

THE LOST PIONEER.

Hurrah! Hurrah! for Canada,
Never crush'd by tyrant's sway
Throughout thy wide Dominion,
The aged, young, and gay
Come rally round the standard now,
Come rally to the stand,
With hearts united to the fair,
In this our forest land.

Long years of toil we left the soil,
Our good old native shore,
To build our homes upon this earth:
Where trees had stood of yore,
We swept the bosom of our fields
And labor'd with our hands
To build our cabins and our towns
Within the lotted lands.

By sail we cross'd the ocean wide,
And brav'd the tide of chance.
No steam had we to plow the sea
From England or France.
We brav'd the dangers of the deep
With God, our pioneer,
Through calm and through the chilly breeze
To plant our footsteps here.

Hurrah! for a land of freedom,
Where health and comforts dwell,
The virtuous Queen of England,
And hearts we love as well.
May our cause for ever prosper,
Our banners, free from stain,
With peace and plenty in our land,
And good Victoria's reign.

In this land of lakes and valleys,
Where gently glides the stream,
And on the side of mountains glow,
The moon's bright rising beam
Sheds its splendor all around us,
Where aged cotters dwell,
Music from the harp hath found us
Its loving memories tell.

Our fathers rest beneath the sod,
Hearts worthy of the name,
They nail'd their colours to the mast,
While sailing o'er the main,
They bore the battle of the breeze,
While seeking favor'd gain,
And swept away the stately trees
In their triumphant reign.

Hamilton.

AMOS PITT.

In consideration of our appreciative review of his poems in a late number of the *News*, Mr. Amos Pitt has had the kindness to send us the manuscript of the above as *primitive*, for which we beg him to accept our most cordial thanks.—
ED. C. I. N.

HELEN.

BY AUSTIN LESLIE.

I.

Such is the simple title of my story. It is a short name—only five letters of the alphabet: to those who delight in aristocratic high-sounding names a very ordinary plebeian one indeed; but to me it is the name among the names of women, at the sight of which, in a playbill or a tale, in a newspaper paragraph or a milliner's circular, on massive door or modest window-plate, a thrill goes through my heart, and I feel a beating there that is not easily hushed. Yet why should I try to still it? Are not all the happiest hours of my life associated with that dear name? At the mention of it there seem to float before my eyes the waves of golden brown hair that encircled as with a halo the sweet face, and the soft violet eyes are looking again into mine, and the old well-remembered tones seem to swell in music upon my ear. What folly to speak thus when I shall listen to them no more for ever!

Yet I still love to think of by-gone days—it is the only happiness that is left me now—days that were ushered in with clouds of crimson glory, filling the east with their roscate hues, deepening on through the noon into dazzling sunshine and an unclouded sky; but the promise of a glorious day went down in thunder and lightning and furious storm. Even so has it been with me; and the storm, alas, may not have spent its force, but be gathering fresh strength to pour out its vials of wrath on my devoted head. Well, I have borne it yet, and my heart is well-nigh seared and scarred with wounds and sorrows; but I shall bear it to the end. What more pleasure can the world have in store for me? Let the rain fall in pitiless showers and the bleak wind howl around the gnarled and crooked trees that stand crouching before the blast. I shall stand firm unto the end. I can bear my fate.

What bitter, dark, brooding sense of evil is this that is filling my heart? What other fate do I deserve than this that has now come upon me? And yet it is sweet to look back on the lost days—the days that are no more. And a balmy breath of summer wind seems to steal over my spirit, and a voice of unutterable love to come borne on the whispering breeze, telling me that there is a solace for the wounded heart and a balm for the broken spirit. Ah, I wonder if that balm will ever be mine!

All is yet as clear and distinct to my mental vision as on that happy day when I put my knapsack on my back, and with canvas and colours, and all the other paraphernalia of a landscape-painter, took my way into the regions of flood and fell. Ah, for those happy days when with a buoyant heart I climbed heath and hill, and filled my longing soul with the beautiful vision of creation—the tumbling brook, the roaring torrent, the heath-clad moor, the rugged mountain in all its stern and glorious majesty, watching cloud and sunshine chasing each other over hill and dale, and transferring to the glowing canvas effects of storm and mist, rain and sunset! Now in shady dells and silvan glades of wood and forest, catching the sheeny light cast on the tremulous foliage, and striving to depict in all its wonderful anatomy the gnarled

trunks and tapering branches of the monarchs of the wood, among wild flowers and grasses growing by the hedgerows, watching the golden tints on the ripening grain, as Autumn, with russet fingers, mellowed the wooded uplands; and again on the solemn shore, amid the glistening seaweed-covered rocks and brown-ribbed sand, with the tumbling waves and the murmur of the unresting surge—God's never ceasing music—around me. Say you that the vocation of a landscape-painter is an idle pursuit, unworthy of a cultivated mind? Let him have—as he should have—a deep reverence for the works of the Creator, and patiently persevering in his attempt to perpetuate that which he deeply reverences, striving to represent worthily something which has touched his inmost feelings, each difficulty he overcomes tends to strengthen and ennoble, each victory affords him the keenest possible delight. But why do I talk of those old days, mauling thus about past joys that can never return, that are gone for evermore, taking with them all the gladness and buoyancy of youth, and leaving behind but the wreck cast up by the waves on a barren shore?

It seems but as yesterday that I saw her as she came along the path in the wood, where I sat transferring to my canvas some exquisite ferns and foxgloves that grew together on the bank, their green and purple tints blending in perfect lusciousness of colour with the wild-flowers growing beside them. I thought her then, and I think her still (in the inmost depths of my lonely heart), the loveliest woman that God had ever made: with a slender and eminently graceful form, in all the soft roundness of budding womanhood, a perfect oval face crowned with a glory of golden-brown hair, and deep violet eyes, tender and true as the sky that is mirrored in the depths of the placid lake. I cannot describe her features; when you looked at her you knew that you were looking at something of exquisite loveliness, though it would have been difficult to describe what really formed that surpassing beauty. It was the whole design that pleased, and the soul within all. But sweeter than all else was the smile that overspread her face with a radiance as of something heavenly, and made you almost feel as if you were looking upon the face of an angel. I tried to transfer that heavenly look to canvas in a picture representing an angel cheering on a soldier in the battle of life, with bruised armour and bleeding feet, tired and wearied, and nearly overcome by the heat of the day and the ardour of his toil, but receiving fresh vigour for further noble efforts by the encouraging smile. It is but a poor attempt to depict with the unworthy pigments of this earth what cannot be limned by poor humanity; but it is to me a valuable memento, a gem of priceless worth, with which I shall not part to the date of my death—nay, not even then; for it shall be buried with me, and we shall go down to the grave together.

I can only remember now that I asked her some questions about the place—I think the nearest road to a scene I wished to paint the next day—and that this chance meeting gradually ripened into acquaintance, and then into love. I have in my writing-desk some lines I wrote on a scrap of paper that day after she had passed out of my sight, which I keep, not from their poetical merit, but as a memorial of old times. Here they are; very silly I may think them now, but I did not think so when I wrote them:

"I have seen her, my love, my queen,
And the flowers were kissing her feet;
Daisies and lilies in white and green
Looked up her coming to greet:
And a sunbeam stole through the leafy sheen
Where the oak and the linden meet.

She is sweet as the breath of the spring
That comes laden with scent of flowers.
When the lark soars aloft on the wing
In the blush of the blossoming hours,
And the soft-voiced thrush and the linnet sing
In the shade of their leafy bowers.

My love with the violet eyes,
And the hair of golden brown,
Where the sunshine for ever nestling lies
Half hid in the radiant crown,
Till the glowing light of even dies
Away over hill and dale!

Winds, breathe soft on her head!
Kiss, O ye flowers, her feet!
O rosy sun, in the western red,
Gently upon her beat;
Beat till the rose of love is spread
Where the oak and the linden meet!"

From that day all attempts at landscape-painting were at an end; for me henceforth this was a holy memory of the past. Everything wore a glory look, as of Eden in its time of fairest loveliness: each bosky island was as Prospero's enchanted isle, each lake like the sea of glass on the eternal shore; the mountains seeming to stretch away to the unseen and the illimitable, where no shadows ever cloud their purple slopes, and where no mist ever rests on their lofty summits.

But above all her face was ever before me, coming between my vision and the scene I endeavoured to depict, so that at morn, or noon, or even, wherever I might be, I saw always the soft tender violet eyes looking at me, and the golden glory of her waving hair shining before my eyes.

II.

On inquiring from my landlady, I found that my rustic beauty was the daughter of a farmer who had died some time before, and that she now lived in the village of Gleneden with her widowed mother; and I was not long in getting an opportunity of calling upon her. Her fa-

ther, from what I heard of him, had evidently been an intelligent, well-educated man, and Helen being his only child, he had given her an education above the common wants of the district, and had looked upon her as the very apple of his eye. I found her mind as well informed as her appearance was prepossessing, and in those happy days gave myself wholly up to the sweets of love. Their little cottage was the prettiest in the whole village, with ivy and honeysuckle climbing up the porch; the summer breeze wafting into the pleasant little room the fragrance of the roses that grew up the wall and clustered about the window-sill. And so the days passed on, each more delightful than the one preceding, until I thought that if there was heaven on earth it was surely here. At last I asked her to be my wife. I can yet remember the conversation that passed between us as we sat on a mossy bank in the wood, with the brook at our feet purling over the pebbles in its bed, its tinkling cadence, soft and low, bearing a soothing dreamy feeling over the spirit, and mingling with the song of the birds and whisper of the falling leaves.

"My darling!" And I put my arm round her yielding waist, and looked into her soft eyes that were cast down to the ground, but when I spoke looked into mine with the light of love beaming from them.

"Will you be my wife, Helen? Do you think you love me well enough to be that? I know I can never love another as I love you, and until I saw you I did not know what it was to love. Without you to share it life will henceforth not be worth living for; but with you, it will be an Eden for ever. Will you accompany me on the voyage, dearest, when I will try to shield you from all trouble and care? Helen, will you be mine for ever and ever, till death parts us?"

"Yes, Arthur. I have loved you from the first."

She spoke in low gentle tones, loud enough, however, for me to hear, and to me they were the sweetest words they had ever listened to. I clasped her to my beating heart, and covered her cheek with kisses.

"Ah, but, Arthur, perhaps you'll get tired of me, and be ashamed of your village maiden when you take me among your own kindred."

"Never, my darling! Though all the world should forsake you, I will be near for you to lean upon, and to comfort and love you for ever and ever, so help me God!"

Were these idle words I spoke to her, without even the shadow of truth in them? God knows I loved her then, and love her still, as I never shall love any on earth again, and that what I spoke I spoke out of a true heart.

The sun was setting behind the far-off hills as we took our way homeward, happy as ever lovers were happy on this side the grave. We spoke little—when the heart is full the tongue is often most silent—but we knew the thoughts that were in each other's hearts, and her looks, at least, were more eloquent than words. And as we parted at the stile that led to the village, we plighted our troth again, and with a burning kiss and a close embrace parted, her golden hair glistening in the tender sunshine as she slowly walked by the beech-trees towards her home.

I returned to the woods, and walked there till the moon shone out on the sleeping earth, and shed her silver radiance through the stillness of the glade. I sat again on the mossy bank where we had told our love, listening to the eternal murmur of the stream, that seemed to tell of peace and happiness that would never pass away.

When I reached my lodgings in the evening I found a letter awaiting me, with the superscription, "Sir Arthur Compton, Bart." Good God! what was this? I was distantly connected with the Comptons of Grange Court; but as there were two persons not much older than myself who bore any prospect of my succeeding to the title and estates, I had always looked upon it as an idle dream, and had banished from my mind all idea of the probability of its ever happening. And now, when I least expected it, it had come true. A baronet! But to what fortuitous chance was I indebted for being thus addressed? With trembling fingers I broke the seal, and read:

"Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, July 17, 18—
"Sir Arthur Compton, Baronet.

"Dear Sir Arthur,—We have the honour of informing you that, owing to the sudden death, by a railway accident, of which you may have read in the daily papers, of Sir Charles Compton, Baronet, and his cousin, you have succeeded to the title and estates.

"We shall be glad to be continued as agents of the estates, a position which our firm has held for the last forty years.

"We are, dear Sir Arthur, your obedient servants,
"BLACKENRIDGE & MORRIS.

"P.S. As there are various matters connected with the estates which it is desirable should be attended to as soon as possible, we would suggest your coming to London at as early a date as you conveniently can."

I can scarcely now tell with what varied feelings I perused and reperused this epistle. I slept little that night, cogitating over my good luck, and wondering how my betrothed would bear the tidings which I had now to tell; for I looked upon the news as equally with myself concerning her, as she had agreed to become my wife.

I rose early, and after a long walk through the woods to calm my mind took the well-known path to the village, fully expecting to see my beloved one at the window, looking out and watching for me as was her wont. But no one was there; and when I entered I found to my disappointment, that a friend had called late on the previous evening, and asked her to go to nurse a relative who was not expected to live many days, and that she might not be back for a week. I cannot tell what a disappointment this was to me; but it was too far for me to go to her in the pressing circumstances, and not a fitting time to acquaint her with the good fortune that had befallen me. So, telling my betrothed's mother that I had to leave for London, and that I should write after I got there, I bade her good-bye, packed up my things, and went off by the next train, reaching London next morning.

I was thrown into new society on my arrival in London. Young, rich, and titled, my presence was sought at the houses of the noble and wealthy in the great city, and for some weeks after my arrival my life was one round of pleasure. Alas, I had never written to Helen since I left the sweet village of Gleneden. What with business which had to be attended to, and engagements from which I could not well extricate myself, my time had been so fully occupied that I had put off writing to her from day to day; and now that I had delayed so long I was almost ashamed to write to her. About this time I met at a ball Lady Laura Vane, the youngest daughter of an old but rather impoverished family, and my vanity was agreeably touched by the evident pleasure which Lady Laura seemed to have in my society. She was tall, lithe as a panther, with tresses black as the raven's wing, and large lustrous dark eyes, now soft and melting, as an April shower, now fierce and flashing, as they were kindled by indignation or insulted pride. Her complexion was fair for a brunette, and dazzling from its transparent beauty, except when a shade of passing emotion would deepen the delicate rose-blush on the face. In Lady Laura's presence my village maiden was forgotten altogether and I abandoned myself without reluctance to the influence of the syren. Out of her presence the old feeling of tenderness for my first love would come back to my heart, only to be dispelled at my next interview with the enchantress, until the image of my rustic beauty grew fainter and fainter, and I gave myself madly up to the seductive power that now encircled me. Not a day passed without my seeing Lady Laura. I would call for her to ride in the Park (she was a splendid horse-woman, and looked well in the saddle), or would drive her out in the new phaeton I had purchased; or in the evening I would attend her at the Opera, the envy of many a one, who would have given much for a look from her beautiful eyes.

III.

It came at last—the temptation and the fall. I met her at an evening-party at Lady Windermere's, when I thought I had never seen her look so charming; in truth she was the belle of the evening, and I was consequently not a little flattered at her bestowing so much of her attention upon me. She was a glorious dancer, and I had been in the seventh heaven of delight waltzing with her; after which, with a flushed face and a beating heart, I led her down-stairs for refreshment. There was a conservatory close by, where the delicate fragrance and cool atmosphere tempted the tired and heated dancers to rest from the excitement of the mazy whirl. It was untenanted, as most of the company were yet up-stairs, and there accordingly we went, where, at the farther end, we were quite away from the bustle of the party, and hidden by a cluster of over-arching boughs, the place seemed like a paradise after the glare and heat of the rooms above. And here was I with my Eve.

How superbly beautiful she looked as she sat down with a queenly grace beside me on the soft velvet couch! Her eyes were moist with a dreamy delicious tenderness, there was a blush as of a rose-bloom on her cheeks, and I could see her bosom rise and fall beneath the soft airy material of her dress as she panted a little after the exertion of the voluptuous dance. My blood boiled within me, my veins seemed on fire, my breath came hot and fast, and all the fierce passions of my nature raged like a thousand devils within me. I was helpless under the gaze of this enchantress, bound hand and foot in the spell of the serpent, I was entirely without the power of volition.

"What a paradise this is, after the noise and heat above!" said Lady Laura softly.

As if exhausted with the exertions of the dance, she leaned her magnificent head against my arm as we sat together, the masses of her raven hair falling over my shoulder in luxurious tresses. The distant strain from the rooms above came wafted on the ear like the melodious echo of fairy music, and the perfume from choicest flowers filled the air with a delicious fragrance that steeped the senses in Elysium. The twinkling many-coloured lamps that hung from the roof aided the enchantment, diffusing a soft magical light over the scene. As Lady Laura reclined beside me I could feel the heaving of her bosom against my heart; and all the fiery impulses of my nature, heated as they were with the wine I had drunk, burst their bonds in an uncontrollable rush of passion that carried everything before it. I clasped her madly to my breast again and again, before she had recovered sufficiently from her astonishment to free herself from my grasp.