

**THE BELFAST NEWS-LETTER
BELFAST, ANTRIM, NORTHERN IRELAND
13 APRIL 1934
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COUNSEL'S CHALLENGE IN COURT.

PLAINTIFF ASKED TO SHOW MAGIC POWER.

Suggestion He Should Render Himself Invisible.

"BLACK MAGIC" LIBEL ACTION.

A dramatic challenge try his magic in Court, making himself invisible, was made Mr. Allister Crowley, the author, when the was resumed in the King's Bench Division, London, yesterday, the "Black Magic" libel action.

Mr. Martin O'Connor (for Miss Nina Hamnet, authoress of a book entitled "Laughing Torso," whom Mr. Crowley is suing), asked Mr. Crowley "You have said you succeeded in rendering yourself invisible. Would you like try that now, for if you don't I shall pronounce you as an impostor?"

"You can ask me to do anything you like," said Mr. Crowley. "It won't alter the truth."

Messrs. Constable &, Company, Ltd., the publishers of the book, and Messrs. Charles Whittingham & Briggs, the printers, are also sued by Mr. Crowley, who complains that the book imputed that he practised "black magic" at a villa he had in Sicily called the "Abbey of Thelma," and he said this was a libel upon him. The defence was a plea of justification.

"FORCES" INVOKED

"You said on Wednesday," said Mr. O'Connor resuming his cross-examination, "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, for plaintiff). 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.

Counsel then dealt with the ritual observed in the ceremonies at the villa at Cefalu, Sicily. Mr. Crowley denied that a cat was killed in the ceremony and that a quart of the cat's blood was drunk by a person taking part. "There was no cat, no animal, no blood, and no drinking," he declared.

STUDY OF "BLACK MAGIC"

Mr. Crowley's family were Plymouth Brethren. Mr. Crowley agreed that he studied black magic, though only as a student.

"I was just coming out from years of abominable torture," he explained. "I wanted to find out what a church was like, and I sneaked secretly into a church at the danger of incurring the severest penalty, because among the Plymouth Brethren even the idea of entering a church might have incurred damnation."

Mr. Eddy—Have you at any time practiced black magic?—No.

What is the object of the magic you believe in?—My particular branch is the raising of humanity to higher spiritual development.

Mr. Eddy asked Mr. Crowley why he indulged in German propaganda in America during the war.

Mr. Crowley—In order to destroy it. I reported my activities to the chief of our organisation, Captain—later Commodore—Guy Gaunt, and was in communication with the Hon. Everard Feilding. I came back immediately after the war, and if I had been a traitor I should have been shot—and a good job, too.

The hearing was adjourned.