

THE WITCH OF PLUM HOLLOW.

(Written for the Home Journal.)

IN A RURAL DISTRICT, not far from the town of Brockville, Ontario, lived a woman, known from the Atlantic to the Pacific as "The Witch of Plum Hollow." This remarkable woman's life was one bundle of contradictions. She used to relate that she was born near the town of Belturbet, Ireland, of noble parentage, but, forgetting her high social position, she followed the dictates of her heart, and eloped with her father's coachman. Her husband died not long afterwards, and she made a second choice—this time unhappily. A separation soon followed, and she determined to make use of a gift bestowed upon her by Heaven at the time of her birth—that of being able to foretell the future. She asserted likewise that she had solved the mysteries of astrology, and an old worm-eaten chest was pointed out to the visitor to her cabin, as containing the documents from which she derived the knowledge of her mysterious art. Her home was an old log cabin, and the searcher after the future was conducted up an old creaking stair, and, upon stating the time of his or her birth, the past, present and future of their lives was revealed in all the moods and tenses. Most remarkable things did she relate, and people upon quitting her abode, said, truly she surpasses Moll White of Sir Roger de Coverly fame, or the more ancient beldame of the broomstick, viz., the Witch of Endor. She was visited by high and low alike, and the walls of her cabin were adorned with the names of people from all over the American continent—not the least of which was that of a prominent Wall street man.

For sixty years Mother Barnes, that was her right name, practised her art, and she is still believed in by thousands of people. Persons of undoubted veracity positively affirm that she has revealed to

them where lost articles might be found. One thing is certain, she could describe people and places accurately, though she had never seen them. The question now arises, was this woman a mind reader, an adept in occult sciences, an impostor, or what? The answer is as much a mystery as the round tower near her old home in Belturbet.

L. C.

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