

## Slave Days in Canada

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THERE was no Harriet Beecher Stowe to tell the story of slavery in Canada, and few Canadian histories make any reference to the subject, so that many of our people have never heard of this by-gone institution. But we find both from family traditions and local records that from 1749 to 1834, Uncle Toms, Topsies and old Mammies lived in almost every part of the present Canada which was settled at that time.

When the country was new the conditions of living were much harder than at present, and it was very difficult to get dependable "hired help," as we see by reading Mrs. Susannah Moodie's, "Roughing it in the Bush." We can imagine what a comfort these 'servants for life' might be to their masters and mistresses, many of whom had been unused to any manual labour.

What would the Loyalists have done, if, when driven from their homes, they had not had these faithful servants to drive the cows, or to row and sail the boats, and in many ways to relieve them on the long hard journey into the unknown land of Canada? The kindness was not all on the side of the servitors, for we read how the slaves, when given their freedom, begged to be allowed to stay in the household of those whom they loved to serve. For many, perhaps most of them, this was the halcyon period of their lives. Existence apart from their masters spelled poverty and wretchedness, for they had not much idea of making a living for themselves.

There is an old orchard between Collins Bay and Bath, Ontario, now used as a garden, which belongs to the Fairfield family. The children