

Latest "Black Magic" Revelations About Nefarious American "Love Cults"

How the Law Is Laying Bare the Unholy Secrets of "Brotherhoods" and "Orders" Flourishing from Greenwich Village to the Golden Gate and Imperiling Our Girls



MYSTIC SYMBOL. Insignia of the Sacred Order of the White Brotherhood Which Resembles the Star and Circle of Aleister Crowley's "O. T. O.," a Symbol He Seared into the Flesh of Girl Neophytes with a White-Hot Dagger.

FOLLOWER OF KING BEN. One of the Disciples of the House of David (at right), Whose Long Beards Gave a Picturesque Touch to Court Proceedings.



"SUPERWOMAN," Miss Erma Gibbs, "Ermengarde," Arrested with Mrs. Gertrude Wright by Oakland, Calif., Police.

HIGH PRIESTESS. Mrs. Gertrude Wright, Called "Zareda" by Her Followers, Whom Oakland Police Lodged in Jail on Immorality Charges.

SO-CALLED love cults and black magic—regarded by some readers as too fantastic to be real—not only thrive in America, but they are spreading in ever-widening concentric circles, judging by recent arrests in many parts of the country.

Now, instead of smiling indulgently over "alarmist reports," police authorities, social and economic experts are shaking their heads and declaring that the wave of mysticism—be it paganism, Tantricism or medieval diablerie—constitutes a very real menace to American homes and American girlhood.

They point out that "Main Street" is hounded on the West by the so-called Sacred Order of the White Brotherhood in California; on the South with voodoo still secretly thriving in parts of Louisiana; on the East by the New York, N. Y. cult of Pierre Bernard, self-styled Oom the Omnipotent, and Aleister Crowley's mystic "O. T. O." in Greenwich Village, girl neophytes of which bared their breasts to be seared by a white-hot dagger with the symbolical star and circle; on the North by Albert W. Ryerson's branch of the "O. T. O." and the House of David, both of them in Michigan.

Nearly all modern cults fall naturally into two classes. The first is the practical working-out—or attempt to work out—advanced ideas in sociology, where groups of men and women form colonies for the upbringing of their children along scientific lines. In this connection, it may be stated that even so profound an observer as Judge Ben B. Lindsay, of Denver, has recently described marriage as a "worn-out institution, fit only for the discard." The second type of "cult" is frankly a "throwback" to the Middle Ages, carrying with it all of the superstition of those medieval times—devil-worship, Satanism and paganism.

The medievalists are generally the most radical of all the modern cultists. Stemming from the Black Mass mystics of Central Europe, their American equivalents strive to reproduce ecstasy by means of incantations, the burning and "torturing" of their enemies' waxen or wooden effigies, and, in certain somber instances, by the shedding, as an oblation, of some animal's blood—that of a "dedicated" goat or kid, and on occasion that of a "sacred" cat or bird.

PATRICIAN PUPIL. An Exclusive Photograph of Lady Paul Dukes, the Former Mrs. Ogden Mills, Wearing the Costume She Donned at One of the Omnipotent Oom's Ceremonies for Initiates. The Picture Was Snapped Surreptitiously by a Friend.

proclaiming that inside was a "spiritualist and healer." Let Carmella tell what she saw:

"The room was so dimly lighted that each object therein seemed to glow as if with phosphorus. The furniture was rich, there were many tapestries. Dull gold candlesticks held tapers which revealed several religious murals. While I shivered in the atmosphere, a big black man entered and introduced himself to me as the 'Rev.' Gaines.

"I told him of my condition; explained that the doctors were unable to give me any relief. He laughed. He said that was a 'n't strange, for it was nothing physical that bothered me. Someone, he said, had 'put a curse on me,' and he thought it was my mother-in-law. For \$200 he offered to anoint me with a salve that would neutralize the curse. So I stripped to the waist at his bidding, allowed him to massage an oily substance into my skin.

"When I returned for another 'treatment,' my sister, Mary Narfuzel, was with me. 'Rev.' Gaines insisted that she also had been cursed, and he offered to cure her for \$100. She allowed him to rub in the salve in the same manner as I had. But when certain other things occurred, she came to my home and told me. We then visited the police and lodged a complaint against him."

"Emperor" Gaines was tried, convicted and sentenced to a prison term. His books revealed that many prominent and extremely wealthy women had paid huge sums to be dispossessed of devils or relieved of "curses." But none save Carmella and her sister would testify to being mulcted.

Much has been written about the Nyack cult of Pierre Bernard—self-styled "Oom the Omnipotent"—for his Tantrik love colony includes women so rich, so beautiful, so prominent socially that no society page is complete without mention of their names. Bernard is regarded as a sort of man-God before whom they chant:

"Be to me a living guru;
"Be a loving Tantrik guru."

Almost equally well-known is the mystic "O. T. O.," which for a space was presided over by the brilliant Aleister Crowley in Greenwich Village.

Whether Albert W. Ryerson, middle-aged Detroit book publisher and millionaire, lacked Crowley's fiery magnetism or his genius for leadership, isn't known, but it is true that the Michigan man made a dismal failure of his branch of the "O. T. O." After acquiring a large following among Detroit's bohemian colony, he caused his palatial home in aristocratic Grosse Pointe to become headquarters of the "do what thou wilt" and "love is everything" disciples. And Mrs. Ryerson got a divorce.

When the millionaire cult leader got

over the shock of that, he proposed to one of the most zealous of his disciples. She was a hot-haired, fiery beauty whom Detroit's theatrical folk knew as Bertha Bruce, about twenty years old and as recklessly extravagant as she was beautiful. When Ryerson put his foot down on her lavish spending, she, too, consulted a lawyer and instituted proceedings for a divorce.

An artist's model, Maizie Mitchell, followed the pretty Bertha as mistress of Millionaire Ryerson's mansion. She became



O. T. O.
Issued by Order:

Daphnet
N° O. T. O.

O. T. O. MANUAI Frontispiece of Secret Love Manual Issued By Crowley and Distributed to His Adherents. All Over the World.

And Above: Aleister Crowley, Photographed in His Robes as the Anti-Christ Leader of the "O. T. O."

Mrs. Maizie Ryerson, Pictured Adorning the Sculptured Head of Her Husband. She Charged That the Cult Leader Whipped Her During an "O. T. O." Ritual.

Copyright, 1927, International Feature Service, Inc. Great Britain Rights Reserved.