

**THE SOUTH WALES EVENING POST
SWANSEA, GLAMORGAN, WALES
12 APRIL 1934
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"MAGIC" CASE CHALLENGE

CLAIMANT'S RETORT IN COURT

Invitations to him to invoke the Magic, in which he believed, with a view to giving a demonstration in court of his "magic," were extended to Mr. Aleister Crowley, the author and claimant in the "Black Magic" libel action in the King's Bench Division to-day, by Mr. Martin O'Connor, counsel for Miss Nina Hamnett, authoress, one of the defendants.

Mr. Crowley refused to accept the invitation.

The action again came before Mr. Justice Swift and a special jury.

Mr. Aleister Crowley, the author is claimant, and the defendants are Miss Nina Hamnett, authoress, Messrs. Constable and Co., Ltd., publishers, and Messrs. Charles Whittingham and Briggs, printers, the claim being in respect to alleged libel in passages of a book entitled "Laughing Torso."

The defence was a plea of justification.

"TRY IT ON" INVITATION

Mr. O'Connor, for Miss Hamnett, resuming his cross-examination to-day, invited Mr. Crowley to try his magic in Court.

"You said yesterday," said Mr. O'Connor, "that as the result of early experiments you invoked certain forces with the result that some people were attacked by unseen assailants. Try your magic now on my learned friend," pointing to Mr. Hilbery. "I am sure he will not object."

"I would not attack anyone," replied Mr. Crowley. "I absolutely refuse."

Mr. Justice Swift: We cannot turn this court into a temple, Mr. O'Connor.

"On a later occasion—continued Mr. O'Connor to the plaintiff—you said you succeeded in rendering yourself invisible. Would you like to try that on now, for if you don't I shall pronounce you as an imposter?"—You can ask me to do anything you like. It won't alter the truth.

Counsel then dealt with the ritual observed in the ceremonies at the villa at Cefalu.

The case for Mr. Crowley was concluded.

Mr. Malcolm Hilbery, for the printers and Publishers, said the question for the jury was whether the passages in "Laughing Torso," of which the complaint was made would be read by any reasonable person as worsening the character of Mr. Crowley.

What right had a man who had for years been professing contempt for the standards of ordinary decency to complain if injury to a reputation which he had written about himself as being that of the worst man in the world?