

Satan and His Burial-Place

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North American

Advanced
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Satan appears to have troubled the early settlers in America almost as grievously as he did the German students. He came in many shapes to many people, and sometimes he met his match. Did he not try to stop old Peter Stuyvesant from rowing through Hell Gate one moonlight night, and did not that tough old soldier put something at his shoulder that Satan thought must be his wooden leg? But it wasn't a leg: it was a gun, loaded with a silver bullet that had been charged home with prayer. Peter fired and the missile whistled off to Ward's Island, where three boys found it afterward and swapped it for double handfuls of doughnuts and bulls' eyes. Incidentally it passed between the devil's ribs and the fiend exploded with a yell and a smell, the latter of sulphur, to Peter's blended satisfaction and alarm. And did not the same spirit of evil plague the old women of Massachusetts Bay and craze the French and Spaniards in the South? At Hog Rock, west of Milford, Connecticut, he broke up a pleasant diversion:

“Once four young men upon ye rock
Sate down at chuffle board to play
When ye Deuill appearde in shape of a hogg
And frightend ym so they scampered away
And left Old Nick to finish ye play.”

One of the first buildings to be put up in Ipswich, Massachusetts, was a church built on a ledge above the river, and in that church Satan tried to conceal himself for purposes of mischief. For this act he was hurled from the

steeple-top by some unseen instrument of righteousness with such force that his hoofmark was stamped into a solid stone near by. This did not deter him from mounting to the ridge-pole and assuming a defiant air, with folded arms, when Whitefield began to preach, but when that clergyman's tremendous voice was loosed below him he bounced into the air in terror and disappeared.

The Shakers report that in the waning of the eighteenth century they chased the evil one through the coverts of Mount Sinai, Massachusetts, and just before dawn of a summer morning they caught and killed and buried him. Shakers are spiritualists, and they believe their numbers to have been augmented by distinguished dead, among whom they already number Washington, Lafayette, Napoleon, Tamerlane, and Pocahontas.

The two first named of these posthumous communists are still seen by members of the faith who pass Satan's grave at night, for they sit astride of white horses and watch the burial spot, lest the enemy of man arise and begin anew his career of trouble. Some members of the brotherhood say that this legend typifies a burial of evil tendencies in the hearts of those who hunted the fiend, but it has passed down among others as a circumstance.

The Shakers have many mystic records, transmitted verbally to the present disciples of "Mother Ann," but seldom told to scoffers "in the world," as those are called who live without their pure and peaceful communes. Among these records is that of the appearance of John the Baptist in the meeting-house at Mount Lebanon, New York, one Sunday, clothed in light and leading the sacred dance of the worshippers, by which they signify the shaking out of all carnal things from the heart.

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