

## LITERATURE, &amp;c.

## The British Magazines.

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.

## THE EMIGRANTS.

## A STORY OF THE BACKWOODS.

A youthful newly wedded couple were preparing for the decisive step of emigration to one of the North American States: it might be called *decisive*, because, under any circumstances, they contemplated no return hither. It is unnecessary to detail all the reasons which determined these young persons to abandon their fatherland and the amenities of cultivated society, for a retired and self-denying residence amidst the primeval forests of the 'far west.' It may be sufficient to remark, that they were every way creditable to them; and that, while their wishes and expectations were moderate, their energies were braced to meet, in a firm spirit of self-relying industry and courage, whatever inconveniences or disappointments might await them. On one all important point they felt satisfied—namely, that strong mutual affection must be the foundation of every step in the path of life they had chosen. Amidst the dimness with which the visions of their futurity were blent, this only seemed clear. They were voluntarily about to leave, perhaps for ever, the luxuries and appliances of polished society, together with all the ties of kindred and friendship which had hitherto smoothed and beguiled their young life's journey, and they felt therefore, that the love must be of the nature of an enduring, self-denying tenderness, which would make them all in all to each other, and which would cheer whatever solitude, and make amends for whatever privation, they might have to encounter in their wilderness lot. On this main point then their youthful hearts were at rest: they had long been intimately acquainted with, and almost as long fondly attached to, each other. But in other respects they were also peculiarly fitted for the mode of life they anticipated, and it was probably an intuitive perception of this fact that finally influenced their decision, so they set themselves cheerily to their multifarious preparations.

'I shall make a much better farmer than I ever should a merchant I feel confident,' said George Hadley; 'and now my early penchant for edged tools, will, I hope, find useful exercise. I think I shall be able to make something better than clumey—that is, very clumsy—tables and chairs for our new home.'

'And I,' said his wife, with a fond responsive smile, 'am getting rapidly into all the mysteries of home-brewing and baking. I was not idle during my late short visit to cousin Grace, at her country cottage, though she did stare prodigiously at my anxiety to pry into the depths of everything.'

I often think of Aunt Jane's lesson, and will even have a hand in every dish we have upon the table. Aunt Jane, you must know, promised a particular provincial pudding to a very particular English gentleman. She felt sure she knew the ingredients necessary, the proportions, and how to mix them, having often done it; but alas! she knew not how: or the proper time to cook it. When she had learned to make pies and puddings, the cook or a baker finished them; here she was at fault, and to her shame and mortification the pudding was spoiled and uneatable.'

Thus they encouraged each other, and chatted over their prospects and plans, till the time of leave taking arrived. Here they did wisely also, we think: they made no formal farewells; but having incidentally mentioned their intentions to each of their friends, so as to feel assured it would not be taken amiss, they quietly slipped away by themselves; and thus, as Marion said, when she stood on the vessel's deck, and looked her last on England, the gaze was not dimmed by friendship's tears, but the past looked bright as did the future.

They had collected rather a formidable equipment of articles for personal and domestic comforts, as it was one of their aims to retain as many of the *agremens* of the past as their future position would justify or admit of. In one particular they practised praiseworthy self-denial: they were both passionately fond of music, but, fearing lest this pursuit should tempt them to sacrifice to it too much of their time, after some consultation they agreed to take no musical instruments or music with them. We shall just add, that they had unitedly about two thousand pounds; a capital which would go but a little way in their rank in Britain, but which is ample for a settler in a colony, who is contented to begin moderately.

After a pleasant voyage George and Marion Hadley landed in New York. There they immediately sought, and soon obtained information, as to the best district to which to proceed. For the most part things went favorably. They secured a farm, partially cleared, which the occupant, from various misfortunes, was obliged to resign, and which their romantic wish to be alone induced them to prefer to others, from its isolation, and being rather out of the track which the tide of emigration seemed likely to take. They had a fancy to keep their home retired amidst the wilds, even should townships arise at no great distance around them.

At the last place on the borders of civilization, our emigrants provided supplies of such additional things as they seemed likely to want, with waggons and assistants to convey them to

their destination. This was the most toilsome part of their long journey; still novelty, curiosity and longings, and even the suspense of hope, made it pass gladsomely. But yet, hopeful and light-hearted as were Mr and Mrs Hadley, it was not in human nature, when their future resting-place was reached, not to exchange a look that seemed to say, 'Shall this desolate spot ever become the paradise we have dreamed of?' The fence, originally but partial, was now lying broken down and destroyed: the unsightly stumps and tangled ground, a half ruined log house, and the dark interminable forest, amidst whose gloomy recesses, the strong breeze was sighing what sounded more like a melancholy dirge than a cheerful welcome—these were the dark features. But the summer sun shone gloriously; a cluster of majestic trees shaded and sheltered the dwelling; a few apple trees were even now bending beneath their load of fruit, and some cultivated rosebushes showed that here a garden once had smiled, and might smile again. The house was hardly fit to shelter the newly arrived with their goods and chattels; their first care, therefore, was to arrange for assistance in the erection of a new and more commodious dwelling. This, where wood was so plenty, and wood nearly all that was required, was soon accomplished. The walls were of rough logs, inside they were neatly boarded, and afterwards varnished: the roof was also of boards, with tar and bark instead of tiling or slate; there was a light and spacious kitchen, and above it a comfortable room, intended for guests: there was no hall, but directly opening from the kitchen was a good apartment, which might be called a parlour from its furniture and appointments; and still within, leading from it, was the chamber, or *sanctum sanctorum*—very snug, yet light and cheerful, its window looking to a pleasant glade in the solemn wood, where Marion felt sure they would find some agreeable walk, and in fact they did find so many, that on that side they allowed the stately trees to remain in their ancient majesty. Hardly was the house made habitable, ere the team was at work for the autumn sowing; and then succeeded winter, with its fence-making, and almost equally important in-door employments, completing the domestic comforts; and then they called their home 'Young Hope Farm.'

But it is not our intention to follow these settlers through all the details of their transatlantic residence. Suffice it to say they prospered. Their moderate wants were soon abundantly supplied from their own farm, and chiefly by the work of their own hands; for, except in spring and harvest, one stout servant girl was all their help. Marion had a small dairy; she had poultry of the finest kinds in abundance, and she raised in the garden the only ornaments they cared for—the flowers of their country. George cultivated excellent fruit; he followed his plough, and superintended in person every operation of the farm; while for healthful recreation, and a pleasant variety to their table, he had his gun and plenty of unrestricted game. In the evening they had few well chosen books, or if busily engaged with their hands, they often joined their voices in some of the melodies of home, and concluded with a grateful hymn of praise. Happily passed their time, not a moment unemployed; and they cast not one 'longing, lingering look behind.' But, monotonous as to some this life might appear, unvaried by friendly greetings or pleasant re-unions, and uncheered by Sabbath bell or social worship, yet one or two incidents befell Mr and Mrs Hadley of interest far surpassing the average of those in our every day existence; and these it is our chief object to narrate, as tending to illustrate how a self-possessed demeanor and a generous heart will meet exigencies the most trying, and eventuate in results the most satisfactory.

The following, as the preceding incidents, are strictly true. One of them we should especially shrink from having the hardihood to invent; and it is another proof of the trite remark, that the romance of real life is often more highly wrought, and more deeply affecting than any fiction, however well drawn:—

One hot bright day in the early harvest of the year succeeding their arrival in America, Mrs Hadley was engaged in the cheerful, cleanly kitchen, making preparation for their mid-day meal, of which several laborers in the harvest field had also to partake. Her husband, as usual, superintended his work, and even the servant girl had gone out to assist. Mrs Hadley had her face turned from the window; but as she saw one shadow after another darken the opposite wall, she raised her head to glance at the wooden clock, to see if it were possible the dinner hour had brought her laborers from the field. What was her surprise and consternation to see the dark figures of several Indians walk into her presence with noiseless tread, and in utter silence. She had always felt an undefined but extreme dread of these savages, often represented as so terrible, and had shudderingly imagined such a circumstance as now occurred, but hitherto she had never seen any of them, so that the novelty, the suspicion, and her unprepared situation, caused her heart to sink within her. It was only for a moment, however.

When two men had entered she was relieved to see them followed by a young woman, carrying on her shoulder a little child; and whose timid stealing steps formed a striking contrast to the bold and confident bearing of the men. Mrs Hadley, rallying her courage, and endeavoring to appear quite unmoved, courteously greeted the intruders. Though they could not understand the import of her words, her gesture and her smile were nature's well understood telegraph of kindli-

ness and welcome. They exchanged one syllable, it seemed to her of satisfaction, and continued to gaze earnestly at every object they saw around them. One of them was tall, and seemed advanced in years; the other was young, and was the husband of the female. Mrs Hadley, observing that the latter was almost sinking from fatigue and heat, took the child from her arms, carressed, and gave it a large piece of white bread, which it eagerly ate, and then a draught of new milk. She then lifted from the ample pot that hung over the fire, a mess of savoury soup, which she placed on the table, with spoons, pointed to her uninvited guests to eat. They looked at each other, at the food, and at her, but said and did nothing. Eager to propitiate their good will, as well as anxious to fulfil the duties of hospitality to any of the brotherhood of man, the hostess seated herself at the table, took a spoon and a piece of bread, and began to eat, as if inviting and showing her guests the example. She then resigned her seat, and was pleased to see the men gravely, yet with the utmost propriety, eat as they had seen her do, though in all probability they had never handled a spoon before. Meanwhile the female had squatted down at a respectful distance from her lord and father; and Mrs Hadley, recollecting that the Indian squaws do not eat with the men, placed before her some of the nicest of the meat and vegetables. The young woman—for she seemed scarcely above sixteen—looked sad and very gentle, yet smiled thankfully and admiringly at the kind and comely white woman.

Short time sufficed for the strangers to make a plentiful meal, after which, seeing a pitcher of water by, they drank eagerly, and then with a gesture of stately courtesy, stalked away, having hardly uttered a word during their visit. As they were departing, Mrs Hadley, seeing the child much attracted by a handkerchief she wore of many-colored silk, took it from her shoulders and spread it over the poor babe's uncovered skin, to protect it from the fierce rays of the noon-day sun. The mother more than once looked back with a deeply grateful smile, and very soon they were all out of sight amidst the forest.

Mr Hadley was much annoyed by this occurrence, and thought it only prudent that his wife should not again be left alone, for fear of a similar or worse alarm. They saw no more Indians, however, till the fall of the following year. By that time they had a little girl of their own; and one day when Marion was lifting her from her cot in the inner room, she suddenly saw a dark and frightfully painted countenance glaring in at the low window. Again she preserved her coolness and composure, though the effort was even greater than before; for ere she could call her husband, who was not far off, the house was surrounded by eight or ten fearful looking savages. This time, as no females were with them, Mrs Hadley justly concluded that they were a war party, and might be bent on mischief. With her child in her arms she hastened into the kitchen, and warned the servant girl of their unwelcome neighbors; commanding her on no account to display the least distrust or displeasure. Hardly had she time for this communication, when the armed warriors crowded into the house, unceremoniously, yet with the appearance of harmlessness; and she soon had the pleasure to recognise among them the elderly man who had formerly visited her. He advanced to the fireplace and looked as if for the great boiling pot; but there was none there that day. The hostess, however, understood him; and smiling at him (she afterwards averred it a very faint-hearted smile), as if to let him know she did, she brought a large bowl of sweet milk and a basket of wheat cakes, inviting the Indians to partake, which they did, but without seating themselves. Mr Hadley soon after walked in, his gun on his arm, and looked aghast when he saw by whom his kitchen was occupied. One of the Indians instantly wished to examine his fowling-piece. Alarmed at the danger, and anxious to make an impression on the wild strangers, George first fired it off at one of his own pigs that strayed near. Most of the savages started, uttered exclamations of surprise, and then leaped to the dead animal to examine it more closely. When he saw their excitement and frantic gestures, he began to fear he had not acted wisely; certainly he had not exercised the prudence and self command his Marion had done. Some of the warriors remained within the threshold, and appeared acquainted with the use of firearms; so George loaded again, as composedly as he could, while his brave wife observed suspended round the neck of one of them a well used tobacco pipe. By her suggestion her husband offered a supply of the weed he never used himself, but kept for the use of his visitors and laborers. This courtesy was received by the Indians with every mark of satisfaction, and shortly afterwards they took their wished-for departure. After this, scarcely a year passed that some parties of Indians did not call at the farm, and never without interchanging marks of hospitality and good will, till it seemed to be generally understood that these white people and the Red Men were friends and brothers.

A few seasons now glided peacefully past with Mr and Mrs Hadley. They still enjoyed, in a great measure, their beloved retirement; only one family had become domiciled within five miles of them. But that is near neighborhood in the backwoods; so these solitary families occasionally interchanged visits. 'Few and far between' were they, it must be said, except when some neighborly assistance was required of either. Perhaps it was a candle-making, or a grand maple-sugar boiling, or it

was to look after the horse during a confinement; on the whole, it was agreeable to all parties. Mr and Mrs Oswald had, like our friends the Hadleys, emigrated on the strength of love and industry; but they were not so fortunate, perhaps not so judicious, as the others. The lady had been tenderly nurtured, and was little fitted to sustain the roughness an emigrant family has, especially at first to encounter. Moreover, her health was delicate, and her family increased rapidly: three children they had carried with them, but only one survived to reach their future home. This damped the youthful pair at the outset. Still Mr Oswald and his interesting wife were happy, for they were contented and affectionate; and the husband, (an energetic Irishman) was indefatigable in industry, and a desire to do well.

[To be Concluded.]

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.

## CAPTAIN POSITIVE.

A French veteran with one arm was seated before the door of his neat cottage one pleasant evening in July. He was surrounded by several village lads, who with one voice intrusted him to commence his promised story. The old man took his pipe from his mouth, wiped his lips with the remaining hand, and began thus:—

'In my time boys, Frenchmen would have scorned to fight with Frenchmen in the streets as they do now. No, no; when we fought, it was for the honor of France, and against her foreign enemies. Well, my story begins on the 6th November, 1812, a short time after the battle of Wiazma. We were beating a retreat, not before the Russians, for they kept a respectful distance from our cantonments, but before the biting cold of their detestable country, more terrible to us than Russians, Austrians and Bavarians put together. For the last few days our officers had been telling us that we were approaching Smolensko, where we should be certain of finding food, fire, brandy and shoes; but in the meantime we were perishing in the ice, and perpetually harassed by bands of Cossack riders.'

'We had marched for six hours without pausing to draw breath, for we knew that repose was certain death. A bitter wind holed snow-flakes against our faces, and now and then we stumbled over the frozen corpses of our comrades. No singing or talking then! Even the grumblers ceased to complain, and that was a bad sign. I walked behind my captain: he was a short man, strong built, rugged and severe, but brave and true as his own sword blade. We called him Captain Positive; for, once he said a thing, so it was—no appeal—he never changed his mind. He had been wounded at Wiazma, and his usually red face was now quite pale; while the pieces of an old white handkerchief which he had wrapped round his legs were soaked with blood. I saw him first move slowly, then stagger like a drunken man, and at last he fell down like a block.'

'*Morbleu!* captain,' said I bending over him, 'you can't lie there.'

'You see that I *can*, because I *do*,' replied he, pointing to his limbs.

'Captain,' said I, 'you mustn't lie thus; and raised him in my arms, I managed to place him on his feet. He leaned on me and tried to walk, but in vain: he fell once more, dragging me over with him.'

'*Jobin*,' said he, 'tis all over. Just leave me here, and join your column as quickly as you can. One word before you go—at Vazreppe, near Grenoble, lives a good woman, eighty two years old, my—my mother. Go to see her, embrace her, and tell her that—that—tell her whatever you like, but give her this purse and my cross. That's all.'

'Is that all, captain?'

'I said so. Good by, and make haste.'

'Boys, I don't know how it was, but I felt two tears freezing on my cheeks.'

'No, Captain,' cried I, 'I won't leave you: either you shall come with me, or I will stay with you.'

'I forbid your staying.'

'Captain, you might just as well forbid a woman talking.'

'If I escape, I'll punish you.'

'You may place me under arrest then, but just now you must let me do as I please.'

'You're an insolent fellow!'

'Very likely captain; but you must come with me.'

'He bit his lips with anger, but said no more. I raised him, and placed his body across my shoulders like a sack. You may easily imagine that while bearing such a burden I could not move as quickly as my comrades. Indeed I soon lost sight of their columns, and could perceive nothing but the white silent plain around me. I moved on, and presently there appeared a band of Cossacks galloping towards me, their lances in rest, and shouting their fiendish war-cry.'

The captain was by this time in a state of total unconsciousness, and I resolved, cost what it might, not to abandon him. I laid him on the ground, covered him with snow, and then crept under a heap of my dead companions, leaving, however, my eyes at liberty. Soon the Cossacks reached us, and began striking with their lances right and left, while their horses trampled the bodies. Presently one of these rude beasts placed his hoof on my left arm and crushed it to pieces. Boys, I did not say a word: I did not move, save to thrust my right hand into my mouth to keep down the cry of torture; and in a few minutes the Cossacks dispersed.