

THE DEVIL, THE WORLD AND THE FLESH

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(Concluded)

MUSIC, DANCE AND DRAMA OF INFERNAL ORIGIN

THE Devil has been popularly credited with the invention of music. Victor Hugo repeatedly refers in his works to the popular belief in the diabolical origin of music. Asmodeus himself, in LeSage's novel, *le Diable boiteux* (1707), asserts that he is the inventor of music. This popular belief is based on Church tradition, which ascribed the origin of music, not without good reason, to the Devil. Catholic asceticism denounced all instrumental music as the Devil's work. Even some Protestant sects not many decades ago condemned music during religious services as a Satanic artifice to lure men's thoughts away from God. The popular English preacher, Rowland Hill, long ago admitted the fact that the Devil had all the good melodies, and a popular hymn-writer of this country likewise thought it unfortunate that Diabolus should have all the good tunes.

This view is shared by many modern writers who can hardly be said to believe in Beelzebub. James Huneker, in his already quoted *Bedouins*, speaking of the Devil, affirms, "Without him . . . there would be . . . no music . . . He created the chromatic scale—that is why Richard Wagner admired the Devil in music—what is *Parsifal*," the great American art critic concludes his pæan of praise of the Prince of Pleasure, "but a version of the Black Mass?" Dr. Henry van Dyke, in a statement dated February 27, 1921, credits the Demon with the invention at least of jazz-music. The songs of a musical comedy are considered by our high-brow critics "the Devil's own ditties."

The Devil always has given sufficient proof of his musical talent. Again James Huneker, in his *Bedouins* just quoted again, goes so far as to call Satan "the greatest of all musicians." The vocal ability of the demons of hell was early discovered by the medieval

monks. Thomas de Cantimpré, writing in the thirteenth century, tells how a demon composed a famous song about St. Martin and circulated it abroad all over France and Germany. In the second, more sketchy, part of Novalis' *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* (1802), the Principle of Good and the Principle of Evil appear in open competition, singing antiphonies. The French composer, Boieldieu, believed that he had composed the "Valse infernale" for his comic opera *Faust* (1828) with the help of the Devil in person.

But Satan's greatest musical work is perhaps the *Sonata del Diavolo* (1713) nominally composed by Giuseppe Tartini, an Italian musician. According to Tartini's own testimony, the Devil appeared to him in his dream and played on his violin an air of such great beauty that the composer, upon awakening, seized his own instrument and played "The Devil's Trill."

Diabolus is also credited with a sonata by Gérard de Nerval in *la Sonate du Diable* (1830). This story tells how a musician, chagrined that his daughter understood nothing of music, offered her hand to the man who could write and execute the best sonata, "be it the Devil in person." The Evil Spirit, who is never slow to appear when called, arrived with two accompanists at the musical tournament, which the master had arranged. The Devil, it transpired, had written the best sonata of all the aspirants to the hand of the maiden. But an angel, wishing to checkmate the Devil, on the evening preceding the day fixed for the tournament, handed a sonata to the young man who was in love with the musician's daughter. But even the angelic sonata was inferior to that of the infernal composer. However, when the Devil's players approached the end of their superb composition, convinced of their final victory, the young man surreptitiously substituted his own parchment for theirs and thus won out in the end.¹¹

While the Devil plays all instruments equally well, he seems to prefer the violin. He was said in the Middle Ages to own a violin with which he could set whole cities, grandparents and grandchildren, men and women, girls and boys, to dancing, dancing, until they fell dead from sheer exhaustion. The Devil appears in this rôle in the medieval legend of the Pied Piper, which is well known to English readers through Robert Browning's poem, "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" (1843), Robert Buchanan's opera, *The Piper of*

¹¹ Mr. W. H. Snyder has written, in 1911, a drama in three acts entitled *The Devil's Sonata*.

Hamelin (1893), and Miss Josephine Peabody's play, *The Piper* (1909). The miraculous musician in this legend carried off one hundred and fifty children when the inhabitants of Hammel in Saxony refused to pay him for ridding them of the rats, which had infested their town. This Pied Piper was, according to Johannes Wierus and Robert Burton, none other than the Devil in person. The rats were the human souls, which the Devil charmed by his music into following him. In the Middle Ages, the soul was often represented leaving the body in the form of a mouse. The soul of a good person, it was believed, comes out of the mouth as a white mouse, while, at the death of a sinner, the soul escapes as a black mouse, which the Devil catches and carries off in his sack to hell. Mephistopheles, it will be remembered, calls himself, in Goethe's *Faust*, "the Lord of rats and mice" (i. 1516). Death, the Devil's first cousin, if not his *alter ego*, similarly is represented, in the Dance of Death, marching off the souls to hell to the accompaniment of a merry tune on his violin.

Satan appears as a fiddler in the poem "*Der Teufel mit der Geige*," which has been attributed to the Swiss anti-Papist, Pamphilius Gengenbach, of the sixteenth century. Klemens Brentano, in the fragmentary *Romanzen vom Rosenkranz* (written in 1909 and published posthumously in 1852), represents the Devil playing the violin, sending forth from this instrument shockingly shrill tunes. In Lenau's *Faust* (1836), Mephistopheles takes the violin out of the hands of one of the musicians at a peasant-wedding and plays on it a diabolical *czardas*, which fills with voluptuousness the hearts of all who hear it. An opera *Un Violon du Diable* was played in Paris in 1849, and Benjamin Webster's extravaganza in verse, "*The Devil's Violin*," was performed the same year in London. The Devil also appears as a limping fiddler in a California legend, which appeared, in 1855, in the *Pioneer*, a Californian magazine, under the title "The Devil's Fiddle." In his story "les Tentations ou Éros, Plutus et la Gloire" (1863), Charles Baudelaire presents the Demon of Love holding in his left hand a violin, "which, without doubt, served to sing his pleasures and pains." We also meet the diabolical musician in "The Devil in a Nunnery," a medieval legend modernized by Francis Oskar Mann (1914). In this story, the Devil, disguised as a pilgrim, enters a convent, and plays on his "cithern" for the entertainment of the nuns. Slyly he

drifts into the most voluptuous music, until the nuns are overcome with old memories that should be dead. The effect is so disastrous to their serenity that in expiation a fast is ordered for the next day.¹²

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Naturally the Devil is also the originator of the dance, particularly the rapid and fantastic variety. Asmodeus, in Le Sage's previously mentioned novel, assumes credit for the invention of the dance.¹³

The demons inherited their dancing ability from the ærial spirits, who were too ethereal in nature to walk prosaically on earth. For this reason, dancing is their distinguishing characteristic. In many legends, the Devil becomes the dancing partner of the girls who show too great a fondness for dancing, and who, therefore, must dance with their diabolical partner without rest or repose till they fall dead. Friedrich Hebbel has used this legend in his poem "Der Tanz" (1832). In this romance, based on an Eiderstedt legend, a young girl is seized by such transports of joy in dancing at a ball that she keeps whirling about after all the others have left the hall. When her mother warns her that she is fatiguing herself and asks her to stop dancing and go home, the girl boastfully replies that even if the Devil himself were present, he could not tire her out. But no sooner has she uttered these words when a young man in dark clothes approaches her and invites her to dance with him. The girl accepts the invitation, and the pair swing around in the empty hall. But now the girl finds no joy in her dancing; she feels rather as if she stood on the edge of her grave. The mother enters the hall and again asks her daughter to stop dancing. But the young girl cannot break away from the grasp of the weird looking youth, who holds her so firmly in his

¹² In this connection it may be interesting to refer to the following Irish tale mentioned by Leland in a footnote to his translation of Heine's *Elementar-geister*: Pat O'Flanagan, the tailor, was dancing in mad joy with the Devil, who was fiddling, while both took alternate sups from Satan's whisky-bottle. "Whin, och what a pity! all at wanst this foine parrety was broken up by the apparence of Judy, Pat's wife." In the end, the Devil goes off with Mrs. O'Flanagan.

¹³ It is believed that our waltz originated in a dance called *la Volta* performed at the mediæval Witches' Sabbath. See Margaret Alice Murray's *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe* (Oxford, 1921), pp. 134-5.

arms. Suddenly blood spurts out of her mouth; and as she sinks dead to the ground, the diabolical young man disappears in the fog and the night.

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In addition to his sponsorship of the dance, the Devil is likewise regarded as the inventor of the drama. Asmodeus, who figures in the novel by LeSage, contends that he is the creator of comedy. Certainly the Church condemned all secular dramatic performances as "*pompæ diaboli*." The Church fathers declared that all dramatic arts emanated from the Devil (Pseudo-Cyprian: *De Spectaculis*, iv; Tatian: *Oratio ad Græcos*, xxii). St. John Chrysostom also denounced the "Satanic corruptions of the stage." Indeed, the actors were regarded by the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages, and even for many centuries afterwards, as servants of Satan and denied the holy sacraments and burial in consecrated ground. It is a matter of common knowledge that Molière, the creator of the French comedy, who died in 1673, was considered unfit for Christian burial. In revenge, the condemned comedians starred Satan in their plays. Protestants were likewise opposed to play-production. During the sixteenth century, the faithful were forbidden by the Church of England to attend plays of any kind, and any person connected with the stage was denied the offices of the church.

The Puritans considered the play-house the Devil's own place. Stephen Gosson, in his *School of Abuse* (1579), affirmed seriously of theatrical productions: "There is more in them than we perceive; the Devil stands at our elbow when we see not, speaks when we hear not, strikes when we feel not, and wounds sore when he raises no skin, nor rents the flesh." Archbishop John Sharp of London (1645-1714) said that going to the theater was equivalent to looking at the Devil. Our own George Jean Nathan, who certainly cannot be suspected of orthodoxy, fancifully terms the theater "the house of Satan" in his book by that title (1926). A story is told of the demon who entered a woman in the theater and, when exorcised, excused himself by saying that he had found her in his own "demesne."¹⁴

¹⁴ See Thornton S. Graves, "The Devil in the Playhouse," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, XIX (1920), 131-40.

LUCIFER AS LITTÉRATEUR

The Devil was also regarded by our ancestors as the patron of publications. The assertion that his Satanic Majesty hates nothing so much as writing or printer's ink is surely a calumny. In Samuel Crothers' essay, "The Merry Devil of Education" (1910), Diabolus declares, "Ink is my native element." The German mystic, Jacob Böhme, relates that when Satan was asked the cause of God's enmity toward the Adversary and of the latter's subsequent downfall, he replied, "I wished to be an author."¹⁵ The punishment meted out to Satan for his diabolical genius has evidently not cured him of his literary aspirations.

The Devil is recognized as a great writer, although he may never have received any royalties on work published over his own signature.¹⁶ Having been denied copyright privileges on earth, and probably also lacking asbestos paper, Diabolus must perforce publish over human signatures. He finds it, moreover, to his advantage to dictate his ideas through the pens of mortals in order to carry on his work better on earth.

It may be said without exaggeration that all writers, consciously or unconsciously, owe their inspiration to the Devil. Gæthe remarked jokingly on the tenth of January, 1789, that he would have to sell his soul to Satan in order to write his *Faust*. But it is not necessary to enter formally a bond with Beelzebub in order to obtain his aid in writing a book. The Devil is always near to them who are engaged in the profession of letters. It is not without good reason, therefore, that the priests maintain that "the writers are all more or less demons" (Victor Hugo: *les Quatre vents de l'esprit*, 1882, and *Toute la lyre*, 1888-93).

It is a well-known fact that books have in all times been considered tools of hell. For the things that men write have their influence in formulating the ideas and ideals of the reader, and to this extent authors stand in the service of Satan. Thomas Carlyle also believed that he served Satan, but his only regret was that he received no reward for his services. "Sad fate!" he exclaimed, "to serve the Devil and yet get no wages even from him."

¹⁵ The word "author" is used in this connection in its current meaning.

¹⁶ In this connection it is interesting to note that Diabolus has been credited with the authorship of the biggest Bible in the world—the *gigas librorum*—which is found in the Royal Library at Stockholm and which is therefore called the Devil's Bible.

It is especially the imaginative works of literature which are generally considered to be of infernal inspiration. When Asmodeus, in LeSage's noteworthy novel, maintains that he is the inventor of all things that make for beauty in this world, he might just as well have said that he was also the creator of literature. If, from modesty, he did not personally make this assertion, others affirmed it for him. It stands to reason that whatever we read for our enjoyment is in the eyes of Catholic asceticism of infernal origin.

But apart from its joy-giving quality, what we call *belles lettres* is decidedly diabolical in its essence. The writers themselves admit the infernal origin of their work. "I have heard all the men of letters say that their profession was diabolical," asserts Eugène Delacroix. The demonic element is most essential for the success of great creative literary works other than treatises of a scientific or historic nature. The fire and originality in many a masterpiece is due to that power which Timolean calls *Automatia* and Goethe, in his conversation with Eckermann in 1828, *das Dämonische*—the dæmonic—"that which cannot be explained by reason or understanding, which is not in our nature, but to which we are subject."¹⁷ Voltaire believed that, to be a successful author, it was necessary to have *le diable au corps*. In full agreement with the dictum of the patriarch of Ferney, Gottfried Keller, the Swiss novelist, has this to say in regard to literary success:

"He who has had no bitter experience knows no malice; and he who has known no malice has not the Devil in him; and he who has not the Devil in him cannot write anything that will have force and vigor."

Fiction figures in the eyes of many men as a fabrication of the Fiend. Many indictments may indeed be drawn up against all forms of fiction. On account of its frequently immoral matter, the novel has received the condemnation of many a moralist. "The personages of fiction," the great Toystoy declares, "have souls; and it is but truth to say that their malignant authors send them forth among us like demons to tempt us and to ruin us." According to the famous Russian author, Balzac, the Titan of the French novel, is the Lucifer of literature. But the creator of the *Comédie hu-*

¹⁷ Goethe undoubtedly used the word "demonic" as a synonym for "supernatural" with a complimentary connotation. But a writer may be inspired by a good or an evil spirit according as to whether the gravitation of his imagination is toward heaven or hell.

maine is not the only French novelist who has been under anathema. It has been said that all French novelists are of the Devil's party. Nor, for that matter, will the romancers of other countries take their places among the elect of heaven.

Many a well-known novelist, in other countries as well as in France, has produced his work *coopérante Diabolo*. The Fiend has always shown partiality in aiding fictionists. The German fantastic writer, E. T. A. Hoffmann, held the opinion that the Devil was "an ever helpful aid-de-camp of story-tellers in need of help." Tradition has it that the demons of hell guided the pen of many a fiction writer. Asmodeus, for example, wishing to take vengeance on the monks, his sworn enemies, whispered the *Decameron* (c. 1350) into the ears of Boccaccio, while Beelzebub avenged himself on the devil-fighting knights of the Middle Ages by inspiring Cervantes with *Don Quixote* (1605-16).

As for poetry, no argument is needed to show that this emotional art is an expression of the powers of darkness. The poetry of passion in particular is poison. All lyricists are the Levites of Lucifer. Moreover, poetry is often used to sing the praises of the Prince of this world. Byron, the poet of doubt and despair, is not the only "chanter of hell," as Lamartine called him. Even Milton, the great Puritan poet, showed himself as a partisan of the powers of darkness. "The reason," said William Blake, "Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of angels and God, and at liberty when of devils and hell, is because he was a true poet, and of the Devil's party without knowing it." It cannot be denied that the personality of the Devil was the chief preoccupation of the poet. Addison and Dryden, among many other English and foreign authorities, regarded Milton's fallen archangel as the focal point of attention or the real hero of the poem. "The finest thing in connection with this [Milton's] *Paradise*," says Taine, in his *Histoire de la littérature française* (1863), "is Hell; and in this history of God the chief part is taken by the Devil." What fascinated also Chateaubriand in Milton's poem was the character of Satan, whom he considered the finest conception of all poetic personifications of Evil.^{17a}

Criticism, as all creative writers will agree, is without any doubt whatsoever the work of the Devil. "Literary criticism," says Sainte-Beuve, "the kind that I am writing, is alas! hardly com-

^{17a} On this question, see Emily Hickey's article, "Is Satan the Hero of *Paradise Lost*?" *Catholic World*, XCVI (1912), 5871.

patible with Christian practice . . ." The literary critic may wish to be fair, but not infrequently the animus of professional rivalry or scorn seizes him, and he plays the rôle of the Spirit of negation and destruction. The critic of books and their authors, considered in this light, is nothing if not a Devil's advocate. On the other hand, the writers with whom the critic differs are identified by him, in one way or another, with the person of the Devil.

But not only literary works enjoyed the distinction of being considered of diabolical inspiration. In Catholic eyes, the majority of books produced by men owed their origin to the unholy devices and corruptions of Satan. It is a well-known fact that, in the good old days, every book printed without the approval of the Church was associated with the demons of hell.¹⁸

THE DEVIL AS RADICAL AND REFORMER

The Devil was popularly regarded as a pioneer of progress. He was hailed as the standard-bearer of the great reformers and innovators of all ages. Satan was credited with all aspirations for improvement in every field of human activity. The Church contended that it was Satan who inspired the opposition against priestcraft and kingcraft, and that it was the Devil who filled man with the love of liberty, equality and fraternity. Diabolus represented discontent with existing conditions in matters social, political, and ecclesiastical. He was identified with the spirit of progress so disturbing to those who are satisfied with the existing order of things. Every democratic institution, every social reform, was attributed by the reactionaries to the machinations of the spirits of hell.¹⁹

The French Revolution was regarded by the Catholic Church as a creation of the Evil Spirit.²⁰ It was asserted by Catholicism that France was possessed of the Devil during the revolutionary period. According to Victor Hugo, the Catholics believed that the members of the Convention were carried off at their death by the Devil (*les Misérables* I. i. 10). This great French poet himself,

¹⁸ In this connection it may be well to refer the reader to the story, "The Printer's Devil," published anonymously in 1836 and reprinted in the present writer's anthology of *Devil Stories* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1931).

¹⁹ Soviet Russia, on account of her experimentation in social and political reforms, is envisaged at the present day by two writers as the "Devil's workshop."

²⁰ The Catholic view of the French Revolution down to the present day may be seen in *le Diable et la Révolution* (1895), a work written by the impostor Leo Taxil and dedicated to Pope Leo XIII.

in his royalist days, described the Convention as a Pandemonium (*Odes et poésies diverses*, 1822). Marmontel had already previously said that the members of the Convention were "living bronze figures of demons."

The priests taught the French peasants that the civil Constitution promulgated by the Convention, which transferred the property of the Church from the Catholic hierarchy to the French government, was the diabolical masterpiece of this infernal Revolution. Count Joseph de Maistre, the theoretical proponent of absolutism in church and government, also considered the French Revolution the work of Satan (*Considérations sur la France*, 1796). His yoke-fellow, the Viscount Joseph de Bonald, saw in Jacobinism "the reign of demons." Chateaubriand, the partisan of pontiffs and potentates, shared this Catholic view with regard to the French Revolution. In *les Martyrs* (1809), he went so far as to put the revolutionary hymn of his country into the mouth of the Devil.

The revolutionaries, no less than the reactionaries, regarded the French Revolution as the work of Satan. The difference in the conception of this great historical event by the two parties is that the monarchists considered the revolt against the God-ordained powers as a sin, whereas the republicans saw it in a different light.

Either party was absolutely correct in regarding Satan as the moving spirit of the French Revolution. For the emperian rebel is the incarnation of the spirit of revolt in men and the instigator of all social and political upheavals on earth. The Devil, waging on earth the war he started in heaven, will always be found as a partisan of those who seek to throw off the yoke of their heavenly ordained oppressors. Satan is the grandest symbol of protest against tyranny, celestial or terrestrial, that the world can conceive. "The Devil," says Anatole France, "is the father of all anarchy." Was not Satan the first of all rebels against constituted authority? Did he not first utter the words, "*Non serviam*," which burn on the lips of all revolutionaries? Satan was the symbol of the movement for the liberation of the human spirit from the bonds of absolutism,—a movement which started with the French Revolution. He was the embodiment of the revolutionary movement, which was sweeping Europe a century ago. He was the leader of the great army of Human Freedom, as Heine called the lovers of liberty of his day. It was under the standard of Satan that the oppressed

masses in all European countries fought in 1830 against the princes and potentates, who assumed to rule them by divine right. Satan stood at the head of all the agitators and conspirators against political oppression of the past century, and as predicted by the Italian poet, Rapisardi, Lucifer will also accomplish the social revolution which is now preparing in all European countries and bring a new era for mankind, in which social equity as well as political equality will be effected.

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The Devil was represented by the theologians as the Arch-Fiend, the bitter enemy of the good and holy men. The champions of the common folk, on the other hand, saw in Satan the defender of the downtrodden, and the protector of the poor and helpless against the high and mighty of the land. The Devil, who has always been a democrat, is said to have interfered in favor of the peasants or serfs against the feudal lords. The Fiend appears in the folk-lore of all European countries as the defender of accused innocence, and as an exemplar of honesty and fidelity. Diabolus exerted his powers of retribution on misers, on men who brought no good to themselves or to others despite all their hoarded wealth. He was also represented as a chastiser of the Pecksniffs, the moral pretenders. Satan was universally regarded as the Nemesis of the publicans and ale-wives who adulterated the beer they poured out, or who gave short measure to their customers. Gratitude is the crowning quality with which man has invested the Devil of his dreams. Many medieval legends report the Devil's gratitude whenever he is treated with justice. With regard to this trait, Satan can certainly be cited in marked contrast to the sons of Adam.

THE DEVIL AS HEDONIST

Satan has always been portrayed as the Prince of Pleasure. The joys and delights of life were considered by Catholic ascetics as emanations from hell. "Laughter and gaiety," said St. John Chrysostom, "come not from God, but from the Devil (*Opera* vii. 97; x. 590). The modern diabolist, Charles Baudelaire, similarly detected the Devil in human laughter. The excitable poisons, such as tobacco, alcohol, opium, hashish, were for this French

poet "Satanic suggestions," the most terrible means employed by the Evil One to enslave humanity. They all represented for him "artificial paradises."²¹ Liquor is to our own teetotalers the Devil's invention. "King Alcohol is the Devil's worst emissary on earth," recently said a certain Methodist preacher.²²

The Church looked upon Lucifer as the lord of earthly love. The affection of one sex for another was believed, from the earliest period of the Christian era, to be under the special control of the powers of hell. Carnal love was regarded by the Christian monks and missionaries as nothing short of demoniac possession, and its enjoyment was believed to lead man to certain and eternal perdition.

The Church considered celibacy to be the only perfect state, and hesitated for a long time to give its sanction to marriage, which it regarded as unworthy of the "spiritual man." St. Paul denounced marriage in strong terms. "Celibacy must be chosen," said St. Tertullian, "even though the human race should perish." Origen denounced marriage in the following terms: "Matrimony is impure and unholy; a means of sensual passion." When, at the Council of Trent, marriage was finally included among the sacraments of the Church, it was regarded as a *remedium amoris* conceded by the kindness of God to the turpitude of the "natural man."²³

WOMAN AS INSTRUMENTUM DIABOLI

The Church fathers believed that Satan brought about the downfall of men through the allurements of women. All women were regarded as the daughters of the Devil, and all men as bewitched by these sorceresses of Satan.²⁴ St. Paul expressed his horror of women's charms. He confessed that it was only by the strongest practice of faith that he could stay in their society and remain sinless. As Satan is the eternal tempter, so is woman in

²¹ See Wilhelm Michel's essay, "Baudelaire und die Gifte," *Masken*. Bd. XXIII. Heft 21 (1930).

²² The reader will recall in this connection Captain John Silver's song—"Drink and the Devil had done for the rest."

²³ On the final inclusion of marriage among the sacraments, see G. Serrier: *le Mariage contrat-sacrement*. Paris, 1928.

²⁴ Mr. H. M. Tichenor, former editor of the *Melting Pot*, in his clever booklet, *Satan and the Saints* (1918), has described the manner in which the saints escaped the sorceries of Satan incorporated in the daughters of the earth.

the eyes of the Church the eternal instrument of temptation—*instrumentum Diaboli*, the most efficient of stalking-horses, behind which the Devil goes hunting for the immortal souls of men. St. Cyprian said, "Woman is the instrument which the Evil One employs to possess our souls," and St. Tertullian addressed the beautiful sex with the following words: "Woman, thou ought to go about clad in mourning and ashes, thine eyes filled with tears of remorse, to make us forget that thou hast been man's destruction. Woman, thou art the gate to hell." This feminine-diabolical kinship is expressed by the rabbis in their belief that both the Devil and woman entered the world simultaneously.

Many thinkers and writers seem to concur with the fathers of the Church with regard to women. The belief in woman as Satan's instrument in his work of temptation is almost universal among moderns. The German poet and playwright, Lessing, back in the eighteenth century, asserts, "The hand of a woman is often the glove in which Satan conceals his claw." Prosper Mérimée speaks fully in the spirit of the Church fathers when he says, "Woman is the surest instrument of damnation which the Evil One can employ." Woman is especially used by the Devil as a tool to lead man to ruin. This belief explains the French proverb which says, "Man is tow, woman is fire, and the Devil blows on it." Anatole France also affirms, "It is through woman that the Devil takes great advantage of man." Barbey d'Aurevilly believes that women possess greater powers of temptation even than the Devil himself. "Women," this writer says, "are all temptresses, ready to tempt God or the Devil."

Woman's natural inclination to evil is expressed by Gæthe in the following lines:

"When towards the Devil's house we tread,

Woman's a thousand steps ahead." (*Faust* i. 3980-81.)

Other writers think that woman is a match for the Devil in wickedness. Schopenhauer's contempt for woman is too well known to need further comment. "Where the Devil gets through, a woman will get through, too," says Mérimée. "The Devil," this writer also expresses through the mouth of one of his characters, "has nothing left to teach women who overdress themselves and coil their hair fantastically." (We post-Victorians might say, "who underdress themselves and bob their hair fantastically.")

Kornel Makuszynski believes that woman is even more wicked than the Devil. In his *Another Paradise Lost and Regained* (1926), this Polish writer affirms that "Satan himself would not do the things a woman will do and lay to his charge."

Thus woman is believed by modern writers to be possessed of the Evil One. "Every woman," Barbey assures us, "has a devil somewhere who would always be her master, were it not for the fact that she has two others also in her—Cowardice and Shame—to interfere with the first one." This saying is fully in keeping with the proverb which affirms that "The heart of a beautiful woman is the most beloved hiding-place of at least seven devils."

Many writers go so far as to express their belief that woman is partly or wholly the Devil in person. Woman is for Diderot a combination of angel and Devil. Heine does not consider woman wholly diabolical, but he does not know at what point in her the angel ends and the Devil begins. Molière considers woman as the very Devil, and for Balzac woman is a perfected Devil.

Baudelaire regarded woman as wholly diabolical in body and spirit. As a dandy he despised woman, as a Catholic he considered her "one of the most seductive forms of the Devil" and wondered why she was admitted into churches. "Woman," again says this French poet, "is the feminine form of the Other, the most dangerous incarnation of the Evil One." Commenting on the romance *le Diable amoureux* (1772), he remarks, "The camel of Cazotte, camel, Devil, and woman." It should be remembered that Baudelaire was less attached to the form of woman as to her spirit, which he regarded as diabolical. Verlaine, following the lead of the poet Baudelaire, his master in Satanism, likewise believed in woman's identity with the Devil ("Femme et chatte," 1866). Strindberg saw in woman a living Gehenna adorned with all the allures of Satan.²⁵

For the etcher Rops, who was also a disciple of the diabolist Baudelaire, woman is the demonic incarnation of lust, the daughter of darkness, the servant of Satan, the partner of hell, the vampire who sucks the blood of the cosmos. In Barbey's tales as in Rops' etchings, we behold woman engaged in her worship of the Devil. She is described by these diabolist and decadent artists as an adept

²⁵ On the woman as an impersonation of the Devil, see also the end of the chapter "The Form of the Fiend" in the present work.

in all black arts and an expert in all forms of sexual perversion. She is portrayed wallowing in the wildest orgies of lewdness and licentiousness, continually invoking, extolling and worshipping Lucifer, the lord of lust.

Concerning love, too, the Church fathers find support among many poets and philosophers of modern times. Voltaire regarded the Devil and love as synonymous. Love, for Alfred de Vigny, was the art of the Devil and not of the Deity. This pessimistic poet, considering love as idle and mendacious, did not deny to it, however, a narcotizing value in the hands of Satan. Baudelaire always saw the Satanic side in love, and proved his thesis by the animal names we give to the woman we love. "Have not the devils the forms of beasts?" he asks. "The one and supreme bliss of love," this poet again says, "rests in the certainty of doing evil; and man and woman know from birth that in evil is found all pleasure." "Love," this diabolist again affirms, "is the most terrible of all incarnations at the service of Satan." Schopenhauer, in his essay, "Metaphysik der Geschlechtsliebe" (1859), arrived at the same conclusion, arguing that love does not exist to make us happy, but to deceive us under the cover of happiness, and to compel us to perform actions profitable to the human race, but suicidal to the individual. The conception of love as a demonic factor prevails throughout all modern literature: Ibsen, Toystoy, Ola Hanson, Przybyszewski, Prus, Hardy, and Shaw, all perceiving in eroticism not an ideal which should be pursued, but a cosmic power which makes the human being a puppet moving to some incomprehensible goal.

CONCLUSION

Thus the Devil is the representative of terrestrial interests and enjoyments, in contrast to those of the spiritual realm. As a skillful reasoner and logician, he plays havoc with those who dispute his clever materialistic philosophy, for he excels in dialectic. He stands for the glorification of the flesh in painting and sculpture, in the dance and drama, in fiction and romantic adventure, depicting forbidden pleasures in vivid colors, luring on the amorous and the yearning to supposed happiness only to dash this expectation into an empty sense of unreality and frustration. It is his restless

impulse in men which provokes them to unsettle the old order of things and become reformers in the hope of promoting greater happiness. His efforts are inspired by a lusty, democratic hedonism. The protean character of this supermalevolent Personality is attested by a mixture of beneficent traits, such as his ambition, his spirit of good fellowship and democracy, and a progressive desire to unsettle things too long established. Besides which, what would life be without the gratification of the senses? Drabness itself is a mockery of life. But to submit this important Personage to close cross-questioning by Kantian or Huxleyan dialectic is taking an unfair advantage over this mysterious mythological entity, this superhuman presence in our midst.