

THE TEMPTATIONS OF GOOD SAINT ANTHONY

ST. Anthony stood on a lonely rock,
A large black book he held in his hand ;
Never his eyes from its page he took ;
With stedfast soul the page he scann'd.
The devil was in the best humour that day,
That ever his highness was known to be in ;
That's why he sent out his imps to play,
With sulphur and tar, and pitch and rosin :
They came to the saint in a motley crew,
'Twisted and twirled themselves about,
Imps of every shape and hue,
A devilish strange and rum-looking rout !

Yet the good St. Anthony kept his eyes
So firmly fix'd upon his book,
Shouts nor laughter, sighs nor cries,
Could ever win away his look.

A quaint imp sat in an earthen pot,
In an earthen big-bellied pot sat he :
Through holes at the sides his arms out-shot—
Rather a comical sight to see !
He drummed his belly so fair and round,
And he drummed his belly so round and fair,
Brought forth a rumbling, mingled sound,
Rather a comical sound to hear ;
And he hooped & hawed, and winked & grinned,
As birth to a bit of a song gave he ;
Keeping time with the tune as he gallopped along
Till his eyes fairly stood out with glee.
Yet the good, &c.

Another imp came with a trumpet snout,
That was both nose and mouth in one ;
And he twanged his nasal melodies out,
In many a quiver, shake, and run ;
And his head moved backward and forward still,
Upon his long and snaky neck,
He sneezed his octaves out, until
You'd think his nose was ready to break,
And close to St. Anthony's ear he came,
And squeaked and piped his music in ;
The shock ran through the good saint's frame—
He shook and shivered with the din.
Yet the good, &c.

An imp came next with a skeleton form,
Just came out of a charnel vault ;
His jaws with gristle were black and deformed,
And his teeth were as large and as white as salt.
He grinned full many a lifeless grin,
And wagged and rattled his bony tail, 426
His skull was decked with gill and fin,
And his eyes were like the eyes of a snail.
He took his stand at the good saint's back ;
On tiptoe rum he stood a space.

And cocked down his India rubber eyes,
To squint and gaze upon his face.
But the good, &c.

Spiders, with an ugly guise,
Hung from every creek and nook,
Stared at the saint with their eight eyes,
Danced a hornpipe on his book.
Beetles and slow-worms crawled about ;
Forty hornets a full span long ;
Through holes in the wainscôt mice popped out,
And danced in and out in an endless throng.
A sly old rat, with a whiskered snout,
And a toad on his head did squat demure ;
There never was seen such an extravagant rout,
From that to the present time, I'm sure.
Yet the good, &c.

A thing with horny eyes was there,
With horny eyes, just like the dead ;
While fish bones grew, instead of hair,
Upon his round and skinless head.
Last came an imp—how unlike the rest !
A lovely looking female form,
And, while with a whisper his cheek she press'd,
Her lips felt downy, soft and warm,
As over his shoulders she bent ; the light
Of her brilliant eyes upon his page,
Soon fill'd his soul with mild delight,
And the good old chap forgot his age ;
And the good St. Anthony boggled his eyes
So quickly o'er his old black book ;
Ho ! ho ! at the corners they 'gan to rise,
And he couldn't choose but have a look

There are many devils that walk this world,
Devils so meagre and devils so stout ;
Devils that go with their tails uncurl'd,
Devils with horns and devils without.
Serious devils, laughing devils,
Black devils, and devils white,
Devils for churches, devils for revels,
Devils uncouth, and devils polite,
Devils with feathers, and devils with scales,
Devils with blue and warty skins,
Devils with claws like iron nails,
Devils with fishes' gills and fins,
Devils foolish, devils wise,
Devils great, and devils small ;
But a laughing woman with two bright eyes,
Proves to be the worst devil of them all.

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