



The Land Beyond the Forest; Facts, Figures, and Fancies from Transylvania Volume 1

Emily Gerard

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This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can usually download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1888 edition. Excerpt: ... CHAPTER XXVI. ROUMANIAN SUPERSTITION: DAYS AND HOURS. Grimm has said that "superstition in all its multifariousness constitutes a species of religion applicable to all the common household necessities of daily life;" and if we view it as such, particular forms of superstition may very well serve as guide to the character and habits of the particular nation in which they are prevalent. In Transylvania, however, the task of classifying all the superstitions that come under our notice is a peculiarly hard one, for perhaps nowhere else does this curious crooked plant of delusion flourish so persistently and in such bewildering variety as in the land beyond the forest; and it would almost seem as though the whole species of demons, pixies, witches, and hobgoblins, driven from the rest of Europe by the wand of science, had taken refuge within this mountain rampart, aware that here they would find secure lurking-places whence to defy their persecutors yet a while. i " Der Aberglaube in seiner bunten Mannigfaltigkeit bildet gewissennassen eine Religion fiir den ganzen neideren Hausbedarf." There are many reasons why such fabulous beings should retain an abnormally firm hold on the soil of these parts, and looking at the matter closely, we find no less than three distinct sources of superstition:--First, there is what may be called the indigenous superstition of the country, the scenery of which is particularly adapted to serve as background to all sorts of supernatural beings. There are innumerable caverns whose depths seem made to harbour whole legions of evil spirits; forest glades, fit only for fairy folk on moonlight nights; solitary lakes, which instinctively call up visions of water-sprites; golden treasures lying hidden in mountain...

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