Newspapers.com by Ancestry
https://www.newspapers.com/image/596473468

Downloaded on Jun 11, 2020

Why France Finally Kicked Out the High Priest of the Devil Cult

When the Mystic Leader's Name Was Linked With Scions of Royalty Parisian Patience Gave Out and the Police Said, "Go!"

The Above Dramatic Photograph of Aleister Crowley Shows Him as the "Purple Priest" in the Robes of the Secret Order Performing a Ritual. Above His Head Is the Symbol of the O. T. O. Cult, While the Exhibit Below His Arm Is Part of a Letter Written to a Friend in America. He Proclaimed Himself the "Beast of the Apocalypse", Using the Term "Beast 666" as a Signature. The Line Above the Signature Is Part of the Cult Ritual.

Frontispiece of the O. T. O. Secret Manual Issued by Crowley and Distributed by His Adherents All Over the World.

Miss Leila Waddell, an English Beauty, in Her Costume as High Priestess of the O. T. O. She Is Just One of the Many Aristocratic Young Women Who Became Interested in Mystic Doctrines.

Aleister Crowley Today—From a Photograph Taken a Short Time Before He Was Expelled From France. Compare This Picture With the One at Right and Note Its Changed Appearance.

Aleister Crowley as He Looked When He Was a Student at Oxford University and One of England's Most Promising Young Poets.

Sicily Colony, Exposing the Fantastic Love Cult, Which Stirred Up Feeling in England Against Crowley.

Betty May Loveday, the Beautiful Artists' Model, Whose Young Husband Died While a Member of Crowley's She Told Harrowing Tales and Published Articles in England Against Crowley.

PARIS.

ALEISTER CROWLEY, High Priest of the "Devil Worshipers," said by scientists to know more of the secrets of black magic than any white man today, finally tired the patience of the Parisian police so much that they have expelled him from France.

England, Italy and America have previously taken somewhat similar action against the cult of the mysterious Oriental Love-Cult, which is believed to have secret chapters in America and Europe.

Behind the closed doors of their smart drawing rooms members of the hard rounds are excitedly discussing the findings of the Surete General. Their concern arises from the fact that certain noble names, including that of Prince Louis of Bourbon, scion of the royal house of Spain, are mentioned in connection with the activities of Crowley and his High Priestess.

And what these findings include has not been completely revealed, it is thought by many, however, that the doctrine of Crowley's mysterious cult, "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law," may have led to demonstrations which even the tolerant French could not overlook.

Far more strange stories regarding his mystical seances, the peculiar influence he is said to have wielded over disciples recruited from both sexes, have recurred with persistence. But last year when he suddenly bobbed up in Paris after one of his characteristic "disappearances" those who had heard these tales smiled incredulously.

He had been described in former years as dark, dangerous, handsome—the man with the celebrated "basilisk stare." He was that same Aleister Crowley, a rather fat, bald-headed, old man! Whatever strange adventures might have occupied him in the past, he presented anything but a formidable picture on the occasion of his latest appearance. At least that was the opinion of the majority of the people who met him.

Apparently, however, the Surete General did not disturbs the once colorful figure so casually. It is evident now that the French Secret Service decided to keep him under surveillance.

Some people say there is no foundation for the sensational stories involving Prince Louis of Bourbon and other notable figures, but the fact remains that another country has shut her doors to Aleister Crowley and that fantastic stories of his past have been revived with fresh enthusiasm.

The stories present a curious picture. He has been called by his friends and enemies "a brilliant, fascinating, mental genius" to an "inhuman monster." The man who is now a virtual exile from four countries may look back upon his life and consider that he has practically run the gamut of human experiences.

His first burst into prominence as a poet when he was in his twenties. Then England considered him a promising young genius. Those who knew him in those London days depict him as an esthetic young man endowed with a brilliant mind. Some of his poems may be found in the Oxford Book of Mystical Verse. Numbered among his friends were the distinguished writers, artists and diplomats of the Yellow Book days of the nineties.

Then his mind turned to mysticism and he delved into the ancient religious rites of the "Devil Worshipers," introducing into their philosophy, He began developing the strange cult that was later to bring men and women from all parts of the world under his influence. As a result of these studies he founded the secret order of the O. T. O. on the ancient practices of the Rosicrucian Order and the Gnostics.

That was the beginning of his trouble with the authorities and of his peculiar kind of fame. Black magic it seemed was but one phase of his astonishing cult. It was said that aristocratic English, French and American ladies were falling under the spell of the mystic ceremonies and that the rites he performed, set forth by Crowley, "The Purple Priest," were "Dress ye all in fine apparel and drink sweet wines that foam, and take your fill of love." Indignant London husbands became so incensed that the supreme ruler of the order decided to leave for parts unknown.

After a time he showed up in Paris, where he found new disciples. Again news spread of the weird practices of the order, and he dropped from sight, later to make his appearance in New York's Greenwich Village.

By this time it is said that the erstwhile "Purple Priest" fancied himself he was the reincarnation of Eliphas Levi, the Abbe Constant, an author who made an elaborate study of magic. He also signed himself "The Beast 666." Stories were circulated regarding demoniac services held in the very heart of New York City, and of women branded with the symbol of the order, the circle and the star. Similar stories told of women voluntarily submitting to other cruelties as part of the ritual. This was known as mortification of the flesh.

Finally some reputable citizens determined to investigate the truth of these fantastic tales and succeeded in gaining admittance to the "Black Mass" and other ceremonies conducted by Crowley. In describing the scenes he had witnessed, W. B. Seabrook, famous author, wrote:

"It was difficult to believe the evidence of my own eyes. Black-hooded figures in a dimly lighted room chanting mystic phrases in lifeless voices—the black goat—an altar resplendent with mystic symbols—high priestess fulfilling orders of "The Beast" wearing metallic, black robes. This was but part of the unholy ritual thought to invoke the spirit of the Evil One."

One of the most startling developments came with the revelation of the type of women who joined the order and even became the so-called High Priestesses. In England it was said that Miss Leila Waddell, a tall, beautiful young woman was the Lady of Mystery, or High Priestess, who played the violin for the "Black Mass" services. In Greenwich Village a little school teacher, Lea Hersig, became a spectacular figure in the cult.

When "The Beast" first met her he is said to have called her "the dead soul," but through his influence, he declared he vitalized her into a vivid personality. Before her metamorphosis Lea was a cool, aloof, delicate person. Later she is said to have repeated these words dictated by "The Beast."

"I am the blue-lidded daughter of the sunset. I am the brilliance of the voluptuous night sky. Sing the rapturous love song unto me! Burn to me perfume! Wear to me jewels! Drink to me, for I love you! I love you!"

The revelations of Crowley's activities in New York caused an outcry of indignation, and about this time he decided to find a less conspicuous setting for his activities. In the quiet little village of Cefalu, Sicily, he renewed his acquaintance with the "Beast of Thelema," his next colony, was located in an obscure farmhouse of the Sicilian countryside. His disciples followed him, and before long a group of cult adherents had been established.

But in this isolated farmhouse temple an event soon took place which resulted in downright scandal. One of the most ardent of the flock was Raoul Loveday, a brilliant and fragile young Oxford poet. He had brought his beautiful artists' model wife to the colony. Unfortunately for Crowley, the young wife, Betty, did not share her husband's enthusiasm for the Satanic teachings. Still more disastrous to the magician was the fact that the young man sickened and died.

Betty Loveday returned immediately to England and published articles in which she insinuated that Crowley was responsible for her husband's death. Later this was disproved, as it was shown that young Loveday had died from inflammation of the intestines. However, Betty told such harrowing tales of the performances taking place in the colony that the Sicily experiment terminated suddenly.

It was shortly before this that Aleister Crowley directed his talents in a quite different channel. He produced a similar sensational effect. He wrote and published "Diary of a Drug Fiend." Some critics denounced it as "unspeakably wicked." Others called it a work of sheer genius that "will rank with De Quincy's classical 'Confessions of an Opium Eater.'"

During his erratic career there have been other evidences of Crowley's inherent brilliance, of his instinctive genius as a psychologist, and of the magnetic influence he asserted over men and women alike. At times he was painter, scholar, explorer. Again he cast away the monkish garb worn while presiding as "High Priest" and disappeared for months at a time. Here another curious characteristic is revealed.

This man so successful in dominating people would journey about the world unheralded and unaccompanied. For two years he tramped through dangerous parts of Mexico without a guide. In 1906 he crossed China on foot. Again he became a naked Hindu yogi, begging for rice under the Indian sun, and then a recluse on the Sahara Desert.

One man summed up his strange nature in this manner: "A tremendous egotist himself, he catered to the egotism of others."

Another, who had studied him carefully, said: "One must know that the real mystic ended and where the charlatan began. But it is true that he sincerely believed he was able to invoke demons and spirits, actually making them talk to him and do his bidding."

Regarding his powers, one well known scientist, after years of careful personal investigation, made the following statement:

"Whatever else Aleister Crowley may be, I am convinced that he is one of the greatest magicians the world has probably ever known."

But when black magic involves European nobility, France apparently decides that the "Devil Worshipers" will have to find another stronghold.

"The Beast" has been forced to run to cover again. The place of his retreat is not known, but Brussels has been suggested as a possibility."

Despite his age, Crowley has retained his fighting spirit and remarkable courage that have distinguished his career. "The Beast" has not accepted the late victory of his opponents without giving battle. He has declared that his enemies who fear his power to reveal the truth about life have again organized their forces in a drive against him. He has denied the recent stories regarding the alleged findings of the Surete General as well as the superious cast upon him and the scion of the royal house of Spain.

He is indignant about his expulsion from France. Crowley is said to have stated his attitude in the disdainful exclamation, "These are petty contingencies. Eastern philosophy and magic raise the soul far above them."

Copyright © 2020 Newspapers.com. All Rights Reserved.

POWERED BY Newspapers.com