



PENGUIN
CANADA

ROUGHING IT IN THE BUSH

[SUSANNA MOODIE](#) was born in Suffolk, England, in 1803. In 1831, she married John Moodie, a retired officer who had served in the Napoleonic Wars. In 1832, the Moodies and their infant daughter emigrated to Canada. Susanna's older sister [Catharine Parr Traill](#) and her husband, Thomas Traill, arrived in Canada the same year. Moodie had been published widely before she left Britain, and she continued writing poetry and magazine articles after her arrival in the colony. Her letters and journals contain valuable information about colonial life in these early years of Canada. She is the author of a number of books, including *Life in the Clearings*; *Mark Hurdlestone*, *the Gold Worshipper*; and *Matrimonial Speculations*, but is best known for *Roughing It in the Bush; or, Life in Canada*. Moodie died in 1885 in Toronto, Ontario, at the home of her daughter.

SUSANNA

MOODIE

[Roughing It in the Bush; or, Life in Canada](#)

Penguin Group (Canada), 90 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 700, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4P 2Y3
(a division of Pearson Canada Inc.)

Penguin Group (USA) Inc., 375 Hudson Street, New York, New York 10014, U.S.A.

Penguin Books Ltd, 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL, England

Penguin Ireland, 25 St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2, Ireland (a division of Penguin Books Ltd)

Penguin Group (Australia), 250 Camberwell Road, Camberwell, Victoria 3124, Australia

(a division of Pearson Australia Group Pty Ltd)

Penguin Books India Pvt Ltd, 11 Community Centre, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi – 110 017, India

Penguin Group (NZ), cnr Airborne and Rosedale Roads, Albany, Auckland 1310, New Zealand

(a division of Pearson New Zealand Ltd)

Penguin Books (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd, 24 Sturdee Avenue, Rosebank, Johannesburg 2196, South Africa

Penguin Books Ltd, Registered Offices: 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL, England

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (RRD)

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This edition is an unabridged reprint of the "second edition with additions" of
Roughing It in the Bush, published in 1852 by Richard Bentley in London, England.

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Manufactured in the U.S.A.

ISBN-10: 0-670-06505-6

ISBN-13: 978-0-670-06505-9

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication data available upon request.

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to

[Agnes Strickland](#),

Author of the "Lives of the Queens of England,"

*this simple tribute of affection
is dedicated,
by her sister.*

Susanna Moodie.

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Chronology

1803 Susanna is born on December 6 in Suffolk, England, the youngest of six daughters of Thomas Strickland, a merchant, and his wife, Elizabeth. Two sons follow the girls. [The family](#) lives at Stowe House, near Bungay.

1808 The Stricklands move to Reydon Hall, an elegant country mansion near the Suffolk coast.

1818 Thomas Strickland dies, leaving his family in genteel poverty.

1822 Susanna's first known published work, a children's story called *Spartacus*, is published.

1825 Susanna's brother Samuel emigrates to Upper Canada to learn farming in the colony.

1822–32 Susanna's poems, stories, and sketches appear in several London magazines, including *La Belle Assemblée*, the *Athenaeum*, and *Ackermann's Juvenile Forget-Me-Not*.

1830 Susanna spends several weeks in London as a guest of Thomas Pringle, a Scottish poet and magazine editor, and his wife. Pringle is secretary of the Anti-Slavery League.

1830 Susanna becomes engaged to John Wedderburn Dunbar Moodie, a thirty-six-year-old retired British military officer born in the Orkney Islands. He had spent several years in South Africa.

1831 Two anti-slavery pamphlets, containing first-hand accounts of the sufferings of former slaves Mary Prince and Ashton Warner transcribed by Susanna Strickland, are published in London.

1831 Susanna marries John Moodie on April 4 at St. Pancras (Anglican) Church, London. They move to a cottage in Southwold, [Suffolk](#), nearer Susanna's family.

1831 Publication of *Enthusiasm, and Other Poems*, prompted by Moodie's intense but short-lived conversion to Congregationalism, a Nonconformist sect.

1832 Catherine Mary Josephine (Katie) is born on February 14.

1832 Catharine Parr Strickland, Susanna's sister, marries John Moodie's fellow officer Thomas Traill on May 13 in Suffolk.

1832 On July 1 Susanna and John Moodie sail from Leith, Scotland, for Quebec on the brig *Anne*. Thomas and Catharine Parr Traill leave Greenock, Scotland, two weeks later, and arrive in Montreal two weeks before the Moodies land at Quebec City. The Traills travel straight to Lakefield to be near Sam Strickland and his wife, Mary.

1832 On September 9, upon arrival in Cobourg, Upper Canada, the Moodies buy a cleared farm near Port Hope.

1833 In February Moodie's first Canadian poems appear in the *New York Albion*.

1833 Birth of Moodie's second daughter, Agnes Dunbar, on June 9.

1834 In February Moodie receives a modest legacy from an English relative. The Moodies move to a bush farm on Lake Katchewanooka, near Douro Township north of Peterborough, to be near Sam Strickland and Catharine Parr Traill.

1834 Birth of first son, John Alexander Dunbar ("Dunnie"), on August 20. The whole Moodie family is sick with "the ague," or malarial lake fever.

1835 John Moodie's *Ten Years in South Africa* is published in London by Richard Bentley.

1835–37 The Moodies gradually deplete their capital against the backdrop of an economic depression in Europe and North America.

1836 In January, thanks to the efforts of the Strickland sisters in England, Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada* is published in London. Its common-sense advice for immigrants to British North America makes it a bestseller.

1836 Birth of second son, Donald, on May 21.

1837 Outbreak of rebellion in Upper Canada on December 4, led by William Lyon Mackenzie. Sam Strickland and Thomas Traill join the Peterborough Volunteers and march to Port Hope to help put down the uprising.

1837 On December 8 John Moodie, who has a broken leg, follows his two brothers-in-law to the front and is made a captain in the Northumberland Militia.

1837 Moodie's poem "Canadians, Will You Join the Band—a Loyal Song" appears in the *Palladium*, prominent Toronto newspaper, on December 20. It is widely reprinted in both Upper and Lower Canada. Several more of her patriotic, pro-British poems are published in subsequent weeks.

1838 John Moodie, now a captain in the newly formed Queen's Own Regiment of Toronto, is stationed first in Toronto, then along the U.S. border near Niagara in anticipation of cross-border raids by rebels. Susanna remains with her four small children in Douro Township. She writes to Sir George Arthur, the newly appointed lieutenant-governor, requesting a permanent appointment for her husband so that the Moodies can pay their debts. As rebel activity continues to splutter, John obtains a six-month appointment as paymaster to the militia in the Victoria District (later Hastings County).

1838 The Durham Report is published in April, recommending limited responsible government for the Union of the Canadas (a merger of Upper and Lower Canada), with a single legislature. The Moodies begin to realize that their interests align with those of Reformers rather than Tories.

1838 Birth of third son, John Strickland, on October 16.

1838 Full abolition of slavery finally instituted in all colonies.

1838–51 Moodie is a regular contributor to the *Literary Garland*, edited and published in Montreal by John Lovell.

1839 In January Moodie falls seriously ill with [mastitis](#).

1839 The Traills sell their farm in March and move to Lakefield—a severe wrench for Susanna who is now, she writes to John in Belleville, “doubly lonely.”

1839 In October John Moodie finally obtains a permanent job as sheriff of Victoria District.

1840 Susanna and her children leave the backwoods on January 1 to join John in Belleville.

1840 Birth and death of fourth son, George Arthur.

1840 The Moodies' Belleville home burns down; they lose furniture, clothing, and winter stores.

1840–48 Agnes Strickland, Moodie's sister, gains literary fame in England with her twelve-volume series *Lives of the Queens of England*.

1842 John Moodie, as returning officer in the parliamentary elections, gets caught up in the bitter partisan rivalries between Belleville's Tory and Reform voters during an election in which the prominent reformer Robert Baldwin is defeated. John is forced to call in government troops.

1843 Birth of fifth son and seventh child, Robert Baldwin.

1843 Susanna's four-part newspaper series, “Richard Redpath. A Tale,” is published in Montreal and Toronto. It contains a clearly anti-Semitic portrait of George Benjamin, the editor of the Belleville *Intelligencer* who regularly disparaged John Moodie.

1844 Johnnie Moodie, aged five, drowns in the Moira River on June 18.

1847–48 Susanna and John Moodie write and edit *Victoria Magazine*, a periodical for farmers and mechanics.

1850 The Moodies' second daughter, Agnes, marries Charles Thomas Fitzgibbon, a Toronto lawyer and speculator.

1852 January 9 publication in London by Richard Bentley of the first edition of *Roughing It in the Bush*, in two volumes, much of which had already been published in the *Literary Garland* and *Victoria Magazine*. It is dedicated to Agnes Strickland, who is, however, appalled to be associated with a book about subsistence farming in a primitive colony.

1852 In July a pirated version of *Roughing It in the Bush* appears in the United States to widespread American acclaim and Canadian criticism.

1852 Good reviews in Britain prompt the November 9 publication of a second British edition of *Roughing It in the Bush*, containing additional chapters.

1852 Catharine Parr Traill's novel for children, *Canadian Crusoes*, is published.

1853 Publication in London of Moodie's *Life in the Clearings*, to lukewarm reviews. Meanwhile, Sarah Strickland's exuberant *Twenty-seven Years in Canada West* is well-received.

1853 Publication of Moodie's *Mark Hurdlestone*.

1854 On March 28 Britain and France declare war against Russia. British preoccupation with hostilities in Crimea diminishes interest in Canadian publications.

1854 Publication of Moodie's *Flora Lyndsay, or Passages in an Eventful Life and Matrimonial Speculations*.

1855 The Moodies' elder daughter, Kate, marries John Joseph Vickers, a Toronto businessman.

1855 Susanna meets the Fox sisters, two celebrated mediums, and becomes intrigued by the occult. Both Moodies embark on seances and "spiritual investigations," of which John keeps a detailed record.

1856 The first locomotive of the Grand Trunk Railway arrives in Belleville, which now has fast connections to both Montreal and Toronto.

1856 *The Moncktons* is published by Richard Bentley in London.

1857 Moodie's dedication to her sister Agnes is removed from a new edition of *Roughing It in the Bush*.

1860–64 During the American Civil War, the Moodies are fierce critics of slavery.

1861 On July 28 John Moodie suffers a stroke, partly as a result of stress induced by a prolonged court case in which he was unfairly accused of corruption.

1862 Susanna's eldest son, John Dunbar, marries Eliza Russell. They settle in Belleville and have two children, but relations with the older Moodies are strained.

1863 John Moodie is forced to resign his position as sheriff of Hastings County, leaving his family with no means of support.

1863 Robert, the Moodies' youngest son, marries Nellie Russell (no relation to her sister-in-law). He eventually takes a job with the Grand Trunk Railway, and proves a devoted and reliable son.

1864 Elizabeth Strickland dies, aged ninety-two, in Reydon Hall, Suffolk.

1865 In recognition of her literary achievements, Moodie receives a grant from London's Royal Literary Fund for impoverished British writers.

1865 Charles Fitzgibbon, Moodie's son-in-law, dies, leaving his impoverished widow, Agnes, with six small children.

1866 Donald, the Moodies' second son, marries Julia Anna Russell, Eliza's sister. He drifts in and out of jobs and becomes an alcoholic. He repeatedly petitions his parents for money.

1866 John gives the Moodies' home in Belleville to his son Dunbar in the hope that Dunbar and Eliza will look after John and Susanna in their old age. Instead, the younger Moodies sell the property and move to the American state of Delaware to farm. Dismayed and penniless, John and Susanna move to a modest frame cottage on the Bay of Quinte, just outside Belleville. They become estranged from John and Kate Vickers, who are exasperated with the Moodies for giving their house to the feckless Dunbar.

1866 John Moodie publishes *Scenes and Adventures of a Soldier and Settler during Half a Lifetime*.

1867 The Confederation of the six provinces of British North America is formally established.

1868 Susanna Moodie's last novel, *The World Before Them* (previously serialized in the *Montreal Transcript*), is published in London by Bentley.

1869 John Moodie dies, aged seventy-two, in Belleville on October 22. A deeply grieving Susanna never publishes again. She now divides her time between Belleville lodgings and extended stays with her daughter Katie Vickers (with whom she now reconciles) in Toronto, her son Robert Moodie in Seaforth, Southern Ontario, and her sister Catharine Parr Traill in Lakefield. She never sees her two older sons again.

1870 Agnes Fitzgibbon, Moodie's younger daughter, marries Lieutenant-Colonel Brown Chamberlin, the Queen's Printer.

1871 First Canadian edition of *Roughing It in the Bush* is published.

1872 Accompanied by her sister Catharine, Moodie revisits for the first time Stony Lake, the beautiful, unspoiled lake that she first saw in 1835 and wrote about in *Roughing It in the Bush*.

1884 Moodie's health deteriorates: she loses her sight and develops dementia. Her children move her into her daughter Katie Vickers's house on Adelaide Street, Toronto.

1885 Susanna Moodie dies on April 8, aged eighty-two, in Toronto. She is buried in Belleville Cemetery, alongside her husband John, and George Arthur Moodie and John Strickland Moodie, the two sons who predeceased her.

It is a sign of the enduring appeal of *Roughing It in the Bush* that, since it first appeared more than 150 years ago, the book has been published in several different editions, by several different publishers, in London, New York, and Toronto. However, each time a publisher decided it was time to reissue Moodie's classic, a different version appeared. Some included everything in the original edition; some omitted particular sections and/or the poetry; some included new introductions by Moodie herself and others; and a couple boasted illustrations that would likely have surprised the author herself.

Roughing It in the Bush was originally published in two volumes in London, England, in 1852. The publisher was Richard Bentley, of 8, New Burlington Street, who had enjoyed royal patronage and was therefore entitled to describe himself as "Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty." The first English edition contained twenty-four chapters, several poems, and an introduction by Susanna Moodie, as well as four chapters and several poems by her husband, John Wedderburn Dunbar Moodie. The book also contained one poem by her brother Samuel Strickland. Richard Bentley republished this edition of Moodie's book, with an additional chapter entitled "Canadian Sketches" by John Dunbar Moodie, twice: in late 1852 in a second two-volume impression, and in 1854 in a one-volume impression. Bentley then published a second edition in 1857 in "Bentley's Popular Series"—a series of popular travel books.

The first American edition of *Roughing It in the Bush* also appeared in 1852, in two volumes; it did not include any of the poems. The publisher was George P. Putnam of 10, Park Place, New York. Some copies of Putnam's edition also appeared as numbers XII and XIII in "Putnam's Semi-monthly Library for Travellers and the Fireside." Putnam reissued this edition in a single volume the following year, then sold the plates to another New York publisher, De Witt & Davenport, who brought out a cheaper version in 1854. Robert M. De Witt (who dissolved his partnership with Mr. Davenport) reissued this edition twice. In 1887, a two-volume set of *Roughing It in the Bush* appeared under the imprint of yet another New York-based publisher, John W. Lovell. Lovell had published many of Moodie's articles in the *Literary Garland* when he lived in Montreal during the 1840s.

The first Canadian edition of *Roughing It in the Bush* was published in Toronto by Hunter, Rose & Co. in 1871. Moodie wrote a new introduction for this edition, "In Which Canada Of The Present Is Contrasted With Canada Of Forty Years Ago."

In 1913, an illustrated edition of *Roughing It in the Bush* was published under different imprints in London, New York, and Toronto. (This edition, which originated in Britain with the publisher T.N. Foulis, was subsequently reproduced in 1974 and in 1980 in Toronto in the Coles Canadiana Collection.) The 1913 edition was republished by McClelland & Stewart Publishers in 1923, both with and without illustrations.

Two abridged versions of *Roughing It in the Bush* appeared in the mid-twentieth century. Dr. F.W. Tickner was the editor for an edition published by Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., first in 1932, in the Teaching of English Series, and then in 1938, as a Nelson's Classic. A different edition, with an introduction by Carl F. Klinck, was published in Canada by McClelland & Stewart in 1962. In 1986

the London publisher Virago brought out an abridged photographic reprint of the 1852 original, with an introduction by Margaret Atwood, in the Virago Travellers Series.

Most recently, several new editions of *Roughing It in the Bush* have included all the material that appeared in Moodie's original. The new editions include a scholarly version edited by Carl Ballstadt and published by Carleton University Press in 1988 as part of the Centre for Editing Early Canadian Texts Series. In 1989 McClelland & Stewart brought out an unabridged reprint of the "second edition with additions" of *Roughing It in the Bush*, published in London, England, by Richard Bentley in 1852, in its New Canadian Library series edited by David Staines. The edition included as an Appendix Moodie's introduction to the 1871 Canadian edition.

This Penguin Classics edition of *Roughing It in the Bush* follows the text of Richard Bentley's second edition, published in 1852.

Roughing It in the Bush

I sketch from Nature, and the picture's true;
Whate'er the subject, whether grave or gay,
Painful experience is a distant land
Made it mine own.

Advertisement

In justice to Mrs. Moodie, it is right to state that being still resident in the far-west of Canada, she has not been able to superintend this work whilst passing through the press. From this circumstance some verbal mistakes and oversights may have occurred, but the greatest care has been taken to avoid them.

Although well known as an authoress in Canada, and a member of a family which has enriched English literature with works of very high popularity, Mrs. Moodie is chiefly remembered in this country by a volume of Poems published in 1831, under her maiden name of Susanna Strickland. During the rebellion in Canada, her loyal lyrics, prompted by strong affection for her native country, were circulated and sung throughout the colony, and produced a great effect in rousing an enthusiastic feeling in favour of law and order. Another of her lyrical compositions, the charming Sleigh Song, printed in the present work, vol. i. p. 147, [Penguin Classics edition, p. 128] has been extremely popular in Canada. The warmth of feeling which beams through every line, and the touching truthfulness of its details, won for it a reception there as universal as it was favourable.

The glowing narrative of personal incident and suffering which she gives in the present work, will no doubt attract general attention. It would be difficult to point out delineations of fortitude under privation, more interesting or more pathetic than those contained in her second volume.

London,
January 22, 1852.

Introduction

[to the original edition]

In most instances, emigration is a matter of necessity, not of choice; and this is more especially true of the emigration of persons of respectable connections, or of any station or position in the world. Few educated persons, accustomed to the refinements and luxuries of European society, ever willingly relinquish those advantages, and place themselves beyond the protective influence of the wise and revered institutions of their native land, without the pressure of some urgent cause. Emigration may, indeed, generally be regarded as an act of severe duty, performed at the expense of personal enjoyment, and accompanied by the sacrifice of those local attachments which stamp the scenes amid which our childhood grew, in imperishable characters upon the heart. Nor is it until adversity has pressed sorely upon the proud and wounded spirit of the well-educated sons and daughters of old but impoverished families, that they gird up the loins of the mind, and arm themselves with fortitude to meet and dare the heart-breaking conflict.

The ordinary motives for the emigration of such persons may be summed up in a few brief words;—the emigrant's hope of bettering his condition, and of escaping from the vulgar sarcasms too often hurled at the less wealthy by the purse-proud, common-place people of the world. But there is a higher motive still, which has its origin in that love of independence which springs up spontaneously in the breasts of the high-souled children of a glorious land. They cannot labour in a menial capacity in the country where they were born and educated to command. They can trace no difference between themselves and the more fortunate individuals of a race whose blood warms their veins, and whose name they bear. The want of wealth alone places an impassable barrier between them and the more favoured offspring of the same parent stock; and they go forth to make for themselves a new name and to find another country, to forget the past and to live in the future, to exult in the prospect of their children being free and the land of their adoption great.

The choice of the country to which they devote their talents and energies depends less upon their pecuniary means than upon the fancy of the emigrant or the popularity of a name. From the year 1820 to 1829, Australia and the [Swan River](#) were all the rage. No other portions of the habitable globe were deemed worthy of notice. These were the El Dorados and lands of Goshen to which all respectable emigrants eagerly flocked. Disappointment, as a matter of course, followed their high-raised expectations. Many of the most sanguine of these adventurers returned to their shores in a worse condition than when they left them. In 1830, the great tide of emigration flowed westward. Canada became the great land-mark for the rich in hope and poor in purse. Public newspapers and private letters teemed with the unheard-of advantages to be derived from a settlement in this highly-favoured region.

Its salubrious climate, its fertile soil, commercial advantages, great water privileges, its proximity to the mother country, and last, not least, its almost total exemption from taxation—that bugbear which keeps honest John Bull in a state of constant ferment—were the theme of every tongue, and lauded beyond all praise. The general interest, once excited, was industriously kept alive by pamphlets, published by interested parties, which prominently set forth all the good to be derived from a settlement in the Backwoods of Canada; while they carefully concealed the toil and hardship to be

endured in order to secure these advantages. They told of lands yielding forty bushels to the acre, but they said nothing of the years when these lands, with the most careful cultivation, would barely return fifteen; when rust and smut, engendered by the vicinity of damp overhanging woods, would blast the fruits of the poor emigrant's labour, and almost deprive him of bread. They talked of log houses to be raised in a single day, by the generous exertions of friends and neighbours, but they never ventured upon a picture of the disgusting scenes of riot and low debauchery exhibited during the raising, or upon a description of the dwellings when raised—dens of dirt and misery, which would, in many instances, be shamed by an English pig-sty. The necessaries of life were described as inestimably cheap; but they forgot to add that in remote bush settlements, often twenty miles from a market town, and some of them even that distance from the nearest dwelling, the necessaries of life, which would be deemed indispensable to the European, could not be procured at all, or, if obtained, could only be so by sending a man and team through a blazed forest road,—a process far too expensive for frequent repetition.

Oh, ye dealers in wild lands—ye speculators in the folly and credulity of your fellow men—what a mass of misery, and of misrepresentation productive of that misery, have ye not to answer for! You had your acres to sell, and what to you were the worn-down frames and broken hearts of the infatuated purchasers? The public believed the plausible statements you made with such earnestness, and men of all grades rushed to hear your hired orators declaim upon the blessings to be obtained by the clearers of the wilderness.

Men who had been hopeless of supporting their families in comfort and independence at home, thought that they had only to come out to Canada to make their fortunes; almost even to realise the story told in the nursery, of the sheep and oxen that ran about the streets, ready roasted, and with knives and forks upon their backs. They were made to believe that if it did not actually rain gold, that precious metal could be obtained, as is now stated of California and Australia, by stooping to pick it up.

The infection became general. A Canada mania pervaded the middle ranks of British society; thousands and tens of thousands, for the space of three or four years landed upon these shores. A large majority of the higher class were officers of the army and navy, with their families—a class perfectly unfitted by their previous habits and education for contending with the stern realities of emigrant life. The hand that has long held the sword, and been accustomed to receive implicit obedience from those under its control, is seldom adapted to wield the spade and guide the plough, or try its strength against the stubborn trees of the forest. Nor will such persons submit cheerfully to the saucy familiarity of servants, who, republicans in spirit, think themselves as good as their employers. Too many of these brave and honourable men were easy dupes to the designing land-speculators. Not having counted the cost, but only looked upon the bright side of the picture held up to their admiring gaze, they fell easily into the snares of their artful seducers.

To prove their zeal as colonists, they were induced to purchase large tracts of wild land in remote and unfavourable situations. This, while it impoverished and often proved the ruin of the unfortunate immigrant, possessed a double advantage to the seller. He obtained an exorbitant price for the land which he actually sold, while the residence of a respectable settler upon the spot greatly enhanced the value and price of all other lands in the neighbourhood.

It is not by such instruments as those I have just mentioned, that Providence works when it would

reclaim the waste places of the earth, and make them subservient to the wants and happiness of its creatures. The Great Father of the souls and bodies of men knows the arm which wholesome labour from infancy has made strong, the nerves which have become iron by patient endurance, by exposure to weather, coarse fare, and rude shelter; and he chooses such, to send forth into the forest to hew out the rough paths for the advance of civilisation. These men become wealthy and prosperous, and form the bones and sinews of a great and rising country. Their labour is wealth, not exhaustion; it produces independence and content, not home-sickness and despair. What the Backwoods of Canada are to the industrious and ever-to-be-honoured sons of honest poverty, and what they are to the refined and accomplished gentleman, these simple sketches will endeavour to portray. They are drawn principally from my own experience, during a sojourn of nineteen years in the colony.

In order to diversify my subject, and make it as amusing as possible, I have between the sketches introduced a few small poems, all written during my residence in Canada, and descriptive of the country.

In this pleasing task, I have been assisted by my husband, J.W. Dunbar Moodie, author of "[Ten Years in South Africa.](#)"

[Belleville](#), Upper Canada.

Canada, the blest—the free!
With prophetic glance, I see
Visions of thy future glory,
Giving to the world's great story
A page, with mighty meaning fraught,
That asks a wider range of thought.
Borne onward on the wings of Time,
I trace thy future course sublime;
And feel my anxious lot grow bright,
While musing on the glorious sight;—
Yea, my heart leaps up with glee
To hail thy noble destiny!

Even now thy sons inherit
All thy British mother's spirit.
Ah! no child of bondage thou;
With her blessing on thy brow,
And her deathless, old renown
Circling thee with freedom's crown,
And her love within thy heart,
Well may'st thou perform thy part,
And to coming years proclaim
Thou art worthy of her name.
Home of the homeless!—friend to all
Who suffer on this earthly ball!
On thy bosom sickly care
Quite forgets her squalid lair;
Gaunt famine, ghastly poverty
Before thy gracious aspect fly,
And hopes long crush'd, grow bright again.
And, smiling, point to hill and plain.
By thy winter's stainless snow,
Starry heavens of purer glow,
Glorious summers, fervid, bright,
Basking in one blaze of light;
By thy fair, salubrious clime;
By thy scenery sublime;
By thy mountains, streams, and woods;
By thy everlasting floods;
If greatness dwells beneath the skies,
Thou to greatness shall arise!

Nations old, and empires vast,
From the earth had darkly pass'd
Ere rose the fair auspicious morn
When thou, the last, not least, was born.
Through the desert solitude
Of trackless waters, forests rude,
Thy guardian angel sent a cry
All jubilant of victory!

“Joy,” she cried, “to th’ untill’d earth,
~~Let her joy in a mighty nation’s birth,~~

Night from the land has pass’d away,
The desert basks in noon of day.
Joy, to the sullen wilderness,
I come, her gloomy shades to bless,
To bid the bear and wild-cat yield
Their savage haunts to town and field.
Joy, to stout hearts and willing hands,
That win a right to these broad lands,
And reap the fruit of honest toil,
Lords of the rich, abundant soil.

“Joy, to the sons of want, who groan
In lands that cannot feed their own;
And seek, in stern, determined mood,
Homes in the land of lake and wood,
And leave their hearts’ young hopes behind,
Friends in this distant world to find;
Led by that God, who from His throne
Regards the poor man’s stifled moan.
Like one awaken’d from the dead,
The peasant lifts his drooping head,
Nerves his strong heart and sun-burnt hand,
To win a portion of the land,
That glooms before him far and wide
In frowning woods and surging tide
No more oppress’d, no more a slave,
Here freedom dwells beyond the wave.

“Joy, to those hardy sires who bore
The day’s first heat—their toils are o’er;
Rude fathers of this rising land,
Theirs was a mission truly grand.
Brave peasants whom the Father, God,
Sent to reclaim the stubborn sod;
Well they perform’d their task, and won
Altar and hearth for the woodman’s son.
Joy, to Canada’s unborn heirs,
A deathless heritage is theirs;
For, sway’d by wise and holy laws,
Its voice shall aid the world’s great cause,
Shall plead the rights of man, and claim
For humble worth an honest name;
Shall show the peasant-born can be,
When call’d to action, great and free.
Like fire, within the flint conceal’d,
By stern necessity reveal’d,
Kindles to life the stupid sod,
Images of perfect man and God.

“Joy, to thy unborn sons, for they
Shall hail a brighter, purer day;

When peace and Christian brotherhood

~~Shall form a stronger tie than blood—~~

And commerce, freed from tax and chain,

Shall build a bridge o'er earth and main;

And man shall prize the wealth of mind,

The greatest blessing to mankind;

True Christians, both in word and deed,

Ready in virtue's cause to bleed,

Against a world combined to stand,

And guard the honour of the land.

Joy, to the earth, when this shall be,

Time verges on eternity.”

A VISIT TO GROSSE ISLE

Alas! that man's stern spirit e'er should mar
A scene so pure—so exquisite as this.

The dreadful cholera was depopulating Quebec and Montreal, when our ship cast anchor off [Grosse Isle](#), on the 30th of August, 1832, and we were boarded a few minutes after by the health-officers. One of these gentlemen—a little, shrivelled-up Frenchman—from his solemn aspect and attenuated figure would have made no bad representative of him who sat upon the pale horse. He was the only grave Frenchman I had ever seen, and I naturally enough regarded him as a phenomenon. His companion—fine-looking fair-haired Scotchman—though a little consequential in his manners, looked like one who in his own person could combat and vanquish all the evils which flesh is heir to. Such was the contrast between these doctors, that they would have formed very good emblems—one, of vigorous health; the other, of hopeless decay.

Our captain, a rude blunt north-country sailor possessing certainly not more politeness than might be expected in a bear, received his [sprucely](#) dressed visitors on the deck, and, with very little courtesy, abruptly bade them follow him down into the cabin.

The officials were no sooner seated, than glancing hastily round the place, they commenced the following dialogue:—

“From what port, captain?”

Now, the captain had a peculiar language of his own, from which he commonly expunged all the connecting links. Small words, such as “and” and “the,” he contrived to dispense with altogether.

“Scotland—sailed from [port o' Leith](#), bound for Quebec, Montreal—general cargo—seventy-two [steerage](#), four cabin passengers—[brig](#), ninety-two tons burden, crew eight hands.” Here he produced his credentials, and handed them to the strangers. The Scotchman just glanced over the documents, and laid them on the table.

“Had you a good passage out?”

“Tedious, baffling winds, heavy fogs, detained three weeks on Banks—foul weather making Gulf—short of water, people out of provisions, steerage passengers starving.”

“Any case of sickness or death on board?”

“All sound as crickets.”

“Any births?” lisped the little Frenchman.

The captain screwed up his mouth, and after a moment's reflection he replied, "Births? Why, yes; no I think on't, gentlemen, we had one female on board, who produced three at a birth."

"That's uncommon," said the Scotch doctor, with an air of lively curiosity. "Are the children alive and well? I should like much to see them." He started up, and knocked his head, for he was very tall, against the ceiling. "Confound your low cribs! I have nearly dashed out my brains."

"A hard task, that," looked the captain to me. He did not speak, but I knew by his sarcastic grin what was uppermost in his thoughts. "The young ones all males—fine thriving fellows. Step upon the deck, Sam Frazer," turning to his steward; "bring them down for doctors to see." Sam vanished, with a knowing wink to his superior, and quickly returned, bearing in his arms three fat, chuckle-headed [bul terriers](#); the sagacious mother following close at his heels, and looking ready to give and take offence on the slightest provocation.

"Here, gentlemen, are the babies," said Frazer, depositing his burden on the floor. "They do credit to the nursing of the brindled slut."

The [old tar](#) laughed, chuckled, and rubbed his hands in an ecstasy of delight at the indignation and disappointment visible in the countenance of the Scotch [Esculapius](#), who, angry as he was, wisely held his tongue. Not so the Frenchman; his rage scarcely knew bounds,—he danced in a state of most ludicrous excitement,—he shook his fist at our rough captain, and screamed at the top of his voice,

"Sacré, you [bête](#)! You tink us dog, yen you try to pass your puppies on us for babies?"

"Hout, man, don't be angry," said the Scotchman, stifling a laugh; "you see'tis only a joke!"

"Joke! me no understand such joke. [Bête](#)!" returned the angry Frenchman, bestowing a savage kick on one of the unoffending pups which was frisking about his feet. The pup yelped; the slut barked and leaped furiously at the offender, and was only kept from biting him by Sam, who could scarcely hold her back for laughing; the captain was uproarious; the offended Frenchman alone maintained a severe and dignified aspect. The dogs were at length dismissed, and peace restored.

After some further questioning from the officials, a bible was required for the captain to take an oath. Mine was mislaid, and there was none at hand.

"Confound it!" muttered the old sailor, tossing over the papers in his desk; "that scoundrel, Sam, always stows my traps out of the way." Then taking up from the table a book which I had been reading, which happened to be [Voltaire's History of Charles XII.](#), he presented it, with as grave an air as he could assume, to the Frenchman. Taking for granted that it was the volume required, the little doctor was too polite to open the book, the captain was duly sworn, and the party returned to the deck.

Here a new difficulty occurred, which nearly ended in a serious quarrel. The gentlemen requested the old sailor to give them a few feet of old planking, to repair some damage which their boat had sustained the day before. This the captain could not do. They seemed to think his refusal intentional, and took it as a personal affront. In no very gentle tones, they ordered him instantly to prepare his boats, and put his passengers on shore.

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