other, a person of the name of George Cecil Jones, who was for some time employed at Basingstoke in metallurgy, but of late has had some sort of small merchant's business in the city."

Detailing his experience at the performance of mysterious rites by Crowley in London, Mr. Wm. Migge, a city merchant, expressed to the court a strong feeling that he did not get value for money. He said he paid five Guineas, and didn't like the rites, and asked for the return of his money. (Laughter.)

The judge asked what the rites were about. Mr. Migge replied they were "ritual under planetary spirits." The first was the Invocation of Saturn, and the room was in darkness.

The Judge: What was Saturn invoked for?

The witness said he did not know. The second planet invoked was Jupiter. (Laughter.)

Clairvoyant Manifestations.

Counsel: Was one lady present called the Mother of Heaven, and another the Daughter of Heaven?

Mr. Migge: I couldn't see very well. There was so much incense. (Laughter.)

Counsel, cross-examining, asked what induced him to go to the rites.

The witness said he was induced to go by a clairvoyant, "who seemed to cater for the purpose."

You considered they were not worth the money?—No.

What did you expect to get?—Some clairvoyant manifestations.

You didn't expect to see anything indecent?—No, certainly not.

One of the articles in the series in "The Looking Glass" related to proceedings at a meeting of a sect of which it was said Crowley was the head, and yet another said, "We think we have said enough to show that our previous attacks on him and his orgies were more than justified."

Mr. Jones said that, personally, he had never seen anything wrong in connection with Crowley. He himself said the plaintiff, was not a member of the sect. He knew Crowley had called himself Count Svaref and Lord Boleskine.

Counsel for the defence said it was quite clear that the quarrel was with Mr. Crowley, and not with Mr. Jones.

For the defence the Comte Macgregor de Gleestrae, External and Visible Head of the Rosicrucian Order, was called. He said that Aleister Crowley was expelled from the Order in 1905, because he circulated a libel against the head and wrote anonymous letters and acted against the interests of the Order.

The witness said he was registered at birth as Samuel Liddel Mathers. His birth certificate was in the possession of the Bedford Grammar School. The name of Mathers dated, the witness said to 1603, because then the name of Macgregor was used under pain of death.

Counsel: Your name in 1603 was Macgregor, then? (Laughter.)

The Comte: Yes, if you put it so.

James IV. Never Died.

Have you ever said that you were connected with King James IV. of Scotland?—Every member of a Scotch family is connected with King James IV.

Have you ever asserted that James IV. never died?—There is a tradition to that effect, and it forms the basis of one of Allan Cunningham's novels.

Counsel: No, no; we don't want any more fiction. (Laughter.)

Counsel then asked the comte whether he did not claim that James IV. was embodied in himself, and the witness loudly denied it.

Have you ever asserted that Cagliostro was one and the same person as yourself?—No, again you are confusing me with one of Mr. Crowley's aliases. (Laughter.)

Do you believe that Count de St. Germain is living?

The witness in reply, referred counsel to a book and to traditions in the St. Germain family.

When was he supposed to have died?—In 1780.

Then we have two dead people who are supposed to be dead who are not dead?—I am not responsible for the traditions.

His Lordship (to counsel): The "Flying Dutchman" is a third if you want to pursue this subject. (Laughter.)

The witness: And, again, "the Wandering Jew." (Laughter.)

The witness added that the term "Rosicrusian Order" was a general term in the Middle Ages to express a secret order. There were secret chiefs of the Order to-day, but he was sworn not to discuss them.

His Lordship recalled counsel to the issue of the case by remarking: This trial is getting very much like the trial in "Alice in Wonderland." (Laughter.)

The jury answered four questions given them by the judge as follows:—

Are the word complained of defamatory of plaintiff?—Yes.

If so, are the defamatory statements in fact substantially true?—Yes.

Are the defamatory statements, so far as they consist of opinion, fair comment on the facts?—Yes.

What damage has the publication caused the plaintiff?—None.

Judgment was accordingly entered for defendants.