

the very first to welcome you to Canada?" said Tom.

"But what are you doing here, my dear fellow?" said M——.

"Shaking every day with the ague," replied Tom. "Pleasant work that! But on my soul, M——, I could laugh in spite of my teeth, to hear them make such a confounded rattling in my jaws. You would think they were all quarrelling with my tongue to get out of my mouth. But this shaking mania forms one of the great attractions of this new country."

"How thin and pale you are!" said I. "This climate cannot agree with you?"

"Nor I with the climate. Well, we shall soon be quits—for to let you into a secret, I am now on my way to England."

"Impossible!"

"True!"

"And what have you done with the farm?" said M——.

"Sold it."

"And your outfit?"

"Sold that too."

"To whom?"

"To those that will take better care of both than I did. Ah! M——, such a country—such people—such rogues! It beats Australia hollow. You know your customers there. But here you have to find them out. And such a take in. Well, well, God forgive them! I never could take care of money, and one way or other they have cheated me out of all mine. I have scarcely enough to pay my passage home. But to provide against the worst, I have bought a young bear—a splendid fellow—to make my peace with my uncle. You must see him, M——; he is in the stable."

"Tomorrow we will pay a visit to Mr. Bruin," said I. "But do tell us something about yourself and your residence in the bush."

"D—n the bush!" was the slow and deliberate reply. "You will know enough about the bush by and bye. Well," he continued, stretching out his legs and yawning horribly, "I am a bad historian, a worse biographer; I don't know how the deuce you contrive, Mrs. M——, to write romances, when I can scarcely find words to relate facts. But I will try what I can do,—but don't laugh at my blunders."

We promised to be serious—no easy matter, by the bye, while looking at and listening to Tom Wilson, and he gave us at detached intervals, the following account of himself:

"My travels began at sea. We had a fair voyage and all that; but my poor dog—my beautiful Duchess—that beauty in the beast—died.

I wanted to read the funeral service over her, but the Captain interfered—the brute, and threatened to throw me into the sea along with the dead bitch, as the unmannerly ruffian called my canine friend. But I never spoke to him again during the rest of the voyage. Nothing happened worth remarking until I got to this place, where I chanced to meet your brother, and went up with him to the woods. Most of the wise men of Gotham I met upon the route, were bound to the woods; so I thought it was as well to be in the fashion. S—— was very kind; he did nothing but praise the woods. Their beauty, their comfort, their independence; and he so inspired me with the theme that I did nothing all day but sing

"A life in the woods for me!"

until we came to the woods, and then I soon learned to sing that same, as the Irishman says, on the wrong side of my mouth."

Here succeeded a long pause, during which friend Tom seemed mightily tickled with his reminiscences; he leaned back in his chair, and from time to time gave way to loud hollow bursts of laughter.

"Tom, Tom, are you mad?" said M——, shaking him.

"I never was sane that I know of," returned he. "You know that it runs in the family. But do let me have my laugh out. The woods, ha! ha! ha! I tell you what, M——, when I used to be roaming through those woods shooting, though devil a thing could I ever find to shoot, for birds and beasts are not such fools as our English emigrants, to love the woods, and I chanced to think of you and Mrs. M—— coming to spend the rest of your lives in the woods, I used to stop and hold my sides and laugh until the woods rang again. I tell you that it was the only consolation I had."

"Good heavens!" said I, "let us never go to the woods."

"You will repent if you do," said he. "Well my bones were well nigh broken before we got to D——. The roads for the last twelve miles of the journey were nothing but a succession of mud-holes, covered with the most ingenious invention for racking your limbs asunder ever thought on, called corduroy bridges—not breeches mind you,—for I thought whilst jolting up and down over them that I should arrive at my destination minus of that indispensable covering. It was night when we got to your brother's place. I was tired and hungry, my face disfigured and blistered by the unremitting attentions of the mosquitoes and black flies that rose in swarms from the river. I thought to get a private room to wash and dress in, but lord! there is no such