

**THE GAZETTE**  
**MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA**  
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**Black Magic And Death.**

**The Satanist.** By Dennis Wheatley. Hutchinson; 447 pages, \$3.95.

Dennis Wheatley is an English thriller writer whose prodigious output numbers 38 novels and four or five other works. In the course of all this toil it would be rather surprising if the author had not evolved some sort of formula, or framework into which he could fit his ideas. The formula is obviously present in "The Satanist" and occasionally it becomes perceptibly evident. However, since Mr. Wheatley is also the possessor of a masterly technique, this does not seem to matter. The plot thickens in a predictable way, thrill follows thrill, suspense builds up, until in the final pages the fate of the whole world (literally) hangs in the balance. Will the forces of good be able to reach the forces of evil [before] the deadly weapon is unleashed?

Mr. Wheatley has a deep interest in the occult—otherwise known as Black Magic—and most of this story concerns the entanglement of a group of Special Branch police operatives, male and female, with a group of Satanists in London.

The ritual and blasphemies recorded here presumably have a firm foundation in fact, since the author knows the subject well and has apparently discussed it with several well-known authorities. In fact, if "The Satanist" were checked against Aleister Crowley's writings, and the latter accepted as even half true, then Mr. Wheatley's sources are obviously quite accurate. Whether or not Magic is actually practised in civilized countries today is open to question, but the evidence suggests more than a possibility.

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