From The Barre Daily Times (Barre, VT), November 01, 1913, Page 3, Image 3


DELVIL CHILD STORY STIRS ALL CHICAGO

Report Birth of Horned Infant With Tail To Mother Who Wished for Devil.

Chicago, Nov. 1.—Probably one of the strangest myths that ever obsessed a considerable portion of the population of a big city is now the subject of vast dispute among thousands of less enlightened residents of Chicago and a source of everlasting worry to Jane Addams, the kindly head of Hull House, and to the directors of the Chicago academy of sciences and the trustees of the art institute.

Thousands of people have visited Hull House in search of a mythical devil-child, which, it is claimed, was born to an Italian woman on the west side, who, it is reported, said she would rather have a devil than a baby. The story as related to Miss Addams by a child of the slums is as follows:

“The midwife showed the mother the baby. It had horns and a tail and it could talk. When the baby saw its mother it shook its finger at her and said: “You wanted a devil and you have got one. If you kill me, six others will come.”

The academy of sciences and the art institute were deluged with inquiries yesterday as to the authenticity of the report, while vast crowds besieged Hull House. Miss Addams thinks that perhaps a deformed baby was born somewhere in the Italian colony and that it had been merely attributed to the Hull House district. Whatever its origin, the report is credited by thousands and the devil-child’s powers are deadly. According to one version, the father was killed at the sight of it.

How do the words “myths” and “obsessed” convey how the author feels about this story?

What kind of people believe this story?

What is the author’s opinion of Jane Addams?

What is the significance of this happening in an immigrant neighborhood? Why would the author use the word “slums” to describe it?

How does Addams explain it?

Why would this story be so appealing to the people of Chicago? Or the people of Barre, Vermont, for that matter?