

HIS SATANIC MAJESTY

CURIOUS OLD LEGENDS CONCERNING THE EVIL SPIRIT.

In Popular Folklore the Prince of Tempters is Constantly Outwitted, and Facts With Him Are Broken by the Simplest Expedients.

There is a curious legend of the devil making his confession in Cologne cathedral. He professes to repent his crimes and to be willing to endure a thousand years of penance. "My son," says the priest, "all you need is to bow before the image of the Crucified and ask him for pardon."

"What!" cries the devil. "He who swept up the chips for Joseph, he who hung on a gallows?" And he turned on his heel, with a curse.

In popular legend and folklore the devil is outwitted constantly, contracts made with him are broken, and he is again and again deceived by the simplest expedients as substituting a lantern for the sunrise. This, if I remember rightly, occurs in the legend of the Devil's Dike at Brighton. As a child terrified by a very different Satan I remember the light brought to my own spirit by some story of the kind. The expedient in this case was cutting the sole out of the shoe which the devil had to fill with silver. The shoe was never filled, and so he could never claim his part of the bargain. I remember feeling a thrill of relief at seeing that it was possible to evade and elude him after all.

There is an Icelandic legend which is possibly the origin of the proverb, "The devil take the hindmost." He had agreed to instruct seven scholars in all the mysteries of magic for no other reward than that when their seven years' apprenticeship was over he should have as his thrall the last to leave for the last time by the single narrow door. On that fatal day the last to leave literally escaped him—eluded him by slipping out of his cloak, which the devil had grasped. He became a most worthy parish priest, venerated all over the island. As the iron door slammed to it crushed his heel.

The devil is constantly represented in tradition and folk tales as childish, grotesque, spiteful. With his bellows he tries to put out St. Genevieve's candle as she carries it alight through rain and wind to church. A very well known legend is that of St. Dunstan, who, when attacked by him while busy at the forge, brought the conflict to an end by seizing the adversary with the red-hot tongs. This incident was the most popular pageant provided by the goldsmiths on lord mayor's day, when the mayor happened to be elected from their company.

The lion and the dragon are the animals typical of the devil. It is said that the ancient idea of the animosity between the lion and the cock is the origin of the placing of the weather-cock upon the steeple. A mediaeval rhythm says of the cock, "In nocte dum concinat leo perturbatur," and the idea was to terrify Satan by the sight of the enemy on the highest point of the sacred building. The dragon was the symbol of the powers of darkness everywhere. In many of the stories of saints delivering a country-side from a devouring dragon the dragon obviously represents paganism destroyed by the labors of the Christian apostle. Up to the French revolution a prisoner was set free at Rouen every year on Ascension day in commemoration of the deliverance of the people from a dragon by St. Romain. In Provence St. Martha bound a monster called the tarasque with her girdle so that the people could slay him "with swords and glaives," hence the name Tarascon. In Spain a monster snake, called la tarasca, is dragged in the Corpus Christi processions to signify Christ's triumph over death and hell. By the way, the Elizabethan injunctions decreed that in the rogation-tide processions "there should be neither George nor Margaret, but the old dragon to come on alone and show himself."

He was believed to have special power over the air, to be continually stirring up thunderstorms and tempests of wind and hail; hence the ringing of the bells during thunderstorms to frighten the evil spirits away. It was by the help of Satan that Simon Magus, according to the early Christian legend, floated in the air till commanded by St. Peter to descend. It is significant that Leonardo da Vinci, the typical figure of the renaissance, spent many years of his life in the endeavor to invent a flying machine. The opposition he met with from the clergy and devout people was intense. It is indeed difficult to imagine a more concrete symbol of all that is most opposed to what has been known historically as the Christian spirit than a flying machine. It must have seemed a partaking of Lucifer's daring presumption, to be speedily followed by a similar fall.—National Review.

Modern Luxurious Living. The fact is, the laborer of today has luxuries that neither Queen Elizabeth

nor King George of our great-grand-fathers' time ever dreamed of—daily mail, telephone, street cars, electricity for domestic purposes, homes well lighted, well plumbed and well heated. To say nothing of the thousand and one articles that we daily use and do not regard as luxuries—for example, matches. Nowadays contagious diseases do not devastate our cities, because state and municipal laws unite to enforce protective sanitation. Never were homes so clean and well cared for as by the housekeepers of today.—Syracuse Journal.

A Miss and a Find.
It was the habit of the Rev. James Spurgeon, grandfather of the great preacher of that name, to pray each evening under a certain oak tree in a secluded wood in Honeywood park. One night he dreamed, the story goes, that Satan appeared and threatened to tear him in pieces if he followed his accustomed route to the tree. There was another path by which he might go in safety. Remembering his dream, Spurgeon felt sorely tempted the next night to take the route in which Satan was not. But this would be to capitulate. Trembling in every limb, he made his way by the path in which the danger lay. He reached his goal in safety and in prayer and song returned thanks for delivery from peril. When his prayer had ended he rose to return. In his path lay a piece of solid gold "as large as a curtain ring." All inquiry failing to discover an owner, he retained it and when he married had his wife's wedding ring made from his curious find.

A Desperate Wager.
Driven to desperation by their heavy losses, gamblers have often sought by some coup either to repair their shattered fortunes or to bring down utter ruin upon themselves. One of the most curious instances of this kind comes from England. In the eighteenth century a notorious gambler had been losing steadily in a game for high stakes with Lord Lorne. Exasperated by his continued ill fortune, he suddenly sprang up from the card table, seized a large and costly punch bowl and, balancing it above his head, called out to his opponent:

"For once I'll have a bet where I have an equal chance of winning! Odd or even, for 15,000 guineas!"

"Odd!" replied the peer placidly, and the gambler hurled the magnificent bowl against the wall.

When they counted the pieces Lord Lorne had won.—Tuesday Magazine.

Warmed by Their Perfume.
According to the results of experiments by Dr. Jean Chalon, aromatic plants charged with essential oils which exhale a perfume that spreads like an atmosphere about them when touched by the rays of the sun are to a slight degree warmed by the presence of this agreeable atmosphere. It acts in retaining the solar heat like the glass covers of a hothouse, although of course far less effectively. Professor Spring has shown that the relatively high temperatures of large cities is probably due, at least in part, to the carbonic anhydride in the air above them acting as a retaining screen for heat rays.

Spots on Leather.
Oxalic acid in weak solutions is the best thing to use when removing spots from leather. Two or three crystals of oxalic dissolved in warm water then applied with a bit of cloth to the spots, will do the work. Watch closely, and when the spots begin to disappear apply clear water to overcome the acid, which is a powerful bleach. Dry the leather with a clean cloth. For bright leather make the solution weaker.—Philadelphia North American.

Worse Than Murder.
An old negro preacher of southern Georgia had been given a fine fat possum by some of his admirers and was keeping it in a barrel, feeding it heavily, to still further increase its weight. He had decided to have it killed the next day, when, to his rage, it was stolen in the night.

Shortly afterward a revival meeting was being held, and among those who went up to the pious' bench was a certain very black Jim, and his grief seemed inconsolable.

"Dat's all right, mah brudder!" the old man shouted. "Don' matter what yo' done, de good Lawd gwine fergib yo'!"

"But Ah's been powerful mean," Jim declared, weeping.

"Is yo' stole chickens?" the old man demanded.

"Oh, wuss en dat!"

"Good Lawd, he'p dis po' nigger!" the old preacher entreated. "Is yo' used a razor?"

"Wuss dan dat!"

"Is yo'—yo' ain't done killed nobody?"

"Wuss dan dat!"

"Den hyah's whar we tangle!" the old man shouted, throwing aside his coat. "De good Lawd kin fergib yo' ef he wants ter, but Ah's gwine skin yo' alive. Yo's de vermint dat stole mah possum!"

He is great who is what he is from nature and who never reminds us of others.—Emerson.

CHURCH NOTICES

Presbyterian Church

Preaching Services in El Centro First and Third Sundays of each month at 2:30 p. m. All are cordially invited to attend. Rev. A. H. Croco, Pastor.

Christian Church

Preaching in the Hotel Franklin every Second and Fourth Sunday of the month. You are invited to attend. Rev. J. F. Tour, Pastor.

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