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MADE HIMSELF INVISIBLE
"MASTER MAGICIAN'S" CLAIM
"BLACK MAGIC" LIBEL ACTION

The hearing was resumed before Mr. Justice Swift and a special jury in the King's Bench Division to-day of the libel action by Aleister Crowley, the author, against Miss Nina Hamnett, authoress of "Laughing Torso," which he alleged imputed that he practiced "black magic."

Other defendants were Constable and Company, Limited, publishers, and Charles Whittingham and Briggs, printers, the defence being a plea of justification.

At the material time Mr. Crowley had a villa on the mountainside at Cefalu, Sicily, which was known as the "Abbey of Thelema." He denied that he practiced "black Magic" there.

To-day Mr. Crowley remarked: "I should like to be universally hailed as the greatest living poet. The truth will out, you know."

Mr. Crowley agreed that he wrote "The Diary of a Drug Fiend," which was assailed in the Press.

"DEGENERATE CANNIBAL"

Mr. Hilbery: Did you say: "Horatio Bottomley branded me as a dirty degenerate cannibal"?—Yes.

"I also had the reputation of being the best man in the world," declared Mr. Crowley a few moments later.

In a London flat which he once had was "a hall of mirrors, the function of which was to concentrate the invoked forces, with the result that some people were attacked by unseen assailants.

Mr. Crowley said that because of his magic he had once walked in the street in Mexico in a scarlet robe and with a jewelled crown without anyone seeing him.

Mr. Hilbery: As part of your magic you do believe in a practice of bloody sacrifice, do you?—I believe in its efficacy, but I do not approve it at all.

You say in your book, "For nearly all purposes human sacrifice is best"?—Yes, it is.

Mr. Justice Swift: Do you say that you don't approve it?—Yes.

Mr. Crowley said that at the villa at Cefalu there was "a sort of square box" used as an altar. On it were a book purporting to contain the laws and candles for ceremonial purposes. Incense, a dagger, and a sword were used, and he wore an appropriate robe.

Mr. Hilbery referred to articles in which Mr. Crowley was described as "the king of depravity," "the wickedest man in the world," "the man we would like to hang," "another traitor trounced," and "the notorious Aleister Crowley."

Mr. Justice Swift: It is said of you, "It is hard to say whether he is man or beast."

Mr. Crowley: It was said of Shelley the he was sent from hell.

Mr. Justice Swift: I am not trying Shelley. I am only trying your case. When that was said in the public Press, did you take any steps to clear your character?—I was 1,500 miles away, I was ill, and I was penniless. I wrote to my solicitors.

The hearing was adjourned until to-morrow.