

A CYCLOPÆDIA OF CANADIAN BIOGRAPHY.

Moodie, Mrs. Susanna, was the sixth daughter of the late Thomas Strickland, of Reydon Hall, Suffolk, England, and was born on the 6th of December, 1803. This Strickland family was certainly one of the most remarkable known in England, since the famous "Nest of Nightingales," five out of the six daughters having made themselves more or less celebrated in the realm of letters. At the age of thirteen, Mrs. Susanna Moodie lost her father, at whose hands she had received her education. Mr. Strickland was a man of considerable wealth, highly cultured, and much devoted to literature, so he spent much of his means upon his library, and instilled into his family the same love for *belles lettres* that he felt himself. Many have regretted that the excellent man did not live to see the fruition of his care. Susanna, it is said, began to write when in her sixteenth year, her early productions being poems, and tales for children. In 1829-30, she put out a volume entitled, "Enthusiasm, and other Poems." In the same year, during a visit to London, she met Lieutenant J. W. Dunbar Moodie, Esq., fourth son of the late James Moodie, of Melsetter, Orkney Islands, to whom she was married on the 4th of April, 1831. Lieutenant Moodie belonged to the 21st Fusiliers, and was then on half pay. They left England in the following year for Canada, settling at Cobourg for a few months, thence proceeding to the Township of Hamilton, eight miles from Cobourg, where they took a farm. Here they remained a year, after which they permitted themselves, unwisely, to be persuaded to settle in the backwoods, ten miles north of Peterborough. This region was then a perfect wilderness. There was no church, no school, no refined society, and very little cleared land near where they took up their abode. Here, struggling with all the privations belong-

ing to life in the woods, they lived for eight years, in the meantime spending all their available money in the purchase of wild lands, and in the operation of the farm, an occupation for which the family, gentle bred, and unaccustomed, and unsuited to labour, were singularly unfit. When, in 1837, the rebellion broke out, Mr. Moodie, who, from his birth and military training, was a devoted loyalist, hastened away to Toronto, leaving his wife and four little children, the eldest being only in her fifth year, behind him in the bush. The summer following, he remained absent, and much of the crops were lost, because there was no help to harvest it. All this Mrs. Moodie vividly and feelingly describes in her delightful book, "Roughing it in the Bush." This was the first ambitious literary effort of Mrs. Moodie, and it attracted wide attention. The style was simple, limpid and picturesque: it was full of movement, and contained pen portraits which were true to the life of the hardships of the family's wilderness life; of the character of the neighbours with whom she was thrown in contact, and of her alternating hopes and disappointments. When the book came out the Canadians who were pictured in it were terribly wroth, and probably it was the sex of the author that saved her from maltreatment. But she never once exceeded the bounds of truth in her delineations, and invariably pictured the good traits as well as the bad ones, of the ordinary Canadian backwoods family. The book was brought out in England in 1850, but the greatest portion of its contents had already been published in the *Literary Garland*, Montreal. Encouraged by the success of this book, Mrs. Moodie afterwards brought out in quick succession, through her London publishers, the Messrs. Bentley, "Life in the Clearings," "Flora Lindsay," "Mark Hurdleston," "The World