

TRUTH
SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA
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OUR BOOKSHELF

In 1943 the late Mr. Justice Swift uttered this condemnation: "I thought I knew of every conceivable form of wickedness, but I have never heard of such dreadful, horrible, blasphemous, abominable stuff as that produced by a man who describes himself as the greatest living poet."

He was speaking of an infamous Englishman, Aleister Crowley, a man who combined the iniquities of a Marquis de Sade with the black magic of a necromancer, who believed in degenerate celebration of the black mass, who declares, "I believe in blood sacrifices, human sacrifices being best of all."

Once tall and good-looking, this fiend who loved obscene ritual and drugs, was described before his death this week as "a fat olive-skinner with staring reptilian eyes, heavy jowl, wispy grey hair, the very embodiment of a repulsive Dorian Gray."

Crowley revived the ancient cult of Satanism at one time widely publicized in England and which even today has secret worshippers.

During the war, this cult was again heard of and was practiced in milder form in obscure parts of this country.

Crowley was expelled from Italy after founding the Abbey of Thelema, where he sacrificed live cats. He was also thrown out of France.

Although he spent £100,000 on devil worship he became an undischarged bankrupt, dying a morphia addict.

His doctor, William Brown Thomson, who prescribed drugs for him, refused to increase the prescription three months ago and was consequently cursed by Crowley, whom he followed to the grave within 24 hours of the "master's" death.

An oddly-assorted group of people, including five well-dressed women, attended the last rites over Crowley, at the undenominational chapel of the Brighton Crematorium.

One woman placed a bunch of pink carnations on his coffin before it disappeared.

There was no religious service, and Crowley's cremation, like his life, was mysterious.

As the mourners stood around silently, one of Crowley's best friends opened a large volume and, in a powerful voice, read extracts from Crowley's own book, "Magic in Theory and Practice."

Then the mourners talked among themselves, lit cigarettes, and drifted quietly away.

All were pledged to secrecy about the "rites."

Half jocularly one mourner said to a reporter: "Better be careful what you write—Crowley might strike at you."