

The frame house is owned by the son of the same person who built and lived for years in the log-hut, for he was one of the first settlers in that part of the country. Thomas Mortimer was a raftsman, who some fifty years ago, took a fancy to the place, and commenced farming in the summer, while he and his boys went off to the woods in the winter. He was a rough, good tempered fellow, a Canadian by birth, and did very well in the course of time; for his land was good, and he could always sell his hay, potatoes, and oats at a good price to the shanties. But my story has little to do with my old friend, Mortimer, except so far as he had the good fortune to be the father of the prettiest and sauciest girl in the valley. Many a farmer and lumberman would go far out of his way to buy something from old Mortimer, just for the sake of getting a smile from Mary, who, at the time of which I am speaking, was about twenty years of age. Mary knew her power—what pretty girl does not?—but she had such a way of showing her dislike of all those whom she did not favour that many said she was too proud of her good looks and thought herself above her father's friends and visitors. She frequently made visits to the older settlements, and it was on one of these occasions that she became acquainted with two young men, who were employed as foremen in mills during the summer and in the shanty during the winter. Charles Marston was a hard-working young man of twenty-four years, with a bright, honest look in his large blue eyes, which would make you say 'here's a fellow that I can trust.' Philip Simond, the other young man, was the son of a French Canadian widow who had suddenly died in the house of the elder Marston. The wife of the latter was also a French Canadian and was an old friend of Simond's mother. Though Mrs. Marston had several children of her own, she did not hesitate to adopt the boy at the bedside of the dying woman. "One mouth more," said Marston to me afterwards, "won't hurt us, for we have enough and to spare; and then it more than repaid us to see the joyful look in that poor creature's eyes when my good wife promised to take care of little Philip."

Philip was the very opposite of his foster brother in appearance, for he had the dark hair and eyes of his French Canadian parents; but both were handsome, sturdy lads, very popular among their associates, whether rough lumbermen or gentle women. Philip was of less regular habits than the other, and as he was exceedingly passionate he was often brought into trouble among the rough companions he met in the woods, and who are always ready to make the blow follow the angry word. He was, as I have just said, of a roving disposition, without any great liking for steady work; his delight was to wander in the forest, and none of the half-breeds in the numerous shanties of the Ottawa and the smaller rivers, had a keener eye for an unsound tree or for hunting out the finest groves for timber; but this was not strange in one who could number on his mother's side many famous *bois-brûlés*, and voyageurs, whose adventurous exploits in forest and river were still remembered by the old raftsmen and formed the material for many a story on the long winter evenings when the men gathered round the roaring fires of the shanties.