

Choice Literature.

MISTRESS AND MAID

One June day in 1866 the people in an Irish hamlet came out to bid good-bye to a woman who was going away. It was only Hannah McCosh, who was ugly and stingy and bitter-tongued, and whom they had seen every day at work with the plow or the pigs for thirty years. Yet they stood about looking at her with a certain awe and sense of novelty as they would if she had suddenly died. She was "going to Ameriky," which really was further off than death.

Hannah was a squat, black-a-vised, little woman, with the waddling walk which comes from long carrying of burdens on the head. Her muscles were enormous, her skin had burned a leathery yellow in the sun, her hands were horny, in short, she showed, like a draught horse, that she had all her life been a beast of burden.

Her brother James had borrowed a cart to take her chest to Lifford. She would walk with him alongside of it; hence, she did not put on her new shoes and stockings, but left them in the cart. It was only fifteen miles to Lifford, but, middle-aged woman as she was, she had never been there, nor away from her mother for a single night. Now she was going out alone to the other side of the world. If she had any terrors or hopes, or griefs about it she told nothing of them even to herself, as an educated woman would have done. An educated woman, too, would have felt the wonderful beauty of the gorse-covered hills, of the massed flowers in the hedges and ditches, of the cabin with its ruddy brown thatched roof, of the soft golden mist over all; would have remembered that this was her home and that she would never see it again.

But Hannah was busy with her last charges to her brothers and sisters.

"Yeez'll make my mother wear her shawl nights, Maggy. An', Katty, try 'n' take my work from the master in July. An' the first money I send, yeez'll give it to him, 'n' he'll pay intrust, till I send enough to pay the passage of one of yeez, 'n' that one is to be Bob, hekase he'll help me the most, 'n' we'll bring out the rest, wan be wan, 'n' me mother—"

"Yeez hes told us that all an hunder times, Hannah," said Katty.

"Bekase I want yeez to mind, I say, 'n' see that my mother's kep' out of the field work. She's that ambitious—yes, yeez are, Mammy!" she put her hands suddenly on the shoulders of a gaunt, gray-haired woman who stood in the door of the cabin. The two women looked at each other without a word; the others stood silent. They all knew how many years Hannah had worked to save the money which was taking her to the country where she could earn enough to drag them all out of misery and starvation. They knew it was for her mother most of all that she did it, there was not an atom of her flesh, nor a drop of her blood which she would not spend for her old mammy. Yet nobody had ever put it into words. The Scotch-Irish are a taciturn race.

James, standing by the cart, shuffled from one foot to the other. "The mornin's goin'," he mumbled.

Hannah turned and wobbled from one to the other, pecking a kiss on their faces. "Ise'll send every penny—yeez'll come out—Bob first—wan be wan—'n' my mother!"

She was back by the old woman again. Her mother gave a queer, pitiful laugh. "Ise'll see yeez again beyant the grave, me lamb; but not in Ameriky. Ise'll never live to see that country."

Hannah said nothing. She reached up to kiss her mother, and then suddenly dropped her head on her breast like a child for a moment. Katty and Maggie burst into sobs; and when the cart started they ran by Hannah's side, holding her dress and crying loudly. But she trudged along without a word. She was very pale, and the sweat broke on her forehead, but she did not once look back.

While Hannah was going towards the west that day, another woman halfway round the world was coming to meet her. This was Susan Peyton, granddaughter of Mrs. Deborah Peyton, but heir to very few of her acres. The greater part of Isaac Peyton's land went to pay the taxes, and when the remainder was divided among the descendants of his eleven children the share of each was small.

Susan had married a young doctor in Philadelphia, and they were now upon their wedding journey. She was a practical girl, and the thoughts of the little house which he had rented and furnished, and of the delight of arranging her pretty wedding presents in it, mingled largely with the raptures of her love for her Philip.

"The house is in a very unfashionable quarter, Susie," he said one day; "and we cannot afford to keep two servants."

"I understand; I quite understand! I am going to be very thrifty and cut an extremely small coat out of our cloth now. After a while, when you have a great practice, we will move into a fine neighbourhood and go into society. As for the one servant you will see how I shall manage! I will have her young and energetic and neat and pretty. I myself can cook and sew and bake and brew. The Peyton women are all capable, you know. So the little bit of work will be done early in the day, and then the maid shall put on her cap and apron ready to open the door, pretty and smiling for you; and I shall wear one of my wedding gowns and receive you à la grande dame in the parlour!"

After the doctor and his wife had been at home for a month or two he remembered this pleasant picture.

"You did not find your young, pretty maid, Susy, eh?" he said. "Your woman might be a hundred, and as for ugliness she is a prodigy. And you? You are not the gay, grand dame in your wedding robes when I come home. This gown is gingham, and you look pale and anxious."

"I was afraid I had burned the meat. It worried me a little."

"Why does not the woman cook the dinner?"

"Hannah? Oh, she cannot cook."

"I saw you dusting the parlour this morning. Why did she not do that?"

"Oh, Hannah cannot clean a room."

"Well, I can testify that she cannot wait on table. Is she purely ornamental? Merely a thing of beauty?"

"Don't make fun of the poor soul, Philip. She is trying so hard! I am teaching her. She worked in the fields at home."

Doctor Snow did not often meddle with his wife's department of their home. But a few weeks later he said to her:—

"It seems to me that to accomplish good work requires the proper tool. When I have to cut a nerve I do not take a butcher's cleaver. That field-hand of yours is a cleaver. She will never do fine neat work for you. For the same money you could get a young, intelligent woman, who at least would not be aggressively ugly."

"Then what would become of Hannah?" said Susy, anxiously. "If she were once made a competent cook she could earn good wages. But if I turn her away who will teach her? She would become a mere scrubber and not make enough to keep her alive."

"Is it essential that Hannah should amass money?" demanded the doctor, taking up his hat.

"Yes, Philip, it is," she replied, after a little pause. "She has an old mother and brother and sisters, all wretchedly poor, in Ireland. She is trying to bring them over, to give them a chance for life here. I can help her to do it. I think I ought."

"Yes, by working yourself over the range, wearing yourself out doing menial work. Is it your duty? But you must judge for yourself, Susie," he said, gravely.

She kissed him, laughing, pinned a pink on his coat and watched him go down the street. Her eyes grew troubled and anxious. It would be so easy and pleasant to have a skilled servant and drop this load of petty incessant cares on her shoulders. Yet the chance had been given her to lift this woman's life, the lives of a whole family, to higher and safer ground.

Presently Susie laughed, with a little shrug. "It is as much my duty to quit the kitchen and do Church work, crochet slippers in aid of Foreign Missions." She said: "What is wrong now, Hannah?" as the woe-begone face appeared in the door.

"I've burned the biscuits agin, ma'am. They're coal black."

"I will come and mix some more. I'll explain the dampers to you again," said Susie, conscious of a lofty heroism.

"It be'ent no use, ma'am. I'll never understand!"

"Oh, yes you will," said Mrs. Snow, cheerfully, though her heart sank.

It was a little thing to do, this training of a cook. It seems a cheap heroism, to those who give their lives to great conquests on science, to battling with disease and famine and flood, to serve their fellowmen. But Mrs. Snow's work lasted month after month and year after year. She had other duties too as a wife and mother, in the church, in society. But she was faithful to the woman in her kitchen who her sister Emily declared would never be anything but an animal.

Emily had married a wealthy lawyer in Philadelphia, and was active in charitable and literary work. "My idea of the relation between a mistress and maid," she told Susie, "is simply work and wages. I employ skilled servants. I pay them high wages. Individually, they are no more to me than my butcher or plumber. My help to the lower classes is given through clubs and guilds and other organized methods."

Susy smiled and kept on her own way. She trained Hannah to do good work and paid her good wages. She found work in a foundry for Bob, when he came, and took Katty herself, in which act she found the reward of virtue at once: for Katty proved to be the energetic, neat, pretty maid for whom she had long ago hoped.

It was Mrs. Snow, too, who showed the sisters and brother how to invest their little savings in a building association and to buy a tiny house with them.

Then they sent for their mother and Maggy. While they were on the sea Mrs. Snow was as eager as Hannah and Katty in buying the rag carpet, the stoves, the beds, for the little home. She added some gay curtains and many trifles which would be luxurious to the woman who came from a thatched peat cabin. The doctor, who was now a firm believer in Hannah, hung up a clock and picture or two on the last day of waiting.

"Light your fires and cook the supper," he said to Hannah. "Then you can go with Katty and Bob to the Christian Street pier. The ship will be in at seven o'clock."

Mrs. Snow herself waited at the little house to welcome the mother whose children had worked so long and faithfully for her. She showed more excitement than Hannah, who went about all day without a word, her face pale and pinched.

"Are you not happy?" said Susy, impatiently.

"If it's only true, ma'am! But it's been so long. It seems as if it couldn't be true—"

"Don't you believe in your Heavenly Father at all?" exclaimed Susy, who had her grandmother's dogmatic way of haling her inferiors into righteousness.

When she came home that evening, however, she was very gentle and subdued. "I wish you had been there, Philip," she said, laughing nervously. "They are the plainest most ignorant Irish. Yet there was something very noble and fine in the children's faces as their mother crossed the threshold of the home they had made for her. As for dear old Hannah, she was so glad she was positively beautiful. The old woman has a strong, true face. Hannah led her in and said, 'You're to rest here, Mammy, as long as you live.' And then she saw me," said Susy, with a laugh and a sob, and she said, "'This is Miss Snow. If it hadn't been for her I could have done nothing.' And then I went by to shake hands; but the old woman straightened herself and kissed me on the forehead, and said, solemnly, 'May God bless you and yours, my child.' I felt sure that God heard her," Susy added, the tears in her eyes.

Doctor and Mrs. Snow live now in the large house in a fashionable quarter which she promised him. She takes an active part in the social life of the city and in many charitable works. But she is still a friend to her cook and butler, her milkman and errand boy.

"Susan," her sister Emily said lately, at a family dinner, "keeps up the old patriarchal idea of the family. She tangles her life up with the lives of every man or woman who comes near her. There are those stupid McCoshes, now. Bob has made money, and has a big house in Kensington—imitation Brussels carpets and pots of paper flowers, and that sort of thing; and Susy encourages Mrs. Bob to come to her for advice."

"She sent me cards for a reception the other day," said Susy, laughing. "But if I can persuade her to put ingrain carpets and photographs into her house instead of sham velvets and chromos, and to send Sam to college instead of giving receptions, it is missionary work as much as yours in the College Settlement."

"My ménage is perfect," said Emily, with a little heat; "and it is because I will not keep an incompetent servant

for an hour. Work and wages, that is the only bond between me and my servants. They are only parts of a machine, and a machine which must run without a jar. Now, you—if you had not busied yourself with Hannah, Bob's son Sam would not have been going to college."

"No," said Susy, "he would probably now have been shooting at a landlord from behind a peat hedge. I must take my own way, Emily. These people are all human to me. Why should I go into the slums for work, and neglect my own kitchen?"—*Rebecca Harding Davis, in The Independent.*

IDEALS.

How often in the weary way of life,
Have we beheld before us near it seemed,
That we might reach it soon, with steady strife
That nature that we've longed for, fancies seemed
Of true and noble heart, of eyes that beamed
With gladness at the thought of doing good,
Of all that prophets taught or poets dreamed
To raise men up and teach them brotherhood.

And feverish on we've pressed, but still as far,
Or farther, seemed we from the dear ideal,
As though a sailor steering by a star
Hoped ever on its shores to strike his keel.
Yet better onward press than idle drift,
There may come fulness after life's poor shift.

—W. J. S., in *The Week*.

THE DEAD GOETHE.

The morning after Goethe's death, a deep longing came over me to see his earthly shell once again. His faithful servant, Frederick, opened the door of the room where they had laid him. Stretched upon his back, he lay like one asleep, power and deep peace upon the features of his sublimely noble face. The mighty brow seemed still busy with thoughts. I longed for a lock of his hair, but reverence forbade my cutting it. The body lay nude, wrapped in a white sheet. Frederick threw the sheet open, and I was amazed at the godlike magnificence of those limbs. The chest was exceedingly powerful, broad and arched, the arms and thighs full and muscular, the feet of perfect form, and nowhere on the whole body a trace of superfluous flesh or of emaciation or shriveling. A perfect man lay in great beauty before me, and admiration made me for the moment forget that the immortal spirit had left such an habitation. I laid my hand on his breast—deep silence all around—and turned aside to give free course to my pent-up tears.—*Eckermann.*

From the *Book World* we take the following: It has been generally believed that the first printed newspaper, properly so called, is the *English Mercurie*, published in 1582 by Lord Burleigh, with the sanction of Queen Elizabeth, for the purpose of rousing the national feeling against Spain, and of allaying popular alarm at the time when the Spanish Armada was in the Channel. A French writer, M. Dubief, has, however, lately called the statement in question. He maintains that the early numbers of the publication, still to be seen in the British Museum, are in some parts only a literal translation of some Dutch "Gazettes." He, therefore, claims precedence for his own countryman, Theophrastus Renandot, alike distinguished in medicine, literature and philanthropy, who first published the *Gazette de Paris* in 1631, and dedicated the first number to King Louis XIII.

THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

A HUNAN PICTURE GALLERY.

An extraordinary volume has just issued from the Hankow Mission Press. It claims to be an exact reproduction of one of the numerous publications which are being circulated in China by the anti-foreign party. The garbage, of which it is an appalling specimen, proceeds chiefly from Changsha, the capital of Hunan, and is said to be issued in every form, in placards, hand-bills, posters, pamphlets, books; and in every style, classical Chinese and Colloquial, prose and poetry, coloured and plain. It is not possible to indicate, save in the most general manner, the blasphemous and loathsome character of these thirty-two coloured cartoons, with their explanatory letterpress, of which the originals, circulated by the boat-load up and down the Yangtse valley, have already wrought such mischief. The Lord Jesus Christ is throughout represented as a hog. The Chinese term used for the Saviour is "Tien Chu," "the heavenly Lord." Here the "Chu" is changed to "chu," the "Lord of Heaven," thus becoming the "Celestial Hog." The nature as well as the name of the hog is ascribed to Christ: while the missionaries are depicted sometimes as devils, sometimes as pigs or goats. As a further mark of infamy, Christians, native as well as foreign, are shown wearing green hats, the term "Luh mau," or "Green hat," being the worst epithet that can be applied to a Chinaman.

One picture shows the Lord Jesus Christ as crucified in the form of a hog, surrounded by worshippers, male and female, "some on their knees and some indulging in licentious merriment." Others represent Christians gouging out the eyes of their victims, and mutilating their bodies in yet more dreadful fashion. In others, Chinese braves, led by a