

**THE DAILY EXPRESS  
LONDON  
14 AUGUST 1937**

**These Names Make News**

**MASTER OF MATHS  
by  
Aleister Crowley**



**SULLIVAN**  
*Nearly first-class*

No one-track man was J. W. N. Sullivan, who has died, aged 51, of a painful disease.

His main track was science; especially mathematics. But at different times in his life he suddenly developed passions for other paths of learning, pursued them whole-heartedly.

Like many mathematicians, he thought much of music. As his picture shows, he looked a little like Beethoven. He wrote a book about him.

He admired Dostoievski's novels. He admired them so much in English translation that he learned Russian so as to be able to read them in the original.

At one time he had a mania, like T. E. Lawrence's, for speed, used to drive at Brooklands. (He lived near there,

at Cobham, in a painfully picturesque cottage: head-hitting beams & all that.)

Of his scientific books the most remarkable was perhaps "Three Men Discuss Relativity"; it succeeded in making Einstein so lucid that Punch devoted pages to parodying its incomprehensibility.

Of course he had to introduce in it references to such matters as the Reimann-Christoffel tensor."

Sullivan was in youth a powerful heavyweight boxer.

Another of his many interests: beer. He was a great drinker (I use "great" admiringly).

Once, at the Dome in Paris, noted Bohemian café, he drank 44 steins of light beer. He was not drunk.

Once, in Berlin, he found that 14 heavy beers *had* affected him slightly. So he ate a lot of goulash, rested for 2 hours, was then able to drink 17 more.

He might not have died if he had undergone treatment rigorously. But he hated doctors as much as he hated all other professional hierarchies: rarely kept appointments with them.

Years ago he spent some time at the "Abbey" in Sicily run by magician Aleister Crowley; came round to some extent to the view that some phenomena cannot be explained by "pure science."

His odd quasi-autobiography, "But for the Grace of God," showed a great, disturbed, not wholly satisfied mind. It was nearly a first-class mind.