MACHA.

There is a lone upper world among the Connemara hills seldom visited by any wayfarer from the ordinary paths of life. Mountains form bulwarks around it; the gates into it are narrow defiles between rugged crags; the centres of its silent valleys are deep lakes, cold and gray as steel, or black with the shadow of the rain-clouds. By the water's margin the dark sullen earth with its gorgeous clothing of purple and embroideries of emerald green upheaves in curious knolls and bosses, or stretches away in wind-swept levels. The peaks around take fantastic shapes, and in twilight the place is like some region of Hades, where disembodied souls walk in shadow and muse upon the mysteries that death had unfolded to them.

Uncongenial as it appears to human life, there are a few inhabitants of this world of silent gloom and barren beauty. Here and there the infrequent traveller will come upon an isolated cabin built of rude stone and roofed with the sod, hardly distinguishable from the heather-capped rock except for the curl of smoke that steals through a hole from the hearthstone within. On a summer morning an inquisitive explorer of this lonesome world passed by one of these smoking hovels, and while gazing on it in dismay, almost expecting to see a gnome or monster issue from it, was startled by the appearance of an exquisite face which shone on him for a moment and vanished. The solitary rambler in so eerie a spot was at the moment in an imaginative mood, and open to all influences of the beautiful and supernatural, and almost believed that a sprite of the mountain had crossed his path, and that she had a fateful message for him in her eyes; but shaking himself into a more rational frame of mind he went his way, with only a lingering look at the cabin, which seemed to retreat into the fastnesses of the rock. Yet, in spite of common sense, the wild beautiful eyes of the mountain girl pursued him, the message that lay a mystery in their depths bewitched him, and finally, as the sun shot forth long shafts of flame and lances of gold, setting fierily behind a cluster of blackening mountain-peaks, he turned upon his heel, and retraced his steps in the direction of the enchanted hovel.

Macha, the owner of the beautiful face, had withdrawn it hastily into the interior of the cabin, scared at the unwonted sight of a stranger, as lowland dwellers might be scared by a ghost. The cabin was so poor that, only for the red hearth and the warm smell of smoke, it might have been mistaken for a shed for cattle. The earthen floor was uneven and full of holes; the roof, of heather and sticks, was blackened with smoke; the hearthstone was broken. One crazy table, one chair, and two or three other nondescript seats; a kettle, a pot, a battered tin-can, and a few mugs and plates—these were the chief contents of the dwelling's principal room. Looking around, one might well ask by what means life could be supported in this place. Patches of potatoes that struggled for existence between bog and rock close by, and a black cutting, that showed like an ugly wound on the face of a distant level, and was the turf-mine—these gave the only answer to such inquiry. An old woman sat spinning in the corner of the cabin, lean and smoke-dried, like a mummy, her dark-red garment, and the yellow handkerchief wound turban-wise round her head, making a spot of subdued color in the murky picture. The contents of a pot of potatoes had been turned out on the table; and Macha, who with a peculiar cry had summoned the family from their work at the bog to dinner, stood in the middle of the floor, with a light falling on her from the sky, across the mountain-peaks, through the smoked-stained doorway. Her skirt of crimson wool, spun by the grandame in the corner, and dyed with madder by Macha herself, was short enough to show her white feet, shining on the earthen floor. Over it she wore a short brown bodice, and a few yards of coarse yellow-white calico were wound about her shoulders, and had been about her head, but the drapery had fallen back in a sort of cowl behind her neck. No white lily or golden rose was ever so beautiful as the face of Macha, crowned with its honey-coloured hair, set with eyes dark and blue, with a look half sweet, half troubled; a rose-red mouth, tinted to match flowers the girl had never seen, and creamy, satin-smooth, dimpled cheeks. The way in which her head was set on her shoulders, the pose of her figure, and the movements of her white bare arms recalled the goddesses in marble of the early Greeks. With her almost superhuman beauty, where had Macha come from—to battle with the elements for life, to grow suntanned, weather-beaten, lean, and withered in the struggle to force the potato out of the rock and peat out of the reeking bog? What was she doing in this dreary upper world of the barren Irish hills; how could she be the granddaughter of the unlovely crone in the corner; and why had generations of ignorance and hunger and rude toil produced her? It must be that Nature had created her for a whim, making her a sort of image and expression of the wild beauty of this picturesque wilderness.

The after-glow of the sunset was abroad when Macha went out again, to roam round the lake in a fashion of her own. A strange amber-and-red reflection illuminated one side of the sky and the mountain-peaks, intensified by gloomy fringes trailing along the horizon. Delicate green tints overspread the other; and in this fairer skyey field had blossomed the round white moon, brightening momentarily, and shining among the early stars like a lily among daisies. Earth and heaven were pictured in the lake—the gemmed meadows and luridly illuminated deserts on high, the blackening hills, and the moving shape of orange, brown, and purple that caught and rent the fringes of the slowly approaching night.

Macha clasped her hands over her head, and gazed round her half fearfully, enjoying and understanding the beauty of it all. She had heard of a shining city beyond the gold and silver gates of the sun and the moon; also of earthly cities, wonderful too, but not so beautiful, that lay down below the mountains in the busy world of men. She meant to go to the one, but she did not care to visit the others. Her mountain home, with its inhabitants, contained the desires of her heart. The old brown crucifix on the cabin-wall was her passport to the final happy destination of all patient souls, whither she and all she loved would depart when the Master should send them a message to come. Nothing natural or supernatural dismayed or disgusted her. If there were spirits in the rocks and fairies in the lake, the Almighty knew what they were doing there, and everything was all for the best.

"Macha, come in," called her mother, from the cabin. "Something will get you."

"Ay, mother, I am coming," said Macha; but still she lingered, looking hard at a piece of rock that seemed to be taking the shape of "something." The clouds are alive, and move, and change—why should not the rocks? Suddenly a living person seemed to emerge out of the rock, and come beside her; and, startled, she would have fallen into the lake had not a strong arm seized her and swung her into safety.

"Holy Mother! I nearly drowned you!" cried Macha, looking at the same traveller who had passed the cabin in the morning.

"I nearly drowned you," said the stranger, gazing in wonder at her beauty, which seemed to have become almost unearthly, as the still warm glow from one side irradiated her hair, and the greenish moonlight from the other whitened her round cheek and the drapery of her shoulder.

"I thought you were—him who lives down in the lake," whispered Macha.

"Who is he?"

She looked all round in the air, and her lovely face caught a thousand reflections of flitting colours and lights. Then she signed with her hand towards the dark lake.

"The water is deep," she said, "and there is many a thing down there. But you are a living man, for I saw you in the morning."

The person addressed felt a strange thrill as she spoke and put out her round gleaming arm and touched his hand with her warm fingers, as if to assure herself that her own words were true, and that he was indeed a living man.

"And you are a living woman," he said. "I almost thought you were a spirit moving along the edge of the lake. Why do you keep so close to the edge? I thought I saw you walking on the water."

"I like to look in and see what I can see," said the girl mysteriously.

"And do you always walk here in the evenings?"

"Yes, and sometimes a bit at dawn. Mother says something wicked will meet me. But I have only met you, and you are not wicked."

"I am not as good as I ought to be," said the man tremulously, answering the look of simple faith and approval in the girl's wonderful eyes. "But I hope I am not altogether wicked;" and the strangeness of his own humility escaped his notice.

"I do not much believe in wickedness myself," said Macha, "except, of course in the great dhiaoul," (devil), crossing herself. "But he will never hurt me, unless I do something wrong."

"What do you see when you walk here in the dawn?"

"I see the blessed spirits trooping up and down the skies. Anybody could see them. Sometimes they come down upon the hills; but they change into white clouds and run away when they come too near me. There is my mother calling me, and the supper is ready."

"By what name is she calling you?"

"Macha is my name. If you will eat a few potatoes I will bring them out to you."

"I am not hungry, Macha, and I am going back to the inn. But if you offer me some another day I will take them."

The girl went in to her mother, and the stranger returned through the brightening moonlight down the rugged mountain, retracing the steps he had made in the morning. The inn lay under the hills, and a few miles below the wild region where Macha had been born, in which she had grown to womanhood, eating the potatoes she had helped to produce, and watching the blessed spirits trooping up and down the skies.

"Something will get you," said Macha's mother for the hundredth time, as the girl appeared for her supper; and she was not wrong, for Fate had got hold of Macha that very night.

Strange and unaccountable are the whims of men. Here was one with wealth and rank, accustomed to all that is cultivated, witty, and beautiful among women, and yet having gone fancy-free till rather a later period of bachelorhood, he had climbed a savage mountain in an isolated corner of what he considered an uncivilized country, to fall in love with a wild girl with a wild name, who lived upon potatoes in a hovel under a rock! And he did not feel ashamed of himself. Contrasts and inconsistencies had always possessed a fascination for him. Did not the spotless white flower of the bog flourish there as purely as though it had not sprung out of the black slimy substance that held its root? And Macha, with her shining bare feet and arms, and her face like a poet's dream, was all the more enchanting to his imagination because she had sprung with her spontaneous loveliness, out of the mountain, and had been nourished and perfected between the wind and the sun, without help from 'civilization' or a lesson from 'art.'

He was going back to the inn that he might have further opportunities of seeing this girl, and yet he told himself that his admiration for her was merely an abstract idea; that, after he had seen her a few times and studied her exceptional beauty and character, he would go on his way contented, rejoicing to have perceived that Nature can be still so lovely and unspoiled in her own secret fastnesses, beyond the ken of the world. His rest was broken that night by a new excitement; and he wakened in the dawn to fancy he saw Macha walking, with her bare white feet, in the rosy light round the margin of the lake. He wanted to hear her voice again, and feel the touch of her hand. It struck him as remarkable that she had shown no shyness of him, speaking to him as naturally as if he had been her brother; and he divined that this was so because she knew nothing of ranks and classes. Only the supernatural had power to awe her, and she had felt safe and happy as soon as she had assured herself that he was a living man. Accustomed to the attentions of women, he would have felt less attraction towards Macha had she shown any desire for his return. The absence of all coquetry in her delighted him.

The girl thought of him, lyng on her straw bed in the dead of the night. There was a hole in the roof above her head, a hole that would be thatched over with heather for the winter, but at present it was good to let in the air of heaven. Through it Macha could see a star shining in the sky, like a little island of splendor in an ocean of dark blue, and the rugged twigs of the broken heather made a rough frame for the bit of glory. The beauty of Macha's face lay quenched in darkness beneath, but her soul escaped through the opening up to the kindred mystery of the star, carrying with it the memory of the event of the evening. Her mind rested with placid wonder on the occurence of her meeting with the stranger. She had not fallen in love with him, as he with her, nor did the dream him, as he with her, nor did she dream of such a thing. Round about her lay her mother, her grandmother, her little sisters, sleeping soundly, with the love of Macha asleep in their hearts. She loved them passionately, and had no thought or hope for herself apart from them. T owork with them hand and potatoes and turf to enable them to live foot, that they might all have enough together, without more pain than they could endure, this was the one object of her existence. Vague splendors and delicious rest and joy were, she knew awaiting them all beyond the gates of the sun. The only thing to be desired was that they might not be parted meanwhile in their purgatory on the lonely mountain. As the night crept on and the stars waxed brighter, Macha owned to herself that the 'living man' might have been 'him who lives down in the lake' after all. Pondering this doubt, she fell fast asleep.

The stranger reappeared next day, and for many days afterwards haunted the mountain. Macha had leave from her mother to accompany him in his search for the wild-flowers which, he explained to them, he wanted for scientific purposes. The little sisters frisked about them and took their share in the search dancing like young kids on the edge of precipices, with wild bright eyes and flying locks. Potatoes boiled in the cabin were eaten on the heather, and the long summer days went past like the beads on a golden rosary, told brightly through the fingers. The man was brotherly and kind with the little girls and the elder women, but he recognized a gulf between them and Macha. Their speech translated literally from the Irish, though poetic and musical enough, was not delicately correct, as his ear imagined hers to be; their swift feet were not white, nor was their clothing spotless. Macha, who bathed in the lake every morning, and hung out her yellow hair to dry in the first beams of the sun, and who wore her well-bleached draperies like a princess, could not keep young nor old from dyeing their skins and garments in the bog-holes. An instinctive personal delicacy had come to Macha with her exceptional beauty. At the end of a fortnight the stranger told himself that this mountain flower was worthy of being transplanted into the brightest parterre ever cherished by man. And what a month ago would have appeared to him only madness seemed now the most sensible course he could pursue.

Macha came into the cabin one evening in the gloaming, with a face of dismay.

"Mother!" she said, grasping her mother's arm.

"What is on you, child?"

"The sassenach is asking me to go away with him."

"Away with him?"

"He wants to give me a satin gown and a ring, and to take me to his home."

"Well, avourneen," with a long sigh, "if he makes you a true wife and is good to you, you would be better with him than here."

"Mother," cried the girl passionately, "have I vexed you, have I angered you, that you would turn me from your door?"

"Turn you away, asthore machree! Macha, are you mad? Wouldn't it be only to see you happy and well? I suppose the man has a good farm and can pay his rent. And you would be well warmed and fed, my Macha, though your mother's hearth would be blank."

"I don't want to be well warmed and fed; I am as well-off as you and the grandmother and the girshes. He would take me out to England, over the sea—away, away to the other side of the world!"

And the girl sobbed wildly on her mother's shoulder.

"Send him off then, acushla machree. Why need you break your heart about what nobody is going to bid you do? Your mother before you never wore a fine gown; and we will be hungry together as we always were."

Macha's weeping subsided a little; but only to break out again as fiercely as before.

"I cannot send him away, mother! I love him as well as you. O, why did he ever come over the mountain? Better it had been him that lives down in the lake!"

The mother stood aghast. "Holy Virgin!" she cried; "and 'tis only a score of days since we saw him first. Then, if you love him like that, my daughter, you are bound to be his wife. You must go—even to England over the sea!"

"You don't know what you are saying, mother. How could I live without seeing your face?"

"As many have to live, my Macha. Maybe he would bring you back to see us. And you might be able to send us the potato-seed, or a piece of the good flannel to keep us warm."

Macha looked piteously in her mother's eyes, and then round the familiar cabin; the storm came down upon her heart, and she flung up her arms and fell into a swoon. Her lover, arriving up the mountain, found her lying white on the heather outside the door with her head on her mother's knees, and was thus led into uttering promises which, else, he might never have made.

"It's only the heart that is too strong in her," said the poor mother sorrowfully. "It is ill to love a stranger that must part you from your own."

"I swear to bring her back," said the man eagerly. "She shall come whenever she pleases, and bring as many good things as she likes. We might even build a house in the valley below."

At this the color began to return to Macha's cheeks; and the comfortable promises sank deep into her mind.

Little by little the struggle between the new love and the old was softened away; the will of the stranger prevailed, and the marriage took place in a little rude mountain chapel, where Macha had been baptized, and where, travelling through hail, rain, and storm, she had knelt every Sunday since she had been able to walk. At the church-doors the husband reiterated the promise that he would bring her back; very soon she would return to the mountain. He almost tore his bride away, weeping and half-fainting, from the embraces of her people, from the clinging of their thin brown hands, and the kisses of their weather-beaten faces. And in spite of the promises he had just repeated, he was glad to think that he had probably seen the last of this wild mountain tribe.

(To Be Continued.)

PEARLS OF TRUTH.

The greatest difficulties lie where we are not looking for them.—Goethe.

Let us dignify the lowliest duties by a noble nature. It takes a greater man to do a common thing greatly than to do a great thing greatly.—F. B. Meyer.

One can and should ever speak quietly; loud hysterical vehemence loaming and hissing, least of all beseems him that is convinced and not only supposes but knows.—Carlyle.

He is the best who wins the most splendid victories by the retrival of mistakes, by beginning afresh. Forget mistakes. Organize victory out of mistakes.—F. W. Robertson.

Do not think of others' faults; in every person who comes near you look for what is good and strong; honor that, rejoice in it, and, as you can, try to imitate it.—John Ruskin.

By the constitution of the human intellect error constantly tends to resolve itself into nothing, and to sink into oblivion; while truth, having a real existence, remains permanent and impregnable.—George Combe.

As the shadow of cloud-masses on a plain so passes the life of man. In the midst of Life, Death surrounds us. The Pale Hunter pursues all that breathes—kings and beggar, strong and weak, are alike to him prey—F. W. Weber.

He only is advancing in life whose heart is getting softer, whose blood warmer, whose brain quicker, whose spirit is entering into living peace. And the men who have this life in them are the true lords and kings of the earth—they and they only.—Ruskin.

The mastery of self is the end of true living, and this mastery is shown, not in the negative attitude, by the things we do not do, but by that mental power that compels the mind to the positive attitude—the forcing of the mind to do that against which it rebels.—Hamilton W. Mabie.

Few such quiet things in nature have so much of the sublime in them as the spectacle of a poor but honerable-minded youth, with discouragement all around him, but never-dying hope within his heart, forging, as it were, the armor with which he is destined to resist and overcome the hydras of this world, and conquer for himself in due time a habitation among the sunny fields of life.—Carlyle.

AN EAST INDIAN KNIGHT.

His Brave and Noble Act Broke Through the Laws of His Caste.

Major-General Younghusband writes to the London Times: "May I hope that you will find space in your columns for the following extract of a letter received by last mail from Captain Leslie Younghusband, Inspecting Officer Imperial Troops:—

"That poor boy of the Central India Horse, Cadell, died here, Jodhpur, in the house of enteric fever, These men here did what I suppose no other natives in India of their class would have done, when there was not any absolute necessity for it, and for almost a stranger, simply because he was a soldier. Sir Pertab Singh, his brother, and two other officers helped Mayne and I to put Cadell into his coffin and to carry the coffin down stairs to the carriage, and again at the cemetery. You know what this is for a high-caste Hindu to do. We had an escort of cavalry. Mayne read the service. The Resident and one or two more who belonged to this place were away in camp.

"The Sir Pertab Singh above-mentioned is Maharajah Pertab Singh, K. C. S. I., the regent of the Jodhpur State Rajputana, and uncle of the ruler, who is a minor. He is a man of the highest caste and bluest blood in India, the genealogy of the family going back to before the Christian era.

"Lieutenant Cadell was not a British official employed at Jodhpur, he was not a personal friend of the Maharajah, but he was a brother soldier. Those who have lived in India know how powerful must have been Sir Pertab Singh's resolutions when he broke through the laws of his caste in the action he took. Putting this aside, I do not think we can withhold our admiration from the Regent of a State, who, with his brother, personally aids in the last sad offices to a British officer. There is a thrilling incident related by Lord Roberts in his Life, of an encounter on foot with a wild boar and the author and Sir Pertab Singh, where the latter was severely wounded."

LIGHT BREAD.

In baking bread it is wrong to put it into a very hot oven, for the great heat kills the yeast plant before it has had time to grow, and makes the bread heavy. The oven for bread should only be slightly heated, and gradually allowed to get hotter. Bread baked in this way is sure to be very light, and rises to an astonishing degree.

ROUND THE WHOLE WORLD

WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE GLOBE.

Old and New World Events of Interest Chronicled Briefly—Interesting Happenings of Recent Date.

A horse car line to the Pyramids has been authorized at Cairo.

Prince Ernst von Windischgratz, who was robbed by Corsican brigands a month or two ago, died recently of consumption at Ajaccio.

M. Levat informs the Academie des Sciences that steel tempered in commerical carbolic acid is much superior to that tempered in water.

Fishing in the lakes of Killarney seems to have been destroyed by the recent bog slide. Only seven salmon have been killed since it happened.

One of the potsherds, inscribed with the name of Themistocles, with which the Athenians voted for his ostracism in 471 B. C., has been discovered at Athens.

Islington refuses to have a public library even when it can have one for nothing. The parish has rejected by a large majority an offer of $50,000 for such a library.

Mlle. Conedon, the Paris young woman who is in communication with the Angel Gabriel, has moved into Belgium, where the Bishop of Liege has given her his benediction.

A prophet is not without honor save in his own county. The Guildhall Library in London has refused to accept a bust of the late Joseph Whitaker, whose "Almanac" is one of the most useful books ever devised.

Marseilles is worked up because the city authorities have ordered the street venders, and especially the fish-wives, to employ the ordinary scales instead of the old-fashioned Roman balances they had used from time immemorial.

Fifty thousand marks have been appropriated to the Russian budget to the development of the practical uses of the Rontgen rays. Prof. Friedrich of Vienna announces that he is able by the use of the rays to find out whether a person is dead or not.

Masses said for a dead man's soul are a charity, and therefore no legacy duty need be paid on money left for that purpose, according to a recent decision of the Irish Court of Appeal. It is the first time that the question has come up in a superior court in Ireland or England.

Frau Bohme, alias Mother Sedan, the German camp follower who distinguished herself by giving birth to a son on the battlefield while the fight was going on, has died at Gottitz. Her boy was christened in the trenches around Paris, Crown Prince Frederick standing godfather.

Paris is gloating over the detention in quarantine at Bougival of a little London steamer having on board some cargo that came from Bombay, as it brings out the fact that Paris is now a seaport, Bougival has been hitherto famous chiefly for demi mondaine boating parties and suppers.

Daubigny's "Banks of the Olse" was sold to an American for 68,000 francs at the recent Vever sale in Paris. This is the highest price yet obtained for a Daubigny at auction. Three Corots sold for 32,000, 30,000, and 28,700 francs, and a little Meissenier 6 1-4 by 4 1-2 inches brought 94,000 francs.

A British Dr. Rainsford recently presented himself at a county ball at Chelmsford and delivered an address to the dancers on the wickedness of their ways. He said he could not understand people enjoying themselves when there was a judgment to come. After he had withdrawn the dancing went on.

Church cars are a recent Russian improvement. They are intended for the Siberian Railroad. The cars look like ordinary first-class carriages, but the windows are shaped like those of Byzantine churches. One-third of the space shut off by the holy gates, is devoted to the priests, the rest is for the congregation.

One-third of the Duchesse de Montpensier's estate goes to her grandson, the Infante Luis Fernando. The rest is divided between the Comtesse de Paris and Prince Antonio de Montpensier. The palace of Sant' Elmo in Seville is bequeathed to the Archbishop of Seville to be made into a seminary, and $1,000 is given to the Pope, on condition that he will say mass for her soul.

ARMENIAN HEROINES.

It has been commented upon as somewhat strange that in the year of massacre in Armenia no man of that country has risen to the stature of a hero, gathered around him a band of his countrymen, and, if nothing better, died fighting. There is much to account for the submissiveness of the Armenians and if their men have given no conspicuous evidence of valor, the Armenian women have afforded ample proof of heroism. On several occasions, when resistance was hopeless and when confronted by the alternative of Islam and worse or death, they have welcomed the latter by throwing themselves from lofty rocks or into rivers. There have been and there are heroines among the Armenian women.

MAMMA HAD NOT FORGOTTEN.

No, daughter, just tell the young man that he can never take you sleigh riding with a sleepy-looking old horse like that.

Why, mamma, that's false pride.

Nothing of the sort. It's just common sense. It is plain that the horse was chosen because he can be driven with one hand.