

## FOREST LIFE IN CANADA WEST.

LADIES of Britain, deftly-embroidering in carpeted saloon, gracefully bending over easel or harp, pressing, with nimble finger, your piano's ivory, or joyously tripping in Cellarian circles, suspend, for a moment, your silken pursuits, and look forth into the desert at a sister's sufferings! May you never, from stern experience, learn fully to appreciate them. But, should fate have otherwise decreed, may you equal her in fortitude and courage. Meanwhile, transport yourselves, in imagination's ear, to Canada's backwoods, and behold one, gently nurtured as yourselves, cheerfully condescending to rudest toils, unrepiningly enduring hardships you never dreamed of. Not to such hardships was she born, nor educated for them. The comforts of an English home, the endearments of sisterly affection, the refinement of literary tastes, but ill prepared the emigrant's wife to work, in the rugged and inclement wilderness, harder than the meanest of the domestics, whom, in her own country, she was used to command. But where are the obstacles and difficulties that shall not be overcome by a strong will, a warm heart, a trusting and cheerful spirit?—precious qualities, strikingly combined by the lady of whose countless trials and troubles we have here an affecting and remarkable record.

The Far West of Canada is so remote a residence, and there is so much oblivion in a lapse of twenty years, that it may be necessary to mention who the authoress is who now appeals (successfully, or we are much mistaken) to the favour of her countrymen, and more especially of her countrywomen. Of a family well known in literature, Mrs. Moodie is a sister of Miss Agnes Strickland, the popular and accomplished historical biographer. In 1831, Miss Susanna Strickland published a volume of poems. Had she remained in England, she in time, perhaps, might have rivalled her sister's fame as one of

the most distinguished female writers of the day. But it was otherwise ordained. In 1832 she sailed, as Mrs. Moodie, an emigrant to Canada. Under most unfavourable circumstances, she still from time to time took up the pen. The anxieties and accidents of her forest life, her regrets for the country she loved so well, and had left, perhaps, for ever, and, subsequently, the rebellion in Canada, suggested many charming songs and poems, some of which are still extremely popular in our North American colony. Years passed amidst hardships and sufferings. At last a brighter day dawned, and it is from a tranquil and happy home, as we gladly understand, that the settler's brave wife has transmitted this narrative of seven years' exertion and adventure.

Inevitable hardships, some ill luck, some little want of judgment and deliberation, make up the history of Captain and Mrs. Moodie's early days in Canada. "I give you just three years to spend your money and ruin yourself," said an old Yankee hag with whom the Captain was concluding the purchase of a wretched log-hut. It scarcely took so long. Borrowing our colours from Mrs. Moodie's pages, we may broadly sketch the discomforts of the emigrant's first few months in Canada. These were passed near the village of C—, on the north shore of Lake Ontario. A farm of one hundred and fifty acres, about fifty of which were cleared, was purchased by Captain Moodie for £300, of a certain Q—, a landjobber.

"Q—," says the Captain, who has contributed two or three chapters to his wife's book, "held a mortgage for £150, on a farm belonging to a certain Yankee settler, named Joe H—, as security for a debt incurred for goods at his store. The idea instantly struck him that he would compel Joe H— to sell him his farm, by threatening to foreclose the mortgage. I drove out with Mr. Q— next day to see the farm in question. It was situated in a pretty retired valley.

*Roughing it in the Bush; or, Life in Canada.* By SUSANNA MOODIE. In 2 vols. London: 1852.