The Feminine Experience in the Margins of the British Empire

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The Feminine Experience in the Margins of the British Empire

How Canada is Described in the Writings of Nineteenth-Century Canadian Women

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INTRODUCTION

Two interesting questions connected to the history of the second British Empire seem to have been neglected by contemporary historical and cultural scholarship and it is the aim of the present study to remedy this situation. The first of these questions concerns the specific position held by Canada in the imperial project designed in the first half of the nineteenth century between 1815 and 1867. Canada was at the forefront of the colonial debate in Britain, owing to its size, its potential and its proximity to the US and it naturally took pride of place in the numerous representations of the white colonies that circulated in England. New imperial policies were developed and applied to Canada as the Colonial Office was influenced by prevailing English attitudes towards colonial possessions, in a climate of opinion fed by publications on Canada. The Canadian colonies were particularly present in several women's books, essentially non-fiction texts, which contributed to enlightening and informing the British public on the progress of the Empire in Canada.

The second question is therefore concerned with the perception that white women had of the second British Empire, at home and in the colonies. Contrary to the travel narratives and personal accounts about Australia or New Zealand which were all written by men, colonial Canada, the North American margins, seems to have become a "feminine" topic of observation and debate. If numerous imperial historians acknowledge that Canada had been at the heart of the British Empire in America in the first half of the 19th century\(^1\), no scholarly literature has been published on the way British people imagined Canada or represented it. It is the rectifying of this absence of analysis of non-fictional contributions, written by educated English women, informing the early Victorian public debate on Empire-building which will be at the core of the present study. We will see that between

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1821 and 1867, women’s texts on Canada either heralded or commented upon contemporary crises or moments of tensions between the colonies and the mother-country, thus connecting these personal narratives with the historical narrative of the Canadian colonies.

A series of texts published at the beginning of the second British Empire influenced the public’s perception of the white Empire. The margins of Empire, represented during the first four decades of the 19th century by colonial Canada became familiar to the educated public, thanks to these texts, a third of which were written by women who participated in the representing of their Empire. Some of the non-fictional texts studied in this volume were written directly in the margins by female authors who permanently resided there. From the Margins of Empire will therefore examine the living conditions of these women of letters living in the white colonial world, who tried to gain some acclaim by writing texts on Canada for their British readers. The book examines the difficulties of negotiating the budding publishing world in the metropolis while living in the margins. It will also examine the new genres that these women authors invented or revisited to promote their personal experience of settlers in a literary form which appealed to a new middle-class readership.

The fact that these narratives of the colonial world were circulated in the imperial centre where they were published also launched an interesting "transatlantic dialogue" between the settlers' communities, represented here by their educated female elite, and the educated middle-class readers at home. These textual and cultural ties were essential to the imperial project in North America and in the rest of the Empire in the making. As the theorists of Empire were abandoning the old 18th century mercantile system that was centred on the benefits of the metropolis, and promoting a new liberal margin-oriented Empire, people at home and abroad that were part and parcel of this human enterprise, also reflected that change of perception.

Contributions to the elaboration of an imperial project for Canada were also brought in a marginal way by travel narratives written by English women
whose discourse on the progress of the colonial world enabled them to offer comments and ideas on how to fashion the British Empire. From the Margins of Empire will also analyse these published travel narratives which in the first half of the 19th century, led these female writers to revisit the travel narrative genre and to accommodate it to their new adventures and visits in the Canadian colonies. Writing to the metropolitan readers from a so-called “domestic” perspective about the margins of Empire they had visited, these female authors offered personal views on imperial policies towards the margins, reflecting on how these colonies could become the pride of the mother country or on the contrary emancipate themselves from the imperial rule.

Canada as a group of colonies under British rule since 1763, was often neglected by English visitors or English imperialists in the 18th and 19th centuries because its development and progress was seen either as slow but distinctly English and sure to remain so because it was settled by loyal British colonists, or as a set of colonies whose future was American since it was already living in the margins of the United States in which they lingered. In short, the study of Canada is often neglected in volumes on British Empire history as too compliant or lacking interest. This present volume will show how the Canadian colonies were removed from their North American margins for a few decades, thanks to a series of texts written by women, which placed Canada at the heart of the imperial project for the growth of a white Empire, in the metropolis, in the first half of the 19th century.

Between 1821, when the British public seemed to “discover” Canada therefore and 1867, when the Canadian colonies gained a Dominion status - subsequently receding into the margins of colonial news in the metropolis - a handful of English middle-class women contributed with their travel accounts or settlers’ narratives to extending the knowledge of the reading public on the foundations of the second British Empire, with Canada as their central paradigm. Not only did these female authors write about Canada but they also physically participated in its development by settling there or by recording the progress of its
colonial communities in their travel narratives. The texts selected for this analysis were all published in London and they circulated in the public and private spheres informing and influencing the views of their middle-class readers and those of prominent colonial theorists, on the state of Canada. The female authors achieved a certain renown in their times thanks to their Canadian narratives which appealed to the readers for their novelty and their exoticism. They renewed the genres of travel narratives and settlers’ narratives with their feminine discourse or their discourse of domesticity that contributed to familiarizing the British readers with distant, cold and foreign Canada and to fostering feelings of domestic or family attachment to the Canadian colonies.

What is surprising therefore is that in the wealth of travel writings on the British Empire published in Britain in the course of the 19th century, texts produced by travellers whose destination had been Canada have rarely been studied. For instance, in *Early Travellers in the Canadas* published in 1955, Gerald Craig compiled a series of travel accounts written by men that are presented in short extracts. The bibliography at the end of the volume reflects the "formidable quantity and the uneven quality" of the production in this first portion of the 19th century when colonial Canada was still new to these British visitors and a novelty for the metropolitan readers. But readers in the metropolis also discovered Canada through a series of published texts written by gentlewomen - either visitors to the colonies or emigrants. Eleven non-fictional texts were written by middle-class or upper-middle-class women and published in the imperial centre between 1821 and 1867. Seven of them could lay some claim

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4 Craig, *Early Travellers, op.cit.*, p. xii.
to fame and yet with one exception none of these titles is mentioned in Craig’s compilation.

Three of these texts were written directly in the “colonial margins” by female emigrants who permanently resided there. These textual and cultural ties fed the debates over the imperial project in North America and in the rest of the growing Empire. People at home and abroad were now being considered as part and parcel of this human enterprise. Colonists and colonized peoples reflected that change of perception. Simon Gikandi notes that "texts provide the medium through which the crises of both colonial and domestic identities are mediated." Gikandi refers to post-colonial productions by ex-colonized authors; I will show that women's texts about emigration in Canada, as well as travel narratives, also mediated the crises in colonial and domestic identities.

These non-fiction texts written by gentlewomen (settlers and travellers) provide the social historian with a wealth of information on women's history, on Empire building by women, on the question of gender and class at home and in the colonies. Besides, these texts are meta-narratives on Canada, but also on the white colonial world at large of which Canada was the epitome at the time. In discussing the fate of Canadian settlers or the value of Britain’s possessions in North America, the female authors also reflected on social, cultural and political issues at the centre of the Empire. The social historian also finds a wealth of information on issues of national pride, national identity, identity formation and the more vexing question of the inscription of women in the Victorian nation, at home or in the colonial margins.

However, at this point we could beg the question: Why did women writers take over the narration of colonial Canada in the course of the nineteenth-century? Canada was the only instance in the "white" colonial world that brought so many women's non-fictional texts to the forefront. If we consider Australia or New Zealand, all the narratives that circulated in Britain were written by male settlers.

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This leads to a further question: How can the intimate equation between Canada, women's narratives and the British public be explained?

Canada is regularly under-studied by imperial historians, particularly its early 19th century period. The formative years of the first British Dominion have often been neglected in recent volumes of British Empire history. Recently, Phillip Buckner noted that the history of the Old Dominions had to be placed back "where it belonged" at the centre of the agenda of historians, either from the Dominions or from the metropolis. Examining the most recent contributions on the history of the second British Empire, Buckner underlines how the emphasis of the "new imperial history" is clearly "on the exploitative nature of British imperialism and its largely negative impact on the large number of non-Europeans incorporated into the Empire against their wishes." However the British Empire, he insists, would not have existed without the early contributions of white British colonists. This remark can be read as an incentive to examine or re-examine the personal textual production of the first generations of white colonists in Canada, who undertook the building of the second British Empire, and at the same time as an incentive to consider the texts of the so-called “imperialist” visitors who visited the new colonies to report back on their progress or lack of progress to the metropolitan public.

My own interest in these women's texts - and more particularly the narratives of Empire provided by gentlewomen settlers in Canada - was first triggered off by Carole Gerson's remark on the low status in British literature, of the productions by gentlewomen Canadian settlers like Catharine Parr Traill, The Backwoods of Canada (1836) and Susanna Moodie, Roughing it in the Bush (1852). She suggested that the early Canadian or colonial women writers were at a triple disadvantage. They belonged to a marginalized sex, they were producing a

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marginalized genre from a marginalized colonial culture⁷. The volume From the Margins of Empire deals with this peripheral position of the non-fiction text written by women about the colonial margins. However, neither Australia nor New Zealand, the other white colonies in this first part of the 19th century, where some middle-class gentlewomen had also ventured as settlers, revealed any text of the kind. Therefore the historical context of British colonization in Canada that seemed to be the most accessible scene of observation for women at the time, bears heavily on their representations. Canada became a platform from which to voice their positions on Empire building and to express themselves in the public sphere through their Canadian narratives. A sort of "virtuous" circle formed around Canada and women writers. As female readers became more familiar and acquainted with the colonial world, after reading other women's narratives about it, the more interested they became in venturing there themselves. This explains the necessary chronological approach chosen in this book, as each new volume on Canada published in England, generated new interests and new representations in at least one female reader who in turn went to Canada and produced her own narrative of the colonial world. Each subsequent volume refers to the earlier books, thus providing the historian with an interesting view of the reception, perception and impact of each narrative on the middle-class Victorian female readership.

Each work, each author's discourse was not free of metropolitan constraints imposed by the reading market and the patriarchal authority of publishers. As will be seen in chapter 3, writing from the margins for the emigrant gentlewomen, meant fashioning their work for the Victorian public as early as the inception of the work⁸. From the 1830s onwards, publishing books on Canada or

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⁸ I would like to acknowledge Linda Peterson’s excellent contribution to the issue of female authorship in her Becoming a Woman of Letters in which she refers to the sisters’ network in the Strickland family, which enabled Catharine Parr Traill and Susanna Moodie to negotiate contracts
on the Empire was a business, with firms competing with each other, selling "commodity" books to a large public composed of men and women from the middle class and from the educated lower class: "the writing and publishing and marketing of books was a web composed of three strands – the author, the publishers and the public. At any given time, one of these may have seemed to be predominant… but all the while, the taste and capacity of readers, no matter how blurred and weak, made up the third of the strand." How was Canada commodified for the public? How did the selection of texts by publishing houses reflect their political agenda on Empire? Chapters 3 and 6 attempt to provide answers to these questions.

This versatile interest of the Victorian public for "colonial" texts and exotic travel narratives also weighed on the few "colonial" texts written by women in this first half of the 19th century. The "fate" of these colonial books was shaped by their publishers but also by the literate public opinion in the person of the reviewer who, by favouring books or criticizing authors in his or her periodical, also contributed to the shaping of the representations of Canada and the white Empire that were circulated. Cultural, political or social representations of Canada were framed for the public by many institutions that "mediated" the message of these women writers from the margins to the metropolis. Representations of Canada fed the "spectacle of Empire" that culminated in the Great Exhibition in 1851 whose popular displays ensured the publishers had an always-expanding market for travel books and emigration narratives.

I would, therefore, like to reconsider these texts from the perspective of the centre, of the mother country, for whose readers these books had first been written. Following Deirdre David who studied fictional Victorian writing by

women seeking "the textual construction of Empire\textsuperscript{10}\textsuperscript{10}", I wish to analyse non-fiction texts written by women settlers and women travellers, within the same perspective. As an historian of the Empire, I believe that women played a significant role in the building of the white colonies. I'm specifically interested in the textual participation of women in the construction of the Canadian Dominion as many women recorded their colonial effort in writing or publicized their opinion on how to reform the Canadian colonies. Through the analysis of the published texts left by women settlers and travellers in British North America, then an essential jewel of the British imperial possessions, I would like to reflect on the representation of the colonial world these women writers provided for their British readers. How did they question or come to terms with the imperial project? How did they contribute to the Victorian public discourse and concern about Empire building? How did they represent themselves or other British women in the margins of the Empire? Besides, by examining the reception of the texts in reviews, or by following the development of similar ideas in colonial theorists’ essays, it is clear that these women writers’ contribution to the colonial debate was examined by male readers, including prominent ones who often criticized their “unwomanly” contribution to the colonial debate. If it is not always easy to find direct quotes from or acknowledgement to these women’s texts in colonial theorists’ works, inter-textual references or similarities in the development of ideas point to the influence of the former upon the latter as will be examined in chapter 1 and 2.

*From the Margins of Empire* will focus on case studies as the number of texts produced by women on or about Canada is limited at this period of time. However the small number of books also served the interest of each author as they achieved some fame thanks to their “unique” narratives. In each chapter, I have conscientiously examined each female traveller or emigrant's narrative as each in turn brought Canada to the foreground of the British literary and political scene.

by publicizing the morals and manners of colonists or by bringing news and information about the political progress of British North America. Indeed, in order to assess the validity and importance of the views these women expressed, it is essential to take into consideration such matters as the occasion and circumstances of their visits to Canada, the readers for whom the book was designed, as well as the political and personal agendas of the author and her publisher. In the chapters that compose the book, I followed a basic pattern. First, I begin by studying the actual representation of the Canadian colonies, from a social and political aspect, originally provided by each female author. Second, I look at the manner in which the text was promoted by the author herself in view of its publication and how its publishers marketed the Canadian text as well as its colonial message. Finally, I consider the reception of these texts by readers in Britain, from the particular angle of the reception of the authors’ views on the colonial world and their contribution to the colonial debate. The reception of these texts by the general public being difficult to assess, I focus on a few prominent readers who reacted to the text, either colonial theorists and colonial reformers, or prominent reviewers in the periodical press, or other travellers, those men and women who, in the footsteps of these female authors, used their text first as an incentive, then as a guide-book, to discover Canada.

Such close textual analysis of the original text and particularly of the female author's contribution to the colonial discourse, will lead me to conclude that instead of simply reporting on the colonial world from a distance or worse parroting commonly shared views on Canada found in previous travel texts for instance, Victorian women authors in Canada produced very personal and very sharp analyses on colonial building. Each author in turn provided some criticism of the manner in which the British colonial government was ruling British North America and as a consequence, they drew powerful conclusions on the remedies that should be brought to promote sound colonization and social and political progress in the British Empire in North America. In so doing so, they suggested and even heralded views which were adopted, in the wake of the publication of
their work, by colonial theorists: Edward Gibbon Wakefield, Lord Durham, Herman Merivale and Charles Dilke to name a few. We will see that the pertinent comments on Empire-building, the great attachment to the imperial project and their subsequent participation in the reform of the white colonial world, as well as their comments on home politics where colonial discourse was shaped, clearly show that white middle-class women did participate in political debates on the colonies and on the woman question.

This book is based on the microanalysis of narratives that are not always considered by scholars as worthy of examination. Personal narratives written by female emigrants and travel narratives produced by women visitors to Canada form the basis of this study. Each narrator defends a specific discourse on the colonies based on a gendered aesthetic and informed by their middle-class upbringing.

In Canada, the gentlewomen who wrote their colonial autobiographies were in an ambiguous position. They were colonizers since they came as white British settlers to advance the imperial project of the metropolis as discussed by Clare Midgley in *Feminism and Empire*\(^{11}\), but they were also perceived as "colonial" by English travellers or metropolitan readers. The main purpose of the narratives written by these middle-class emigrants therefore was to indicate to their metropolitan readers that their participation in the building of the Empire was effective, while presenting their cultural and social position as central to the shaping of these colonies, in the same way as the middle classes played a central role in England. In *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said stressed the importance of narratives in the formation of imperial or anti-imperial attitudes. Said, as well as Simon Gikandi in *Maps of Englishness*, looks at the place of fiction in the construction of the structure of feeling of colonizer and colonized. Their theses can easily be extended to personal narratives produced by immigrant gentlewomen. This is how Said defines colonial narratives:

Stories are the heart of what explorers and novelists say about strange regions of the world, they also became the method colonized people use to assert their own identity and the existence of their own history... The power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism and constitutes one of the main connections between them.\textsuperscript{12}

Alongside these “colonial” writings, I have selected all the travel texts written by women in which a visit to Canada is mentioned. The \textit{Cambridge History of English Literature} notes the enduring popularity of travel books in 19\textsuperscript{th} century Britain that "have probably been more read [...] than any other books except novels." For this book, therefore, I only selected emigration and travel narratives published in the metropolitan centre, in order to analyse the representation of the Canadas that visitors and settlers wanted to construct for their readers. The imperial viewpoints of many female travellers clash with the "colonial" viewpoints of the female emigrants. The context of the reception in the Victorian metropolis bore heavily on the fashioning of the original work. These non-fiction texts and the subsequent representation of Canada they convey were clearly written in anticipation of the public's views or reactions. We will analyse the tight control and supervision imposed on these women's texts by their London publishers, while bearing in mind the difficulty of publishing in London for authors living in the colonial margins.

Gaye Tuchman, in her sociological approach to the world of publishers in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century\textsuperscript{13}, notes that the 1830s and 1840s radically changed the publishing industry and transformed it into a modern one. Industrialization brought new printing technologies and it rationalized the publishing industry, as it both expanded and centralized in London. In fact, the small publishing houses which had managed to issue some travel books in the 1820s and at the beginning of the 1830s in the Kingdom, had closed down, leaving the control of the market in the

British Isles in the hands of a few important publishers. Tuchman notes that this had a consequence on the world of authors as well, as most of them moved nearer their publishers and nearer the literary circles of the literary reviews. It also had an impact on the representation of Canada, as many publishers, readers for the publishing houses, or reviewers, would have a metropolitan gaze on the colonies, and more particularly an English perspective.

These are the numerous parameters that will be taken into account in the analysis of sources as the form and the content of the texts reflected the publishers’ imperial views, as well as the metropolis readers' concern with Empire building. But female writers still managed to convey their personal and political agenda. The published manuscripts examined in this volume have in common the will to instruct, to encourage, to criticize and to judge British colonial policies, using Canada as a platform or a metaphor to convey their discourse.

In agreement with one of Sara Mill's liminal remarks in her work on travel narratives from the Empire titled *Discourses of Difference*, what is interesting to study in women's travel writings is the way their feminine rhetoric shapes their imperial discourse. While women might adopt a different stance in their texts in order to circumvent the gendered publishing rules, by focusing on the landscape or on the domestic world in the colonial context, they nonetheless manage to convey imperial views and their personal agenda on Empire building. It is in the wake of Mills' work, located between colonial discourse theory and discourses on femininity, that I wish to position my study of the representation of Canada in nineteenth-century women's travel texts and their influence on the public sphere at home.

My use of the word "discourse", like that of Sara Mills, is borrowed from Michel Foucault's "tool-box". A discourse is held by a group of people who adhere to the same ideas and try to promote these ideas or principles in their private or public writings or speeches in order to convince other people. Post-structuralist theories of cognition posit that reality is not given but is produced in

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14 Mills, *op.cit.*
discourses. "These discourses shape perception. This would imply that reality is not reflected but is produced by modes of perception. And the texts produced by travellers do not simply reflect a pre-given reality, but create the world they purport to describe." Therefore, women’s narratives either produced in the margins by emigrants or by travellers upon their return from the margins create the world they purport to describe in women’s eyes. These personal representations of Canada were circulated among educated, middle-class readers, generating knowledge about the "domestic" aspects of the colonial world and curiosity, which in turn attracted further female travellers to British North America. Even though a series of books has been published over the last two decades on travel writing in the Empire, none have combined the study of women's travel texts with the representation of one specific colony in the mother country, or reflected on the elaboration of imperial projects at home based on the contribution of these female travellers. This is one of the gaps I intend to bridge in this present volume.

The first female traveller to resort to this type of discourse combining an imperial stance and femininity was Frances Wright who travelled through Canada in 1820, after a visit to America. The comparison she established in *Views of Society and Manners in America*, between the two "countries" leads her to write disparaging comments on the lack of progress of the British colonies as she is concerned by the lack of progress she viewed in Canada and the fact that its colonists are abandoned by London. Concerned by the fate of these poor British settlers, she directly accuses and criticizes the imperial practices of the government of the time. Departing from the traditional woman's recourse to tourist discourse, Frances Wright embarks upon a anti-imperialist diatribe. Wright’s straightforwardness and bluntness when it comes to expressing her views on the fate of the Canadian colonies, was supported by a feminine discourse on landscape aesthetics, which she uses as a means of accommodating the

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This is particularly obvious in Frances Wright's cold aesthetic discourse on Canada that matches and accompanies her own colonial agenda on the prospects of the British colonies.

In In chapter 4, it is also clear that Anna Jameson uses an aesthetic discourse throughout her narrative that reflects a form of ambivalence towards the colony, according to the emotional state of mind the authoress was in at the time of writing. In *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, Jameson rejects the scenic conventions of the travel book and chooses instead to depict ugly scenes when they appear ugly to her, subverting the "rosy-tint" picturesque language to suit her own personal and imperial agenda. She states that the tradition of the "scenic tour" expected from women's travel texts, has not been her purpose as her "object was not haste, nor to see merely sky and water, but to see the country." In *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, Anna Jameson chooses to combine aesthetics and politics to convey to her readers the potential of the British colonies, more particularly Upper Canada which in 1838 she described as in urgent need of reforms and of a new political system. Jameson, under the guise of the travel book, goes as far as to propose an imperial plan of Union, a federation, a few months before Lord Durham came to that conclusion in his *Report on the Affairs of North America* in February 1839. In her narrative, the English settlers were not to blame for the stagnation of the colonies but the imperial Colonial Office at home was. Finally, as we will see in chapter 6, after 1858, another category of travel accounts written by British women appeared on the market, taking the form of tourist books, in which women used colonial Canada as a platform to support new imperial Tory ideas and a new imperial system. Canada was merely surveyed and the results of their observations were then published by imperialist publishers. I will show that between the 1820s and 1867, British colonial theorists used Canada as a testing ground for new Empire policies and practices, by using or referring to British women travellers' contributions and reports on the progress of the Empire.

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16 Mills, *Discourses of Difference*, op.cit, introduction.
But, a few books also came from the margins of the civilized world in Canada that were unique in the publishing sphere in England. Two gentlewoman emigrants, already known in the metropolitan world of letters, set about the task of writing about their personal lives as colonists residing in mysterious unknown margins: the backwoods or the bush of Canada. However these personal narratives achieved more than chronicling the everyday life of their heroines as they developed a new discourse on the white British colonial world which, until then had remained unknown to the Victorian public. Male travellers had reported on the state of development of the colonies, women emigrants now revealed to metropolitan readers the living conditions of the settlers. But instead of confining their contribution to the mere domestic description of life in a log cabin, they brought to the page their feminine perspective on the future economic, social and political progress of the colonial world in North America. *The Backwoods of Canada* (1836) by Catharine Parr Traill and *Roughing it in the Bush* (1852) by Susanna Moodie have generated a considerable amount of literary criticism in Canada over the last five decades. But the role of the two writers in the trans-Atlantic dialogue or their contribution to an understanding of the Empire at home and in the margins have been overlooked by social historians. Both emigrant writers offered to metropolitan readers an insider's view of the margins where "colonial" projects could challenge the "imperial" project envisaged for the settlers by metropolitan theorists or male travellers, and in so doing they would seem to confirm Ania Loomba’s observations on the tense relationship between the colonies and the metropolis: "the imperial country is the "metropole" or metropolis from which power flows, and the colony [...] is the place which it penetrates and controls.\(^\text{17}\)"

For instance, in female emigrants' life journeys, the intimate interaction of the gentlewomen writers with their "domestic" Canada led them to expose their personal feelings on the land of adoption. There, the colonial discourse of the writers was opposed to the imperial discourse of the metropolitan readers. Genteel

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female colonists expressed their views in a language of domesticity, in a typically feminine rhetoric. In their narratives, Canada was represented in the domestic light and the maternal vocabulary of "shelter" and "safe abodes" having welcomed genteel "exiles" after they had had to leave the motherland. As Gillian Whitlock develops in *The Intimate Empire*, an essay on women's autobiographies in colonial and post-colonial contexts, the themes they developed or the para-textual comments they brought in, far surpassed the limits imposed on women's writings in the metropolis. These colonial autobiographies produced in Canada provide interesting first-hand accounts on the life of women settlers but above all they offer personal reflections on what it meant and felt to be an English expatriate in the British Empire. The authors talk about the experience of "going native" in Canada:

> Autobiographic texts in the field of colonial and post-colonial cultures will raise issue of power and privilege, marginality and authority, truth and authenticity in ways which may disqualify them as autobiography as it is conventionally understood.  

These personal narratives from "abroad" provide a first-hand account for historians on the progress of colonization and on the perception and/or setting up of the "imperial" project by colonists themselves. By the 1830s, British colonists had been deemed useful instruments of imperialism, the so-called "human factor" which was necessary to implement English colonies abroad. But imperialism, as imposed by the metropolitan centre, and its implementation by the English colonists, revealed tensions between the internal development of the margins and the original plans designed by the metropolis. In Canada, two gentlewomen emigrants narrate how colonialism as practiced by the white settlers was taking a different or separate route from that proposed by the imperial centre, since new attachment to the land of adoption was forming among the British settlers that clearly counteracted the demands of the mother country. "Imperialism,

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colonialism and the difference between them are defined differently depending on their historical mutations." Ania Loomba suggests that "one useful way of distinguishing them might be to separate them [...] in spatial terms and to think of imperialism [...] as the phenomenon that originates in the metropolis, the process which leads to domination and control. Its result, or what happens in the colonies as a consequence of imperial domination is colonialism.19"

The perspectives on Empire-building, and its implementation in Canada, varied greatly from women's travel narratives which generally defended imperialist views to emigration narratives which voiced Canadian interests. However all female writers shared the same passion for Canada, made of rejection or strong empathy, as well as an acute sense of patriotism, directed towards the metropolis and its imperial projects or towards the margins and the progress of Canada as a new nation. These different female conceptions of "nation" and "empire" met and confronted each other in the metropolis where the texts were circulated, thus feeding the public debate on nation building and empire building.

Over the first part of the 19th century, the time period under study in this book, a brief statistical survey of books published on Canada indexed in the British Library database, reveals that during the period ranging from 1815 to 1832, only one volume written by a woman and evoking Canada was published. The book Views of Society and Manners in America, in a series of letters from that country to a friend in England during the years 1818, 1819 and 1820 written by Frances Wright (later d'Arusmont) was well praised when it was published in the metropolis in 1821. She describes the Canadian colonies as overshadowed by the greatness of the American republic and doomed by the absence of an imperial project at home. Departing from the traditional woman's recourse to tourist discourse, Frances Wright develops a scathing attack on the inconsistencies of British rule in its colonies by placing the flawed principles of Tory colonial policies side by side with the American liberal system of government. Chapter 1 will analyse her contribution to the budding colonial debate at home and the

19 Ania Loomba, op.cit., p 7 (my italics)
influence her description of the Canadian "desert" as she called the colonies, had on prominent colonial thinkers.

Over the following two decades, from 1832 to 1852, 4 books were published by women, three settlers’ narratives and one visitor's travel narrative about Canada. These four volumes were Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada*, published in 1836 by Charles Knight; Anna Jameson, *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, published in 1838 by Otley and Saunders; Frances Beavan, *Sketches and Tales Illustrative of Life in the Backwoods of New Brunswick, North America, gleaned from actual observation and experience during a residence of seven years in that interesting colony*, published in 1845 by Routledge. And finally, Rebecca Burlend, *A True Picture of Emigration or Fourteen Years in the Interior of North America; being a full and partial account of the various difficulties and ultimate success of an English family who emigrated from Barwick-in-Elmet near Leeds in the year 1831*, published in 1848 by Berger and Green. Two of these texts left their marks in the metropolis. They were noted by reviewers and regularly referred to in other books. Indeed, Catharine Parr Traill and Anna Jameson's contributions were often used as cross-references in later travel texts. Their narratives also informed the public debate about the role of middle-class women in the new imperial project. This led them to suggest that life in Canada would offer greater freedom and more autonomy to educated women. Karen Lawrence, for instance, believes that "the travel book gives substance to philosophical debates about liberty and particularly women's liberty", that "the genres, plots and tropes of travel and adventure have been useful for British women writers in supplying a set of alternative models for women's place in society."

Such is the case in Traill's and Jameson's narratives about the Canadian margins as we will see in chapters 2, 3 and 4. The other two emigrant authors have not been reviewed in any important periodicals or referred to in further texts.

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Chapter 2 focuses on Catharine Parr Traill’s *The Backwoods of Canada* which was the first contribution to the knowledge of the colonial margins from a "domestic" perspective. She changed the clichéd representation of Canada conveyed to the British public by male travellers and emigration pamphlets. We will see that her so-called domestic representations of life in the colony influenced colonial theorists like Herman Merivale and Edward Gibbon Wakefield, encouraging them to take into account the role of British colonists, particularly female colonists, in future emigration schemes for the Empire. We will see how Traill’s manuscript written in the margins of the Empire by an author whose expertise essentially resided in domestic pioneering, was circulated in the metropolis where, with the distance and hindsight provided by emigration, she triggered off questions on issues pertaining to this "imperial project". Crossing the boundaries of the autobiographical genre, at least the boundaries established for published autobiographical texts written by Victorian women, Traill reveals her inner struggles in a colonial environment that were so far unknown to the British public. Traill’s text also breaks ground as in the course of her personal impressions on the New World she adopts quite an intimate tone to reveal her ambivalent feelings towards her mother country suggesting that new bonds were drawing her to her adopted country. In chapter 2 therefore, it will be shown that Traill is a good example of resistance to the imperial plan as she reveals some new sentiments of allegiance and attachment to Canada, as she is "going native". In fact, Traill reflects on the question of feelings, or "sentiment" of attachment towards her adoptive country. Such personal concern for the colonial world and its inhabitants was absent from male travellers’ or male settlers' narratives and in a way, it challenged the imperial theories on Britishness and on the growth of loyal communities of settlers abroad.

21 For instance, such a questioning on the notion of "national" attachment was absent from Traill’s brother settler’s narrative, the only male version of a "colonial autobiography" written in Canada, published in 1853. Samuel Strickland, *Twenty Seven Years in Canada West*, London, Richard Bentley, 1853.
Chapter 3 will examine the professional or economic motivations behind the composition of Traill and Jameson’s manuscripts on Canada. We will also consider how these texts about the colonial world or from the colonies, specifically written by female authors, were received in the metropolis where reading about the colonies had become a popular activity among the educated public. Were texts on the colonies of any marketable interest to the publishing houses of the metropolis? Did texts produced in the margins by emigrants fare as well as those published about the colonial world by confirmed women authors? How much editing was involved in the process of publication? We will detail the manner in which the authors’ publishers interacted with the female writers at home and in the margins, while studying the final formatting of the two women’s texts under the supervision of their male editors.

Chapter 4 will focus on Jameson’s narrative. Contrary to Traill, she remains a British visitor in Canada, even though she pretends at times to share the hardship of the colonists. Jameson’s emotional interaction with the Canadian surroundings influences Jameson's social representation of the colonial world and her political discourse on the state of the British Empire in Canada. Though stating to her readers in her introduction, that she would not dabble in politics, Jameson’s text rapidly becomes an indictment against local colonial politics in Toronto but most strikingly against home politics regarding the Canadian colonies. This chapter also examines how Jameson uses her travel narrative on her Canadian experience as a platform to advance the cause of women.

Between 1852 and 1867, 6 books on Canada were published in Britain. This period opened with Susanna Moodie’s two successive accounts of her personal life as a gentlewoman pioneer in Upper Canada. *Roughing it in the Bush* and *Life in the Clearings* caused some stir in Britain and in Canada when they were published by Richard Bentley in 1852 and 1853, in the wake of the Great Exhibition. Chapter 5 will analyse the fate of these "colonial" books from production in the margins to their final reception in London where the gap growing between the colonial margins on the one hand, and publishers and
readers in the metropolis on the other hand, had become unbridgeable. From the angle of post-colonial reading, *Roughing it in the Bush* is an early example of the Empire writing back home. Susanna Moodie performs the function of "legitimizing" the Canadian community through the act of self-narration, putting forward the colony as a new country presenting all the aspects of a reformed Britain where colonists lived a better life than in the mother country. Chapter 5 will discuss this essential contribution to the representation and elaboration of a new world in the margins.

Chapter 6 will then study the way in which Susanna Moodie posits herself as the legitimate bard of the New World, the intellectual who publicizes the new Canadian society's values and ideologies. Susanna Moodie, thanks to her written production that circulated in the metropolis, plays an essential role in shaping a proto-nationalist discourse in Canada, while she challenges the partisans of a strong empire at home. But her representation of the new world caused a stir at home and in the colony in the form of imperial counter-narratives written by women travellers. Edward Said described these counter-narratives as having "the power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging". Imperial counter-narratives such as Isabella Bird’s *The Englishwoman in America* (1856) or travel narratives published in 1856 and 1859 by Amelia Murray, former lady-in-waiting of Queen Victoria22 and Isabella Strange Trotter, the wife of a Royal Engineer23, were "very important to culture and imperialism" as they "constitute[d] one of the main connections between them."24. These texts supported a Tory imperialist agenda shared by writers and publishers, as we will see. With these books, travel narratives about Canada reflected a shift in or a revision of the imperial project at home, upheld by the Victorian Tory elite in the second half of the 19th century. Canada was more than ever placed in the cultural

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23 Isabella Strange Trotter, *First Impressions of the New World on Two Travellers from the Old in the Autumn of 1858*, London, Longman, Brown and Green, 1859.
margins of the Empire and considered as both an exotic and familiar place to visit as a couple's destination. Upper-middle-class women or couples now surveyed "their" Empire in order to assess its English characteristics, guaranteeing its stability and loyalty, as well as assessing its economic progress for the benefit of the mother country.

In this quick survey of the following chapters it is clear that some "colonial autobiographies" changed the imperial perspective the Victorian public had developed about Canada. Instead of being the "England in the New World" that some male travellers had depicted, genteel pioneers wrote narratives in which Canada was superseding England in moral worth. These texts from the margins revealed some tension in the national identity and "sentiment of attachment" of the authors. Female writers praised the growth of their new communities in the bush along new values and principles. In other words, for the first time, educated English emigrants, women in fact, questioned their Englishness and the imperial project of their former country, while supporting the "colonial" margins instead. They displaced the centre of the Empire from the metropolis to white Canada, staging the birth of Canadian communities that they "imagined" for their readers.

In fact, the first stronghold of the mother country over its colonies was found in the expansion of the bourgeois project, in the transfer of the middle-class values to the colonies. Important imperial theorists, like Edward Gibbon Wakefield or Herman Merivale, placed English gentlewomen at the heart of the imperial scheme. In short, the gentlewomen that settled in Canada and wrote about their experience as educated colonists in the bush were supposed to be the instruments of the bourgeois project, but they produced new colonial communal evangelical values in the New World. Ann Laura Stoler suggests the Empire was "not only about the importation of middle-class sensibilities to the colonies, but about the making of them." Female travellers were also instruments of this imperial bourgeois project, mediating hegemonic ideologies and producing a

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politics of imperialism. Ann Laura Stoler describes imperialism as an insecure "bourgeois project". Canada as represented in 19th century women's texts was an insecure bourgeois project. From 1837 to 1867, Canada was considered by the British educated public as a social and political laboratory on which to project theories to build ideal white British colonies.

The project these genteel emigrants exposed to their British readers, that of the margins, differed from the imperial project developed by the Colonial Office and supported by the middle classes at home. It is necessary to take into account the tension between the bourgeois project for Canada upheld by the margins as gathered in the personal narratives published by Traill and Moodie, and the imperial project defended by the English bourgeoisie at home found in Jameson and in other female travellers’ texts. This tension between the white colonies and the metropolis seems to have been typical of imperial developments in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, suggest Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper who rightly believe that visions of Empire were created and clarified "out of metropolitan discourses as well as by those fashioned in the colonies themselves." However it can be maintained that nationalist tensions and imperialist tensions already existed in mid-19th century women's narratives about Canada.

David Powell, in Nationhood and Identity, challenges the foundations of the myth of Britishness and British nationalism. He asserts that "the empire in particular was crucial to the idea of a British identity and to the self-image of Britishness." Most importantly, he develops the theory of a bourgeois network, of a natural ruling elite, rallying to the defence of British nationality throughout the Empire. I believe that such might have been the case for the bourgeois project that spread through the Empire after 1867 when the new Tory imperial project was

26 Ann Laura Stoler, "Cultivating bourgeois bodies and racial selves", Cultures of Empire, Catharine Hall ed., Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2000, p.90
popularised by female travellers like Isabella Bird against the liberal tendencies found in narratives produced in the margins. In the first half of the 19th century, women writers living in the margins already questioned the concept of Britishness and of the working of the British Empire as a metropolis tightly controlling its colonies abroad and dictating its political and cultural development from the centre to its colonists. Female emigrants, like Traill and Moodie, publicized the fact that new communities were growing in the colonial periphery, which soon would become independent in values and in sentiment from the mother country.

In From the Margins of Empire, I have assessed the various representations of Canada that British women proposed to the metropolitan readers between 1821 and 1867. Each personal narrative about the white colonies included discourses on gender, identity and imperial politics. The representations of Canada they conveyed actually led some British feminists to believe that Canada could become the Dominion of middle-class educated women. From the margins of Empire, the female emigrants have shown that to attend to the feminine realm in Canada was to embrace the politics of the wider community and that of nation building.

This study will also reveal that the female authors are obsessed with class, particularly with the middle classes whose social homogeneity, legitimacy and position was quite controversial in England, let alone in the colonial world. The debate on class and social hierarchy is at the core of the texts produced in the margins. These written contributions from the colonies, as well as the counter-narratives produced by female travellers from the metropolis, are very instructive about the manner in which people on both sides of the Atlantic conceived their status on the one hand, as well as their participation in the building of the Empire on the other. Reflections on the growth of a new Victorian culture in Canada as well as reflections on the social and political development of the Canadian colonies, seen through women's eyes, hopefully form an interesting contribution to the history of the British Empire in the first part of the 19th century, probably the most neglected period in imperial historiography.
CHAPTER 1

Through women's eyes: Canada in the margins of America (1821 - 1836) - Frances Wright’s Views of Society and Manners in America.

British female visitors or gentlewomen settlers did not come to the New World free of representations. The authors whose texts form the basis of the present research had conceived representations of the Empire, and of the Canadas at home, either in their youth or shortly before setting sail for the New World. Catharine Parr Traill, Anna Brownell Jameson, Harriet Martineau, Frances Beavan, Susanna Moodie or Isabella Bird became acquainted with British North America through the literature that was available in Britain prior to their departure. Cross-references to these readings can be found in their introductions, prefaces, or in their correspondence. Titles of travel books are also quoted by the female authors in their acknowledgements when they found these texts contributed to extending their knowledge on the New World. Instances of intertextual dialogue such as this can be found between travellers and emigrants in which authors would answer, quote or correct previous representations of Canada they felt were erroneous or in keeping with their own perception.

Frances Brooke’s The History of Emily Montague (1769) was the very first novel published by a female English author, whose plot was entirely based in Canada, in fact in New France. This much-celebrated epistolary novel belonged to the traditional 18th-century sentimental romance genre. Though this first "Canadian" text seems quite removed in time and genre, from the non-fictional travel texts or emigration narratives studied in this present volume, at least it provided British readers with a first instance of an English female author’s representation of life in the colony. The well-known novel provides us with some interesting observations on which to begin building a frame of analysis of our

nineteenth century texts written in the margins of Empire, for this first fictional representation of Canada offers some observations on the manner in which British female authors were subsequently to interact with the colonial world in North America.

Almost fifty years elapsed between The History of Emily Montague and Frances Wright’s Views of Society and Manners in America30 published in 1821, and another seventy years before the publication of The Backwoods of Canada (1836) by Catharine Parr Traill and Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada (1838) by Anna Jameson. Frances Brooke’s romance was a classic of woman’s literature from which women readers formed and received the earliest representation of the Canadian landscape, of the beautiful surroundings around Quebec, of the Plains of Abraham where Wolfe had died and of the morals and manners of the French and English populations in Quebec under British imperial rule. The History of Emily Montague, published a few years after the conquest of New France by an author who had lived in the colony, was the first contact that many female travellers and educated emigrants had with Canada. In The History of Emily Montague, Canada and colonial Quebec City were almost immediately equated with romance. The context was exotic, the Canadian wilderness was teeming with natives and French settlers who brought the foreign touch to the romance. Brooke’s English characters felt the thrill of being "strangers in a strange land", while being the rulers of a conquered and domesticated Canada. France Brooke’s sentimental romance, though considered as designed for a female readership, was also read and reviewed by male readers seeking information and intelligence about the colonial world in North America31, as Brooke was chronicling life in conquered Canada based on her own lived experience in the colony.

30 Wright, Frances, Views of Society in Manners in America, in a series of letters from that country to a friend in England during the years 1818, 1819 and 1820, London, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1821
Clearly, her novel was also the first instance of a woman’s participation and contribution to the imperial debate at home. Brooke’s close observation of the military circle in which she evolved, being the wife of a British officer, as well as her representations of French Canada under British rule, enabled her to convey interesting remarks on the British positions in North America. She suggested new policies to colonial governors. However Brooke did not write an open pamphlet about the wrongs of colonial policies in Quebec, in contrast to some of our female authors. She proceeded by using "ironic and political undertones". Nonetheless, the too lenient manner in which the governor (John Murray) treated the conquered French in 1769 was criticized. Out of sympathy and affection for the fate of the British Empire in America, the author resented the slackening of anglicization in Quebec. Mary Jane Edwards who studied the reception of Brooke’s novel in England suggested that the interest in the new colony and the political debates that ensued from the conquest of Quebec in England, contributed to the novel’s success since the views she expressed caught "some typical 18th century British thinking about the future of this North American colony." Mercantilism, tight political control, Anglicanism and anglicization should have been the practices imposed on the French settlers suggested Brooke, not "salutary neglect" or leniency - in terms of Catholic religion, French laws and language - which John Murray favoured at the time.

Literary critics have also noted that Frances Brooke had used her Canadian setting in order to comment on issues relating to women’s freedom. This would also be a recurring feature in most of the texts under study. The encounter with other social groups in Quebec, particularly with French Canadian women who were gayer and freer than English colonists, "influence[d] the expatriates’ concepts of liberty and autonomy", notes Faye Hammill. Though there is no space here to fully study Brooke’s fictional contribution to the representation of

32 Mary Jane Edwards, op.cit., p. 25.
33 Mary Jane Edwards, ibid, p. 2.
Canada in the second half of the 18th century, it is important to note that it sets a pattern for women writers on Canada. This has not yet been taken up by historians. Beyond the façade of the sentimental genre or that of travel narratives or emigrants’ narratives, lie important contributions to the imperial debate, from the pens of women. Resorting to the necessary artifices of these genres, when they were accessible to them, female authors reflected on their personal interaction with, and interest for, British colonial politics in Canada. Their texts aimed at instructing their British readers. Fifty years separated Frances Brooke’s novel on colonial Quebec from Frances Wright’s travel narrative on North America. Even though the imperial context had changed with the loss of the American colonies, the underlying message brought by Frances Wright on the state of Quebec and Upper Canada in 1821, was as powerful as that of Frances Brooke’s in 1769.

In the decades following 1815, the fate of the British colonies in North America seemed to again attract the attention of the British public and more particularly that of the colonial authorities in London. The colonies had been somehow forgotten since the end of the American Revolution. In this first quarter of the 19th century, reports or travel narratives about Canada were essentially written by men with the exception of one text written by a young female Scot in 1821, which caught the attention of male travellers and colonial theorists. Frances Wright (d’Arusmont) published her account of a transatlantic journey to North America during which she briefly visited Canada. Her volume entitled, *Views of Society and Manners in America; in a series of letters from that country to a friend in England during the years 1818, 1819 and 1820* went through a second edition in her London publishing house, the following year. In a biography published in 1844, in fact an autobiography written in the third person, the female author wrote that her text had received great acclaim in international reviews.35 Such had been the case indeed in Whig reviews, both in Britain and in America where her book was almost immediately published, as well as in France where the

Marquis de Lafayette asked to meet Frances Wright to congratulate her. However, in Britain, the reception of her text was more controversial than she admits, particularly in Tory circles and in their reviews in which Frances Wright's critical account of British rule in North America was much decried.

In fact, Views was published one year before the colonial debate in Britain was rekindled by a series of petitions from the French Canadian Assembly. British America was thus thrust to the forefront of contemporary debate over colonial affairs in England and remained in this position for at least three decades. Frances Wright’s visit to Lower and Upper Canada provided the enlightened public with useful information on the Canadian colonies, along with harsh criticisms on imperial mismanagement of British America. In other words, in 1821, Frances Wright’s text drew the attention of metropolitan readers to the neglect in which she found the British colonies in North America, anticipating by several years the involvement of the British Parliament in debates on colonial administration which resumed in 1824, after almost four decades of neglect and absence of concern for matters related to the Empire in North America.

Among the score of texts written by men after 1815, mostly one-time visitors to North America or to the Canadas, this travel account written by young Frances Wright, differed from the typical travel literature on the New World. Wright conveyed to her metropolitan readers very personal views on the state in which she found the Canadian colonies in 1819. Her text was rapidly noticed by Bentham and his followers because of her non-consensual tone, her direct indictment of British colonial policies in Canada and her wish to reform both emigration conditions at home and colonial rule abroad. Indeed, she put forward direct and relevant questions on the nature of the political and economic relationship between Britain and its colonies and on the actual necessity of keeping colonies in Canada. Those questions became burning issues in the year 1822 and in the following decade.

The texts published by male travellers presented more subdued political views on the colonies, often buried under layers of formal and lengthy
descriptions on climate, geography, transportation and so on. Departing from the traditional woman's recourse to tourist discourse, Frances Wright embarked upon a strong diatribe on the inconsistencies of British rule in its colonies by placing the flawed principles of Tory colonial policies side by side with the American liberal system of government. An analysis of her contribution to the budding colonial debate at home will lead us to observe the influence and impact that her text had on prominent colonial thinkers in the course of the decade following the publication of her text. Strong echoes of her unusual straightforward, witty anti-Tory remarks and her analysis of the deficiencies in imperial management which she particularly observed in Lower Canada, are to be found in two founding texts on colonial expansion published in Britain: Edward Gibbon Wakefield's *England and America* (1833) and Lord Durham's *Report on the Affairs of British North America* (1839). Finally, it must be noted that Wright’s straightforwardness and bluntness when it came to expressing her views on the fate of the Canadian colonies were supported by a feminine discourse on landscape aesthetics as a means of accommodating the "conflicting discourses of imperialism and gender".

**Canada in the margins of travel books on America (1815-1836)**

Before studying Frances Wright’s travel experience in Canada, we need to locate her work in the more general production of travel narratives on North America that seemed to flourish after 1815. Indeed the British Library catalogues register a growth of travel literature on British North America published in London or Edinburgh, after the end of the war of 1812-1814, which also coincided with the end of the Napoleonic wars. The number of travel books indicates a turning point in the perception of the white colonial world by readers in the metropolis. The British colonies in North America, which had been somehow neglected ever since the end of the American Revolution, seemed to

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36 Mills, *Discourses of Difference*, *op.cit*, introduction.
emerge out of a long slumber, in the margins of the former Empire - America. The
so-called second American Revolution of 1812-1814 had been a cause for concern
for the British Admiralty which had led English newspapers to bring news of the
British American front to their metropolitan readers. After the end of the war in
1814, some military men who had been posted on the Great Lakes or in various
forts along the frontier, now on leave, set out to write accounts about what was
left of the British Empire in North America. The most famous among these
travel texts as far as one can judge from the several editions the book went
through and the numerous references found in fellow travellers’ accounts, remains
Lieutenant Francis Hall’s Travels in Canada and the United States in 1816 and
1817, published in London in 1818. Extensive reading of travel accounts and
emigrants’ narratives proves that until the late 1830s with the very successful
publishing of Basil Hall and Frederick Marryat’s American narratives, Francis
Hall’s travel account remained the definite source of information on the North
American colonies. In his account, Hall tried to provide a more concrete,
systematic and complete account about Canada than that of other travellers. He
spent several months in Lower and Upper Canada from March until August 1816.
There he attempted to understand local politics as well as French Canadian society
and manners. He described himself as “a military traveller” who was concerned

37 For instance, among the texts that went through several editions one can quote from the British
Library Catalogue: John Lambert, Travels through Canada and the United States of North
America, in the years 1806, 1807 and 1808, London, 1810 (second and third editions in 1814 and
1816), David Anderson, Canada, or a View of the Importance of the British American Colonies:
shewing their extensive and improvable resources and pointing out the great and unprecedented
advantages which have been allowed to the Americans over our own colonies, London, 1814;
Charles Stuart, The Emigrant's guide to Upper Canada, or Sketches of the present state of that
province collected from a residence therein during the years 1817, 1818, 1819, interspersed with
reflections, London, 1820; John Howison, Sketches of Upper Canada, domestic, local and
characteristic: to which are added, practical details for the information of emigrants of every
class; and some recollections of the United States of America, Edinburgh, 1821; John Duncan,
Travels Through part of the United States and Canada in 1818 and 1819, Glasgow, 1823; Morgan,
J.C., The Emigrant's Notebook and Guide; with recollections of Upper and Lower Canada, during
the late war, London, 1824…
38 Lieutenant Francis Hall, Travels in Canada and the United States in 1816 and 1817, London,
Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brow, 1818.
with distances, locations, data on local populations and their occupations, as well as with military outposts.

The 1820s saw the publication of a series of surveys on the Canadian colonies, assessing their worth or values compared to America, imitating more or less Francis Hall’s account. The 1830s brought another series of travel accounts in which authors were concerned with assessing the value of the land and potential prospects for future settlers in British America. Emigration pamphlets replaced statistical accounts. A brief comparison between the number of publications on Canada, Australasia or South Africa in the British Library catalogues, indicates that British America was the focus of two out three publications on the colonial world during these two decades.

Herman Merivale, the famous early Victorian colonial theorist, in one of his Oxford lectures on "Colonisation and Colonies" delivered between 1839 and 1841, considered that the metropolitan interest for the (second) Empire had been rekindled in Britain thanks to events connected to Canada, as "the result of fortuitous and unconnected events." Among these events were the end of the long French and American wars, the war of 1812-14, the alarming state of poverty in Britain and finally the rebellions in the Canadas in 1837. Merivale, a shrewd observer of the growth and development of his Empire considered the British colonies in North America as the focus of this revival of interest in empire-building.

The causes which put an end to this apathetic state of feeling and directed so large a proportion of English thought and energy to colonial subjects, were partly such as arose out of the general progress of the community in the long peace […] Bad seasons and discouraging commercial prospects had rendered the theory of overpopulation a received article of belief; and our vast foreign possessions seemed to afford a prospect of relief from a danger then deemed imminent, now almost forgotten.

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In order to prepare his lectures in 1839, Herman Merivale admitted having based his research on surveys and travel accounts on the white colonies published in the previous decade. Central to his empirical analysis of the colonies “as they are and as they should be” according to one of his quotes, Merivale focused on British America which he often used as a case study. To inform his lectures, he relied on the reading of numerous travel accounts on Canada in which he found information on the state of the Empire abroad⁴⁰.

_Travel accounts and emigration pamphlets (1815-1837): mapping the Empire in North America._

Thus Canada regained some consideration in Britain after the war of 1812-1814 because its extensive territories represented an interesting destination for the surplus population of the metropole. Indeed, after the Napoleonic wars, the return home of Britain's demobilized soldiers and officers created a surplus population that could not all be employed immediately either in the agricultural industry or in the budding industrial sector, or, in the case of officers, start a professional career in town. In 1815, Britain had not yet reaped the fruit of the industrial revolution. Besides, with the enclosures having transformed most of rural England and Scotland into efficient farms employing fewer labourers and leaving yeomen and freeholders without land, and with the increase of an unemployed rural population relying on poor relief to survive, agriculture could not absorb the surplus population wretchedly surviving in the countryside⁴¹. In the old market towns or in the new budding industrial centres, the situation was no better as those who left the domestic system or the farming system to look for employment in the new factory system, were either greatly dependent on parish relief when they were entitled to it or sent to workhouses. Between 1815 and the end of the 1840s, poverty and pauperism were cyclically rampant in Britain. Reverend Thomas

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⁴⁰ Merivale, _ibid_, preface, p. vi.
Malthus warned British people that the population would go on doubling every twenty years while food would become scarce.

Emigration to the colonies was one of the solutions advocated by Tory policy-makers to evacuate this surplus population where land was available and where their work could be useful to the development of the Empire\textsuperscript{42}. In 1819, The British Parliament, its hand forced by the condition of the poor, voted for the first time the large sum of £50,000 for emigration to the Cape and Canada\textsuperscript{43}. In 1821, a still larger sum was also voted for emigration to the Cape and Canada. Looking for colonies where this surplus population could be displaced and transferred was a mission taken over by most travellers to North America after 1815. At home, Whig politicians and intellectuals were more critical of these erratic colonial practices in the Canadas, leading some travellers like Frances Wright, to praise the American Republic as a better abode for poor British emigrants.

Indeed, most of the early narratives about Canada did not really focus on the colonies but on the American Republic and its Republican experiment. Francis Hall’s narrative, \textit{Travels in Canada and the United States in 1816 and 1817}, was no exception. However Hall, contrary to many British travellers before and after him, sojourned in Canada for several months before he set out on his travels. Other travellers included Canada in passing as an addition, or appendage, to their travel accounts whose main focus was America. Though travellers included descriptions of the US and Canada, America’s progress attracted the readers and the reviewers in London.

In a review of one of the first travel texts devoted to Canada before 1815, written by George Heriot, \textit{Travels Through the Canadas} (1807), the literary critic of the \textit{Edinburgh Review} declared having been bored by the volume in comparison with books on America. The detailed description of the lakes, rivers,
catastrophic and villages in Canada was tedious for him; he added that "the enumeration of different townships, or districts nominally settled and only begun to be cultivated and cleared are in the highest degree uninteresting to all but persons having estates in those parts."

The British colonies and the gloomy state of underdevelopment in which visitors found them, rarely fared well in comparison with the bright prospects offered by the young American nation. Gerald Craig, who in 1955 edited extracts from the writings of thirty visitors to British North America, noted in his introduction that travellers "wrote not with amused detachment but with direct and immediate purposes: to instruct, to warn, to encourage, to criticize and to judge." Indeed, books on North America combined tedious descriptions with gloomy economic prospects, which were lightened up by some elements of personal adventures often encountered by the traveller during his visit of the American states. Before 1815, the *Edinburgh Review* classified these travellers’ texts as "interesting to lovers of light reading", "seeking the charm in the glory of personal adventures which makes up for all defects", particularly as many writers had no specific expertise or "any previous knowledge of science, of history, of polity or morals." Sidley Smith, the reviewer for the *Edinburgh Review* changed his mind on the quality of travel texts in 1818, when he reviewed Francis Hall's *Travels in Canada and the US* which he praised as a the work of an expert, written by “a clever lively man, very much above the common race of writers, with very liberal and reasonable opinions, which he expresses with great boldness.”

A brief survey of books published on Canada during the long nineteenth century, found in the British Library database, reveals that approximately one hundred and twenty books dealt with this part of the white Empire, which does

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47 Smith only focused on the American travels of Lieutenant Hall however, *The Edinburgh Review*, December 1818, p. 133-141.
not mean that each volume presented much interest for British readers. Indeed *The Edinburgh Review* complained about the poor quality of these volumes, among which Sidney Smith listed Heriot’s *Travels Through the Canadas* (1807), which he had just painstakingly reviewed:

> It should seem that books of travels may be written without any preparation whatever; that a man has only to be, or to have been, bodily in a country, in order to be qualified for describing every thing relating to it when he returns home; that the mere having to say ‘I am come back from a Journey to Canada’, gives a traveller a title to vamp up a full volume of chapters on that country. […] But it seems that a whole continent may be described – its scenery depicted – its wealth estimated – the arts, manners, institutions and habits of its various natives detailed, by any man who can hold a pen, or dictate to a writer, - without any previous knowledge of science, of history, of polity, or of morals – with no talents for reasoning or combination – with scarcely even the smallest attention to the actual state of the things in question, at the moment they are said to have been viewed. […] We must still, however, persist in hoping, that some more accomplished travellers [than Heriot’s] will ere long rise among us.\(^48\)

Out of these 120 volumes published in Britain, one out of five was written by a woman, but statistics show that women were more prolific on this topic by mid-century, to the point of almost taking over the narration of the Canadian colonies in the late 19th century. Between 1815, when travellers resumed their visits to the British colonial world, and 1836 when Catharine Parr Traill’s *The Backwoods of Canada* provided the first in-depth view of Upper Canada, 45 volumes had already been published on North America, i.e. almost a third of the entire literary production for the century. Out of these 45 travel texts, 19 focused on Canada specifically while only 2 were written by women writers: Wright and Traill. Frances Wright had written on North America as a whole, while Catharine Parr Traill focused essentially on Upper Canada. In the previous decade, between 1791 and 1815, 6 travel texts had been published, three focusing on North

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America at large and three being devoted to the Canadas\(^4\), all written by male authors.

A peak in the number of books released on Canada would be reached between the 1830s and 1850s, as we will see in the following chapters. But in the 1820s, travelogues on North America essentially presented Canada as lying on the margins of America. With the exception of military men posted in Canada whose interest seemed first to reside in the mapping of the British colonies for the public, most visitors crossed the Atlantic to take a closer look at the former American colonies\(^5\).

In the wake of this series of books devoted to the mapping of the Canadian colonies and the American Republic, another series of texts was issued in the 1830s whose authors were concerned with listing or comparing the assets of Canada and the US for future emigrants. It seemed that gradually Canada had begun to attract new visitors as 19 out of the 45 books published between 1821 and 1836, focused essentially on the Canadian colonies. This did not mean that all these books praised the values of the colonies, whose progress was measured against that of the American Republic. However, the titles indicate that the authors were not only one-time visitors to the colonies, but also short-term residents in Upper Canada. A great bulk of these "Canadian" texts were published after 1831, the year when colonial policy concerning land sales was reformed by Lord Howick, thus opening up the British American colonies to a more diversified

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\(^4\) Among the most famous texts published after 1791, which all went through at least three editions, one finds the translation of François Alexandre La Rochefoucauld Liancourt, *Travels Through the United States of North America, the country of the Iroquois and Upper Canada in the years 1795, 1796 and 1797, with an authentic account of Lower Canada*, London, 1799 and Isaac Weld, *Travels Through the States of North America, and the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, during the years 1795, 1796 and 1797*, London, 1799, as well as Alexander Mackenzie, *Voyages From Montreal, On the River St Laurence, Through the Continent of North America, To the Frozen and Pacific Oceans, in the Years 1789 and 1793, with a preliminary account of the rise, progress and present state of the fur trade in that country*, London, 1801 and George Heriot, *Travels Through the Canadas*, London, 1807.

emigrant population than previously, including the middle classes. It seems that the educated British public's interest in the colonial world was then awakened in the 1830s, first by a new concern for middle-class emigration, and second by the political situation in Upper and Lower Canada whose colonists began to demand colonial reforms. The metropolitan press reported on these political demands and subsequent social unrest, while considering the state of progress of these colonies. New imperial views on the role of colonies matched emigration propaganda and book publishing. In the 1830s, a real "Canada mania", to quote Susanna Moodie, "took England over". This might explain the large number of books on the Canadian colonies circulating in the metropolis between 1831 and 1836 as publishers found a great opportunity to release new travel narratives and emigration accounts or to reprint older narratives.

Between 1815 and 1836, before the publication of Catharine Parr Traill’s personal narrative, out of the 45 books published in Britain on the topic of North America, only one was written by a woman: Frances Wright. She essentially wrote about America for which she had conceived a real admiration. Nonetheless, in the two and a half years she spent in North America, she travelled through the British colonies for ten days to which she devoted important letters. In her *Views of Society and Manners in America; in a series of letters from that country to a friend in England during the years 1818, 1819 and 1820*, published in London in 1821, Frances Wright, a twenty-three year old upper-class Scotswoman, provided a scathing account of the white British colonial world in which she sojourned. Her text, with its vigorous style, supported a harsh report about Canada that clearly contrasted with the more objective and subdued accounts published before hers, by male visitors. In fact, her pamphlet-style attack against the British Tory cabinet’s colonial policies and its handling of Canada caught the attention of Benthamites as we will see, but also that of a prominent opponent of Tory

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practices in the colonial world, Edward Gibbon Wakefield. When Wakefield read Wright’s account he was not yet the self-fashioned popular colonial theorist of the 1830s. Nonetheless, Wakefield apparently found incentive and inspiration for his "colonial project" in Frances Wright's travel text on North America, and particularly in the pages on Canada, as will be seen at the end of this chapter. Clearly, this first woman's text publicized the neglect in which the Tory policies had left the Empire. I will now consider the manner in which she conveyed this "unfeminine" attack against the British government, as she clearly involved herself in the debate on imperial politics.

Canada and America through women’s eyes.

After the war of 1812-1814, while the American nation was considered as a commercial competitor and as a potential foe on the American continent; nonetheless, the Republican system fascinated British visitors. A thorough reading of the travel accounts most often quoted and referenced by travellers or reviewers, points to the fact that their authors had gone to America to observe the progress of the young nation. Prefaces reveal the interest or purpose of each author ranging from statistical accounts on the agriculture or commerce of America, to observations on political affairs. Frances Wright, to the contrary, declared that she had undertaken a tour of North America for pleasure and that her readers should not seek any specific and expert developments on North America in her book. Frances Wright included an advertisement in lieu of a preface in which she warned her readers about her apparent intentions: "The following letters form only a part of a more extensive and desultory correspondence." 53 (4)

In British Travel Writers in Europe, Katherine Turner notes about women's travel narratives at the turn of the 19th century, that such "feminine"

statements, or disclaimers, were required from the female writers who wished to publish their work\textsuperscript{54}. However, such a statement that was part of the conventions imposed on women could be quite deceptive. The apparently modest interest that Frances Wright found in America and its appendage Canada, during a "pleasure tour", with all the "candour" she believes her American friend Charles Wilkes would find in her account\textsuperscript{55}, turned into an eulogy of the American Republic, leaving the British colonies in its shadow.

According to male reviewers, women travellers were necessarily on pleasure tours. Katherine Turner notes that most texts written by women were disparaged by reviewers who pointed to their "frivolous pleasantry", "excess of female pertness" or else the authors were criticized for their threatening incursion into male territory\textsuperscript{56}. They necessarily displayed specific female or gendered strategies of representation that were expected from them such as: a lack of distance, i.e. a sensuous interaction between the authoress and her surroundings, a display of empathy towards natives. Involvement in the representation, with mind and body, replaced the objective rendering of facts and data by male experts. The "feminine" subject was even accused of being unable to prioritise, to judge or to measure and order. The physical incapacity of the female mind to go beyond the mere perception of her surroundings had been established by one of the champions of the separate spheres theory in Britain, Hannah More who theorized in \textit{Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education} in 1799:

In summing up the evidence… of the different capacities of the sexes, one may venture, perhaps to assert, that women have equal parts, but are inferior in wholeness of mind, in the integral understanding […] that if women have in equal degree the faculty of fancy which creates images and the faculty of memory which collects and stores ideas, they seem not to possess in equal


\textsuperscript{55} Letter to Charles Wilkes, Esq., placed before the advertisement in the original text.

\textsuperscript{56} Turner, \textit{op.cit.} p. 129.
degree the faculty of comparing, combining, analysing and separating these ideas; that deep and patient thinking that goes to the bottom of a subject.

Frances Wright set out for America on a "pleasure tour" as she claimed in the advertisement while in fact she came with a personal agenda she intended to put forward all through her volume. From the start, she seemed to disrespect the codes imposed by conduct books on women travellers by taking the decision to travel with her younger sister without a chaperon, which was more than daring at the end of the 1810s. Just as she had been determined to disregard patriarchal rules by travelling to America unchaperoned, she also seemed determined to breach any patriarchal conventions in her writings if necessary. She was inspired by "the American paradigm", suggesting that she acted like American colonists who had breached the rule of patriarchal and monarchical power in 1776. She sympathized with them for speaking their mind and taking their future in their hands. In Americans, she said she found the inspiration to declare her liberty and assert her right to travel independently and to speak her mind. It is a starry-eyed Frances Wright who asserts before landing, how enthusiastic she is about the New World:

The world [America] has also been the refuge of the poor and the persecuted of every tongue and every clime, and now exhibits, in its northern section, a well-organized nation in all the vigour and pride of youth and freedom; in its southern, a spirited people awaking from ignorance and resenting oppression, asserting their rights as men and citizens, and laying the foundation of commonwealths, which the next generation may see established in power, rich in resources, enlightened with knowledge, and fenced by the bulwarks of just laws, wise institutions, and generous patriotisms, against the efforts of foreign enemies or the machinations of domestic traitors. (8)

Male visitors, educated tourists or expert agriculturists, as trained observers in their field of expertise, adopted a scrutinizing method to expose and

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discuss the state of the British colonies as well as the American political system, its social organization and its commercial achievements. These accounts followed the conventions of male travel accounts already in use in the 18th century. Their essays all displayed an almost identical table of contents according to their self-assigned missions. "Military travellers" as Francis Hall described his style, tended to provide a series of chapters that followed a set route in North America. From New York, travellers usually headed North and surveyed "from the high road" as Hall states, the progress of the nation they were there to witness. As for the travellers who came to inspect the opportunities offered by America or British America, their chapters often combined a travel route with an observation grid which included the categories of climate, soil, productions, principal towns, principal roads and means of transportation, the style of government, lists of prices and cost of living, followed by a few conclusive comments on the prospect of the two nations in terms of population, economic expansion and commercial competition. Visitors usually concluded that the former American colonies had been completely transformed since the American Revolution. Rare were the visitors who did not express surprise upon landing. They then sought to analyse the reasons behind the success story of the United States. Such was the case of Francis Hall who had launched first into a mapping of the Canadian colonies, which he surveyed thoroughly, before returning to America where he landed. Hall's book turns into a praise of the American system to which he dedicates his appendices and addenda. To a rigorous outline, Frances Wright clearly opposed a self-fashioned style that she described in her foreword. Her "desultory remarks" gathered during a pleasure tour should thus be seen as a statement rather than as a disclaimer, usually taking the form of an apologetic introduction. Frances Wright

58 Turner, British Travel Writers in Europe, op.cit., p. 49-50.
59 Craig Gerald, Early Travellers in the Canadas, op.cit., p. xxxii.
60 Hall, Francis, Travels, ch XX- ch XXXVIII, plus appendices n°1-n°3, and addenda: section I-III. Hall's liberal views are revealed in these final sections when in his concluding paragraph, he underlines: "By the triumph of the Democratic party, its principles have been fostered into maturity, and their application illustrated by experience. It has borne the nation triumphantly."
made it clear that she did not wish to write an introduction and readers had to take her manuscript for what it was worth.

While other male visitors had come as experts with some utilitarian ideas in mind, twenty-three year old Frances had crossed the Atlantic to see the New World for herself. But contrary to what most men described as their tour or travel of North America in their titles, Frances Wright picked a title that advertised a new expertise, pertaining to the woman's sphere: *Views of Society and Manners in America*. She intended her representation of North America to be different from the various surveys and mapping produced by male travellers before and after her. And for what was apparently a domestic representation of the domestic sphere in America she did not need to offer a disclaimer. However her conception of the domestic or private sphere was large as she went as far as to produce some political comments on the British colonies, a topic normally belonging to the masculine realm.

Wright also departed from the objective presentation that consisted in suppressing an evident personal view that the best travellers were supposed to convey to their readers. In proper men’s travel accounts, at least those praised by the *Edinburgh Review*, readers were offered impartial representations of the colonial world throughout the book, while more personal conclusions on the progress of the New World were only given at the end of the volumes. In fact, it was only in the final pages of the best travel books that authors revealed the political agenda that they had tried to keep for themselves up until then in order to offer an objective and factual account to their readers. There, in these last pages imperialists or Tory views were revealed if the authors had made the promotion of the Canadian colonies throughout their books. If they condemned Canada as the "poor man’s country" as Francis Hall described it, their pro-republican, reformer or radical views were exposed. All extrapolated on the future of the British colonies in America. For instance, Tory visitors praised the valuable advantages
of the provinces, particularly Upper Canada as yet unexploited\(^6\), while Reformers or Radicals would direct settlers to the United States rather than Canada. Frances Wright, refusing to follow any convention, clearly expressing her political sympathy for the American nation and her antipathy towards what she calls "English colonial rule", from the onset and in the course of her work, dedicating several pages to her opinionated views during her short visit to Canada.

Frances Wright's text was therefore quite remarkable at the time. She wrote the first woman's narrative on North America. She provided the very first non-fictional account of America and Canada, through women's eyes.

**Frances Wright's Views of Society and Manners in America (1821)**

Frances Wright's book was composed of a series of letters to an old friend, Mrs Millar, letters which she wrote in North America and which were then selected and edited upon her return to Scotland. The book achieved great fame when it was published in London in 1821, by Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, Francis Hall's publishers, who offered thanks to the efforts of one of Wright's friends, to bring out the work, take all the expense and share the profits\(^62\). The book clearly placed America and Americans on the map for British readers who seemed to have been well informed of the political and economic progress of their former colonies by male travellers, but whose knowledge of society and manners had been limited. With the publication of *Views of Society and Manners in America*, Frances Wright notes that her letters "changed the tone and somewhat corrected the views of leading British periodicals" on America as readers

\(^6\) Hall, *ibid*, p. xxxiv.

rediscovered "the country of Franklin and Washington". By the same token, readers also discovered Canada and its society and manners.

On the cover of the first edition, as well as that of the following re-edition, the author, presented as a lady, remained anonymous, in the manner of 18th-century travel texts. Her name finally appeared on the cover of the later editions. Reviewers were able to establish that Frances Wright was the orphaned daughter of the first British publisher of Paine's Rights of Man. Following the publication of Views of Society and Manners in America, British periodicals of reformist or radical tendencies acknowledged her contribution to the understanding of the American states. Shortly after the book was published she was invited by Jeremy Bentham and his utilitarian friends, among whom were James Mill and his son. She stayed at Bentham's house on several occasions, referring to him in her letters, as "my philosopher". She also became acquainted with the Marquis de Lafayette who greatly admired her work and whose confidante she became. According to the Edinburgh Review, she was "the talk of London and of Paris."

Frances Wright travelled back to America with Lafayette, in the summer of 1824, sharing his fame and honour. Through Lafayette, she met some of the American founding fathers: Madison, Jefferson, Adams. Shortly afterwards, in 1825, she also befriended Robert Owen with whom she launched the Nashoba colony in the United States. In 1824, Frances Wright brought Mrs Trollope, one of her

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63 Quoted by Richard Stiller, Commune on the Frontier, the Story of Frances Wright, New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1972, p. 67.
64 Frances Wright returned to Glasgow in her teens after having been raised by her grand father and aunt in England. There in the house of her great-uncle James Mylne, professor of moral philosophy at Glasgow University, she learnt that her father had secretly helped the publishing of Thomas Paine's The Rights of Man, see Richard Stiller, op.cit., p. 29.
67 The Edinburgh Review, July 1832, "Mrs Trollope, Domestic Manners of the Americans, 1832", p. 481. Frances Wright is mentioned several times as the reviewer wonders how Frances Wright whom he described as an enthusiast, the champion of America, "the female professor", received Mrs Trollope's fierce and shameful trial of the Americans and their nation.
69 Ibid, p. 53-54.
acquaintances, with her to America, leaving her in Cincinnati to observe the morals and manners of Americans. Contrary to Mrs Trollope's book that mocked and decried the manners of Americans, Frances Wright's book was essentially a long praise of the greatness of American democracy. Frances Wright found no flaws with the American institutions or the people, quite the contrary as she wished them to spread their universal values and views to the rest of the world, as her concluding letter made clear. She pointed to the "awful responsibility that has devolved on the American nation; the liberties of mankind are entrusted to their guardianship; the honour of freedom is identified with the honour of their republic [...]" (270).

The "desire" to see America for herself was at the origin of the transatlantic voyage. Her great-uncle had provided her with free access to the library at the University of Glasgow where she read all the published volumes on America. In her autobiography, she states: "After reading Jefferson's Declaration of Independence, the most masterly piece ever penned by man, I resolved that the United States was the place to put into practice my long cherished notions of reform. I made up my mind to visit that country.71" Young Frances Wright makes clear her Radical sympathies, and even her Republicanism from the start, siding with those who had left the patriarchal Empire ruled by the Hanoverians, to build a free nation. Following the same paradigm, the orphaned Wright sisters (herself and her younger sister) left their homeland, patriarchal Britain, and "conquered Scotland", then travelled through America without a chaperon. Frances Wright, still in her early twenties, was described by her male and female friends as a striking woman; Her "commanding features" were classified by observers as "masculine". She wore her hair clipped short, not caring for the fashion or conventions of the day, sometimes wearing "Turkish trousers" and sporting a man's hat at all times.

72 Helen Heineman, Restless Angels, op.cit., p.6.
The series of 28 letters that composed the volume were written over the two years Frances Wright spent in North America from 1818 to 1820. There she travelled across the Eastern states, from Philadelphia to the Canadian border, crossed the border at Niagara and took a coach from Niagara to Montreal, via Upper Canada. However her visit was short as she and her sister Camilla decided to spend no more than a week in the British colonies. Her weeklong visit to the "Siberian frontier" (141) as she described Canada, is crammed into one letter, Letter XV. The letter reflects her lack of enthusiasm for Canada and her marginal interest for this British territory. It contrasts greatly with the rosy-tinted descriptions she provided of the settled American states she had already visited. In concluding her letter and hence her weeklong visit to Canada, she stated: "I fear I have written a dull letter."(148)

In the late 1810s and1820s, a short-term visit to Canada was enough for any traveller, even those sharing Tory views, to note the neglect of the colonies under Tory rule. Visitors or military men could not help but note the lack of cohesion between remote settlements, the scattering of small loose communities away from any proper towns. All were struck by the sense of absence of bearings. Indeed, once they reached the village of Niagara across the border, British visitors were at a loss. Directions were vague due to the absence of proper maps. For instance, at the end of the 1820s, Patrick Shirreff, an educated Scottish farmer travelling to North America, seeking a destination for his brother to settle, was quite shocked by the contrast between the two worlds, at the tourist beacon of the Niagara Falls. The falls symbolically represented the separation between the two worlds, the underdeveloped British territory and the thriving American states. There no map of Canada could be found:

We could not obtain a map of Canada, the booksellers of Niagara, informing us a pocket one of the country never had been published, almost nothing
could be learned about mails and stages, which nearly placed us in the situation of pursuing our route blindfold.73

Transportation was also inadequate for the visitors who had just travelled from New York to Niagara, by coach and by boat. Similarly inns, when they existed, lagged far behind the American ones in terms of comfort. Frances Wright describes the only little tavern near the Falls as cramped and poor looking compared to the gay and comfortable inns she and her sisters had stayed at in New England. Here she said, "we found the only public apartment sufficiently occupied and accordingly made bold to enter a small room, which, by the cheering blaze of an oak fire, we discovered to be the kitchen and, for the time being, the peculiar residence of the family of the house." (123)

Canada seen from the American side of the border.

For the sake of publication, Frances Wright selected twenty-eight letters out of a larger correspondence with her friend Mrs Craig Millar74. Canada featured in Letter XV, halfway through her pleasure tour in America. It is also partly mentioned in the previous letters when the visitor was approaching the frontier. Letter XIII is an account of her visit to the Niagara Falls and Letter XIV an account of the war of 1812-1814. Both letters provide a form of introduction to Canada as seen from the other side of the border. Near "the frontier village of Lewiston", the young female traveller was struck by the poor road system that seemed characteristic of this Canadian frontier settlement. Near the waters of Lake Ontario, she underlined the desolation of these dreary places, which seemed

73 Patrick Shireff, A Tour through North America, together with a comprehensive view of the Canadas and US, as adapted for agricultural emigration, Edinburgh, Oliver and Boyd, 1835, vol.2, p.68.
74 Helen Heineman notes that Mrs Millar's dead husband had been the friend and publishing partner of Fanny Wright's father, sharing with him radical ideas that had made them both unpopular in Britain leading both Millar to flee Scotland for America after his publication of Paine's Rights of Man, Restless Angels, op.cit., p. 9.
so untypical of America, suggesting that the poor state of the Canadian province nearby might slow down the progress of the settlers:

The muddy creeks, the sluggish drain of the vast swamps whose noxious exhalations breed fevers, intermitting and bilious, during the autumnal months, in the new and scanty populations […] There was, indeed, neither rock, nor dale, nor hill, nor pleasant valley – nothing but the settler's cabin, and now and then a growing village backed by the ragged forest. (121)

In Letter XIV, Frances Wright launched into a comparison of the two countries basing her comments on her various readings of the latest war. She takes the time to recount some decisive moments of the war of 1812-14, in order to acquaint her readers with the details of it, which she gladly describes as the second war of independence of America over the mother country, for "independence and existence", a form of sweet revenge against the Empire. In Britain – which Wright persists on calling "England" –, people seemed not to have been aware that British troops had been so strongly challenged on their colonial grounds:

I know that in England, generally speaking little attention was paid to the events of a contest which to her was a sort of byplay, while occupied in a deeper game upon which she had staked her all. It is probable, indeed, that one half of the nation scarce remembered that they were at war with their young rivals in the New World, until they found their ships, one by one, swept from the seas by a people they had scarce designed to consider as holding the place of an independent nation. (134)

She observed that "The Niagara and northwestern frontier still exhibit some faint traces of the war." (127). Here the conduct of Americans having burnt the city of Newark is used to show how the conduct of one individual, General McClure who ordered the burning of the city, has been collectively condemned by the American public as an "act of inhumanity." By suggesting that Americans had been exemplary in apologizing for the general's misconduct to British settlers living on the border, Frances Wright underlines the lack of similar condemnation on the part of Canadians or the British government for the raids conducted by British troops into American cities during the 1812-1814 war and the so-called
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atrocities perpetrated by Britain’s native allies. She clearly suggests that Americans were honourable citizens while the British soldiers were ruthless and disgraced their country. By the same token, she indicates the British Admiralty at home was properly unforgivable as they had condoned these exactions.

The honour of a government may often be committed by officers acting under its name, yet contrary to its wishes and instructions. Enquiry and condemnation may then avert disgrace, but if, in lieu of these, favour and reward be accorded to the offenders, their employers are justly chargeable with all their crimes. These observations naturally occur to the traveller as he approaches the northwestern frontier. (130)

In this representation of the war on the Canadian border, Wright clearly strove to describe the British soldiers and the Tory government at home as guilty of atrocious misdeeds towards the Americans. Letter XIV therefore heralded her anti-British position that she continued to express as she fast approached the Canadian provinces. Her account and her interpretation of the war between the two nations is even more subjective when she recalls one specific event – the abandoning at Frenchtown of the American prisoners who were subsequently tortured by the natives. In her eyes, the British government is once again responsible for this barbaric act, all the more so as Colonel Proctor, who abandoned his prisoners at Frenchtown "to the savages", was "thanked at home as he was in Montreal for his bravery and humanity?" Frances Wright set the tone of the next two letters, fearing no retaliation when she pointedly referred to the "English government", deriding the so-called "honour of the nation." (131)

Lord Castlereagh, you may remember, in answer to some remarks made in the House of Commons upon the humanity of the Americans to their prisoners, ascribed it to fear. It would be little surprising if that Irish nobleman felt himself interested in confounding the words "courage" and cruelty. (132)

In the final section of Letter XIV, as she was about to resume her journey for which she felt "no small desire", she considered the perspective of progress and industry around Lake Erie, "from the Atlantic through the broad channel of
the St Lawrence." She believed the future development of the region along the waterways could only be effected under the command of American settlers, thereby suggesting the necessary inclusion of some of the Canadian territory within the young Republic, thus raising the spectre of "annexation". (135)

**Frances Wright's "dull letter" from Canada.**

Letter XV is subtitled "The Canada Frontier" which indicates that for the authoress Canada was simply lying on the border or on the margin of America. Like Ohio, which lay on the western "frontier" of civilisation, Canada was merely a settlement in the wilderness on the northern border of American civilisation. There, in a few pages, the Canadas are represented as an aggregate of national communities. The French Canadians and some English merchants live in separate quarters in Lower Canada, while in Upper Canada, small pockets of settlements are composed of poor emigrants who had been shipped from Ireland or Scotland through private emigration schemes. Poverty and wretched moral conditions prevailed as no supervision or care were provided to these bush communities. Canada was thus a desolate frontier.

Letter XV nevertheless also reveals that Wright’s knowledge about Canada was very vague. Frances Wright was an educated young woman and her lack of knowledge on this part of the British Empire was surprising as her geographical knowledge of the rest of the North American continent, as well as of Europe, was correct. Contrary to the American states on which she had read extensively - as her well-informed previous letters indicate -, she was apparently unprepared, uninformed and clearly uninterested in the British colonies. Her main travel guide was Francis Hall's *Travels in Canada and the United States in 1816 and 1817*, mentioned several times in her narrative either to save the female traveller from entering into fastidious descriptions of a city for instance, or to back up her own remarks. Her lack of enthusiasm for Canada is revealed by a terse remark found in the very first lines of Letter XV. There she resorts to Francis
Hall’s comments on Canada to introduce her surroundings. Quoting one famous traveller saved her from what would have been a burdensome task for her: "I shall send you few details respecting our route along the Canada frontier, both because I find little leisure for making notes and because I can impart little that is new." (140)

The general impression that the letter conveys is that her visit was quite short, and limited to the reading of books. This would not be unusual at the time. Contrary to the earlier letters in which Frances Wright was proud of interacting with the American people, in the British colonies she limits herself to distant dissertations on various aspects, having spent most of the week she was in the Canadian provinces, on a boat, which seems to be her main vantage point to observe Upper Canada:

There is something impressive in the monotony of the Canadian frontier – the vast river, the black cedars which line its shores and crown its rocky islands, the settler’s cabin peering out of the shades, and here and there a little village and a line of cultivation breaking upon the desert; add to this the profound silence, broken only by the discordant voices of your Canadian boatmen as they hail some distant solitary canoe or rise and fall in harsh cadence to the paddle and the oar. There is little in such scenery to talk or write about, yet it has its effect on the mind. (142)

The lack of accurate or lively details, the use of clichés on Canadian nature already circulating in travel accounts, like Hall’s for instance, mentioned in a footnote on page 141, as well as the lengthy political information she borrowed from Robert Gourlay’s "pamphlets" or other radical sources, might indicate that she actually never crossed the border. Particularly striking are the descriptions she provides of the "Siberian frontier", an expression already used by Lieutenant Hall in his Travels: "Nothing could be more Siberian than the aspect of the Canadian Frontier", he wrote in March 1816. She also quotes Hall’s expression "the dreary
outpost of civilization" and borrowed from him the above description of the "bateau" trip up the St Lawrence.\(^5\)

The first misrepresentation she gives on Canada concerns the weather. According to her, at the beginning of September 1819, the country was about to be snowed in and frozen by "polar winds", "the icy winds of the equinox". Such horrible weather, combined with a fever she suffered from for a few days, prompted her to cancel her trip to Quebec, she says: "The icy winds of the equinox, and some remaining weakness, scolding me into prudence, we sacrifice our visit to Quebec and strike south for the States.(148)" Curiously enough, in 1819, John Duncan, another Scottish traveller, happened to be in Canada in October. He described the delight of the "Indian summer" to his readers.\(^6\) He did not mention polar wind or cold weather. However when Francis Hall was in North America between March 1816 and October 1817, the whole continent was in a thrall of extremely cold weather that had actually hit most of the world, a climate change that had been due to an eruption underwater. Canada was indeed swept by "icy winds" and "polar winds" in March 1816 when Francis Hall arrived in Canada.\(^7\)

Frances Wright's report on Canada contains several contradictions. For instance, Upper Canada, which she states she did not really visit properly for lack of "adequate transportation", offers her the opportunity for a debate on the living conditions of the settlers: "I was surprised to find much discontent prevailing among the poorer settlers in Upper Canada. I could not always understand the grounds of their complaint, but they seemed to consider Mr Gourlay as having well explained them. (140)" However she does not stop by a settler's house or

\(^5\) Hall, Francis, *Travels*, first quote p. 65, second quote p. 69 and last description p. 154: "'Tis a sad waste of life to ascend the St Lawrence in a bateau. After admiring the exertions with which the Canadian boatmen, who seem to have exclusive possession of this employment, force their low flat-bottomed barks against the rapids, here is nothing else but to gaze listlessly on the descending current and its low wooded shores; which the monotony of the oar stroke is scarcely broken by the occasional rustling of a wild duck."


\(^7\) Hall, Francis, *Travels*, ch. VIII, Albany to the frontier of Canada, p. 49, "[...] the keen blasts of the north, sweeping over its frozen expanse (Lake Champlain) pierced us with needles of ice."
seem to exchange with any one living in a shanty, so we may wonder how she formed an opinion about their living conditions and more particularly how she grasped their feelings of discontent. Besides how could she have stopped at a settler's house, since she went up from Kingston to Montreal in "a well-manned bateau" in at least four days (142).

Following the remark on the feeling of general discontent which she apparently felt was growing in Canada, she immediately switched to the presentation of Robert Gourlay and his pamphlets, which offered her ample details for debate and information on Upper Canada, "as they certainly appear to have spoken the sentiments of the poorer settlers, whose cause he had abetted against the more powerful landholders, land surveyors and government agents." (140)

The usual lengthy descriptions found in earlier letters, even in Letter XIV for instance, are cut short here and replaced by curt remarks on the Canadian side of the border:

> On the southern shores of Lake Ontario, heaven knows, we found sickness sufficient to have broken down the stoutest spirits, and yet there we never heard a complaint. On the northern shores, we found discontent everywhere. (141)

Contrasting the situation she found in Lewiston with what she said she observed on the northern shore of Lake Ontario, she suggests that settlers in America never complain, while in Canada they speak up "whenever a pretext is afforded" them. This enables her to debate on the influence of the two governments towards their peoples and their impact on national characters. British settlers were clearly neglected by their government in Canada and therefore found reasons to complain, while they were well looked after "in the United States", as in Lewiston for instance, where medicine was given to settlers suffering from ague, "a man shivers in the ague, swallows his remedies, recovers or dies, without having quarrelled with anyone save perhaps with his apothecary." (141)
Frances Wright, for "lack of interesting news" to provide her reader, used Canada, the "remaining" British possession in North America, as she stated, to criticize British colonial policies openly and fiercely. Letter XV is a scathing diatribe against British policies in Canada and against aristocratic Tory rule at home. There, Canada becomes a platform to convey Wright's (radical) political agenda.

**Canada, "a poor man's country" where paupers are abandoned by Britain.**

The colonies are described to her readers as a wild forest, where isolated settlers in their shanties struggle "in dreary solitudes"(141), "abandoned" by the British government on the one hand, and exploited by greedy land speculators on the other hand. In her previous letters, America had been presented as a land flowing with milk and honey under a bright sun, where emigrants could find work and eventually prosper. In the same simplistic and trenchant manner, Canada is described as a land where emigrants who came from Ireland or from her native country, Scotland, found misery and sometimes death at the end of their journey. If they came as independent settlers, they were directed by “landjobbers” (land brokers) to small properties which they acquired upon their landing, without surveying them first; since they were unprepared for the work of clearing a plot of land in the Canadian backwoods, the family necessarily starved within a few months before they were able to plant any crops.

You will conceive the sufferings of a troop of half-clad paupers, turned adrift in this Siberia, as it often happens, at the close of the autumn; the delays, perhaps unavoidable, which occur after their landing, before they are sent to their station in the howling wilderness, kill some and break the spirit of others. Many are humanely sheltered by Canadian proprietors; not a few find their way to the United States and are thrown upon the charity of the city of New York.(141)

As for those poor emigrants whose passage had been paid by land companies, after having been transported in terrible conditions across the ocean,
they worked as indentured servants clearing land, while living in conditions that she believed, were worse than that of paupers in the British Isles:

After fearful hardships, some rear at last their cabin of logs in the savage forest; polar winds and snows, dreary solitudes, agues, and all the train of evils and privations which must be found in a Canadian desert. (141)

Her presentation of the bounties of the American states and the good living conditions of all its citizens, if somewhat exaggerated, was also an attack against the poor conditions of living of the labouring populations in England and Scotland. Frances Wright never hides her radical tendencies and her great love for liberty, from her reader. All the more so as her correspondent, Mrs Millar, was the wife of her father’s partner in the publishing of *The Rights of Man* in Britain. But her anti-English sentiment, held in check until the moment she reached the Canadian border, is now made explicit and applied to the political situation both in the colonies and in Britain. Wright proceeds to hold a mirror to the “English Cabinet” for them to face up to their mistakes and inconsistencies in colonial management.

First of all, for Wright, the contrast between the "national characters" of the modern Republic and the old monarchy was nowhere more obvious than in Canada. There it was striking. The British government was immediately blamed for the state of misery and underdevelopment in which she found the colonies. In a few sentences, Canada and the mother country were relegated behind the great liberal American Republic. From the merry vistas and the gay colours of the American landscape, Frances Wright transports her reader to "the savage monotony of the Canadian frontier", with its "vast rivers, black cedars", "here and there a little village and a line of cultivation breaking upon the desert, add to this the profound silence."(141) However, she admitted that this dreariness and feeling of gloominess was impressive and bore on her spirit, "there is little in the scenery to talk or write about, yet it has its effect upon the mind."(142) This blunt summary of the Canadian landscape marks the end of her description of the landscape in Upper Canada, which she had not cared to visit in the first place.
Nonetheless, she resumed her scathing attack on the living conditions of poor settlers in a more rhetorical passage.

Focusing on the inhumane conditions of the settlers she apparently observed, she set about attacking the colonial practices of Tory governments in the colonies. Her readers she feels must be "aware of the precariousness of the tenure by which they [the English government] hold these colonies." Clearly, she describes Canada as basically a frontier, an outpost, used by the British to resist America, and to create tension with its successful neighbour. Irony, and even anger, pervades her criticism. She punctuates her comments with many exclamation marks, and humorous remarks on the English manner of handling affairs in Canada: "Thus goes the world!" Lower and Upper Canada are represented as neglected by the British government, as London seems to prefer focusing on the protection of the frontier of "these expensive appendages to a distant empire", mere "military depots, in short, into which England throws her armed legions, to awe the peaceful population of the neighbouring Republic."

(147) Canada seems to be a mere remnant of some bygone English hegemony that is now destined to remain in the margin of the new American Empire: "If the Canadas are not the most expensive of the British colonies, are they not the most useless? One would think to look at them." (142)

A pamphlet against the British Empire.

Katherine Turner notes that travel writing in the 18th century often presented a challenge to the discourse of national unity advocated by the British themselves79. With Frances Wright's travel accounts the consensus on the British

78 Hall, Francis, Travels, p. 162, Here, she echoes Francis Hall's rare ironical remark on the uselessness of maintaining an army in Canada where 25.000 £ were spent per annum. Compared to America and its millions of acres that needed hands to develop, England was "contending for and expending her best blood and treasure in defence of a country, one half of which is little better than a barren waste of snows and the other a wild forest scarcely intersected by a thread of population."

79 Turner, British Travel Writers in Europe, op.cit., p. 11.
Empire that had not yet been challenged in the previous travel narratives written by men, is put to the test. Frances Wright's national identity is brought to the fore, for the first time, during her visit in the British colonies in Canada.

Frances Wright was a Scotswoman whose radical views prompted her to deride the English colonial efforts to maintain a "British" empire, whose metropolis was London, not Edinburgh. Through her disparaging comparison between the British colonies in Canada and America, Frances Wright expresses her feelings about the "domestic" Union in which the Scottish nation was trapped at home. According to her, Scottish independence had been sacrificed on the altar of the commercial Empire so that few Scots (Tories and land speculators) could take advantage of the colonies. Such a position explains her bitter comments when assessing the trifling boon that the Canadas represented. She gradually suggests through examples that the so-called British Empire was just a farce and even a lie.

She holds the English government responsible for causing so much suffering in its former American colonies, refusing them liberties and independence. She also blames the English government for sacrificing the Celtic fringe to maintain its useless colonies. Indeed, most of the wretched emigrants she said she observed on her road to Lower Canada, "the troop of half-clad paupers", came from Ireland and from her homeland.

The sufferings from which these poor creatures fly – I will take for instance the starving paupers of Ireland, who throng here without a farthing in their hands and scarce a rag upon their backs – the sufferings of these poor creatures, humanity might hope were ended when thrown upon these shores, but too often they are increased tenfold. (140)

She immediately feels sympathy for them and stands on their side against the English government taking up the cause of the defenceless emigrants whose only spokesperson, Robert Gourlay, was in prison in Toronto at the time, for having spoken up in their name. English absentee landlords ruled Canada, in the
same way as they ruled Ireland\(^8\) and a part of Scotland, she seems to imply, reaping benefits from the colonies by exploiting poor souls who had no representative, and no democratic institutions, to stand up against the oligarchs: "It is curious to see how patient men are of physical sufferings […] when they have not in their power to charge them upon their rulers." (141)

In letter XV, therefore, the living conditions in the "Canadian desert" are described as inhumane, compared to the way America takes care of her emigrants. Frances Wright also describes as inhumane the manner in which the English government handles emigration, which she likens to slavery, comparing the conditions of transportation of poor emigrants with the conditions of slaves on board slave ships in the middle passage. According to her, the English government closes its eyes on the manner in which poor settlers were exploited by landjobbers and land companies. They averted their eyes from this human trafficking, while ships’ captains and powerful landlords armed uncomfortable ships in order to remove the "starving paupers" from their homeland like black slaves: "First come the horrors of the voyage: ill-fed, ill-clothed, and not unfrequently crowded together as if on board a prison ship, it is not uncommon for a fourth and even a third of the live cargo to be swept off by disease during this mid-passage.(141)" In 1844 in the personal letters and autobiography Frances Wright published, she vividly recalled having observed emigration scenes in Glasgow when she was in her early twenties which would have been around the time of her departure for America. She described boatloads of poor Scottish peasants, on their way to North America, driven from their Highland farms by British landlords who did not need to employ them anymore - preferring to convert their crop-growing fields into grazing land for sheep. Frances Wright saw

\(^8\) In 1818, in New York, she had a brief romance with William Theobald Wolfe Tone, the only son of the Irish patriot Wolfe Tone. His mother and he had fled Ireland for the United States after the rebel had been condemned to death as a traitor. Frances and Camilla Wright were then entertained by the radical circle that the young man patronized.
these "seemingly helpless people" as "white slaves" seeking a new life in the new world\textsuperscript{81}.

Frances Wright criticizes here the new regulations regarding emigration to Canada which in 1819 had been encouraged when the British Parliament, its hands forced by the condition of the poor, had voted for the first time the large sum of £50,000 to assist emigration to the Cape, Australia and Canada\textsuperscript{82}. In fact, the sum went to assist some landlords or land companies in removing the unwanted pauper population from Irish, Scottish or English parishes, to alleviate the tax payers’ burden at home and, we could add, to procure jobs for ship builders, seamen and captains formerly employed in the slave trade, now abolished since 1807.

From 1815 until the end of the 1840s, poverty and pauperism were rampant in Britain. The poor and paupers were seen by the better classes as wretched, lazy and immoral, a constant eyesore overshadowing industrial progress. As early as the first decades of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, migration to the colonies had been one of the solutions advocated by policy-makers to evacuate this surplus population. In Canada, un-cleared land could be provided for them. However, assisting the emigration of the able-bodied poor only began to be discussed in select committees in 1823. Before that, at the time when Frances Wright was in North America, paupers had been shipped out by private funds as indentured servants and they were now beginning to be "shovelled\textsuperscript{83}" with public money to Australia and to Canada. Paupers were the target of policy-makers who had hoped to clear England of these unwanted individuals. Frances Wright denounced those so-called philanthropic schemes in her letter from Canada:

I have sometimes thought if the societies for the suppression of vice would employ some part of their funds in fitting out their poor creatures in clean

\textsuperscript{81} Frances Wright d'Arusmont, Biography, Notes and Political Letters of Frances Wright d'Arusmont, New York, 1844, vol. 1, p. 28.

\textsuperscript{82} Parliamentary Papers, 1819, appendix XVIII to the Report of the Department Committee on Agricultural Settlements in British Colonies, vol. II, p. 32.

\textsuperscript{83} "Shovelling paupers", the expression was used by Charles Buller to qualify the practices of the under-secretary for the colonies Wilmot Horton who had devised the new colonial policy in 1821.
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and well-regulated ships, under the charge of honest and humane captains, and in furnishing them with the means of subsistence in these distant colonies until they can be settled upon the lands— I have thought that they would render more substantial service to their fellow creatures that the best they may have rendered at present. (141)

Deporting unwanted populations was also a means of providing landlords who had invested in colonial lands in North America with a cheap workforce. Looking for colonies where this surplus population could be displaced and transferred was also a mission taken over by some visitors to North America and Australasia in the first decades of the 19th century.

Canada in the hands of English "land jobbers".

Frances Wright accordingly tackled the question of landjobbers which caused discontent among Canadian settlers and misery among pauper settlers. This issue was at the root of the problems plaguing the Canadian colonies, and more particularly Upper Canada, according to Robert Gourlay. "Land jobbing" referred to the fact that English speculators (absentee landlords or shareholders in land companies) had set up emigration schemes after having received huge tracts of Canadian land for free - a further proof that the metropolitan government was neglecting its colonies. The land was in the hands of the local government under the control of a London appointed British governor whose cabinet or executive assembly was composed of local landlords and colonial speculators taking advantage of public land to reap personal benefits. Local governments had thus developed into colonial autocracies, favouring nepotism and bribery, able to

84 To note: David Anderson, Canada, or a View of the Importance of the British American Colonies: shewing their extensive and improvable resources and pointing out the great and unprecedented advantages which have been allowed to the Americans over our own colonies, London, 1814; Charles Stuart, The Emigrant's guide to Upper Canada, or Sketches of the present state of that province collected from a residence therein during the years 1817, 1818, 1819, Interspersed with reflections, London, 1820; John Howison, Sketches of Upper Canada, domestic, local and characteristic: to which are added, practical details for the information of emigrants of every class; and some recollections of the United States of America, Edinburgh, 1821…
repress and punish anyone who denounced their malpractices\textsuperscript{85}. In her travelogue, Frances Wright takes the example of fellow Scots Robert Gourlay who was arrested and deported because he was a radical and a political dissenter in British Canada. She likens his courage to that of Thomas Paine. In 1817, Gourlay had published a survey of Upper Canada based on settlers’ complaints and statistics on land speculation, followed by a series of personal pamphlets against the local government\textsuperscript{86}. A former member of a land company, Gourlay had denounced the official incompetence and collusion between the landed gentry living in York (Canada), the land companies, and the British colonial government, which he had witnessed. Gourlay was arrested, sent to jail in Toronto for his "libels" and eventually deported to Britain in 1819, after he had launched a campaign for major land reforms, and attempted to rally the population behind him\textsuperscript{87}. His major work, developed out of his 1817-1818 pamphlets, was published in Scotland in 1822 under the title \textit{Statistical Account of Upper Canada}. In 1826, he published a lesser-known text \textit{An Appeal to the Common Sense, Mind, and Manhood of the British Nation}, in which he resumed his indictment against British colonial policies in Canada… and in Scotland. His work was brought to the notice of the enlightened public, particularly the Utilitarians and the colonial theorist Edward Gibbon Wakefield, thanks to Frances Wright’s numerous references to his pamphlets.

When Gourlay began compiling his statistics on the province in 1817, he uncovered the fact that great quantities of public land had been simply granted to land jobbers who instead of selling land at a reasonable price started speculating.


\textsuperscript{86} His first third addresses "To the resident Land-Owners of Upper Canada", were published in the \textit{Upper Canada Gazette} and the \textit{Niagara Spectator} between October 30, 1817, and April 1818. The actual pamphlets Frances Wright refers to were "Principles and Proceedings of the Inhabitants of the District of Niagara for addressing his Royal Highness the Prince Regent respecting claims of Sufferers in War, Lands to Militiamen and the general benefit of Upper Canada", as well as "Letters to the resident landowners of Upper Canada, by RG and replies to Mr. G.", both written and published in April 1818.

They brought impoverishment to the pauper settlers who were sent to Canada by various assisted emigration schemes and who were thus condemned to work as journeymen. Worst of all were the small farmers who had paid for their own passage with the hope of obtaining a cheap plot of land in Canada upon their landing. Land companies had attracted them to Canada but speculation had now made land too dear for them, forcing them to remain poor tenants. Speculators, local landlords and English absentee landlords made money in the process.

Gourlay's pamphlets against the Upper Canadian Tory government, his address to the Prince Regent, as well as the meetings he organized in York, led to his imprisonment in 1818, a year before Frances Wright's visit. She explains to her friend Mrs Millar, who would have been aware of seditious libels and prosecution as her husband had been arrested for having published Paine's *Rights of Man*, that "Mr Gourlay, you would see, was prosecuted, and his pamphlets declared libels", for having supported the cause of poorer settlers against "the more powerful landholders" and their likes in government. According to the information she had gathered about Robert Gourlay's statistical accounts on Canada, she too endorsed his denunciation of the grants of public land that had been given free of charge to big land companies. Robert Gourlay, she reported, had denounced these malpractices, and had tried to open the eyes of the officials in London as well as those of the educated public by showing how these land-jobbers in Canada were taking advantage of all these funds without providing decent living conditions for the poor and paupers sent from the British Isles.

Her self-appointed mission seemed to have been to assist Robert Gourlay, a fellow Scotsman, in his campaign against Tory oligarchy in the colonial world, "the powerful landholders" of course but also "land surveyors, and government agents."(140) She harshly criticized the British government, which was closing its eyes to this inhumane trafficking. According to Frances Wright, the Tory

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The radically minded female traveller was moved by these inhumane conditions, "in no small degree" (140). Frances Wright aimed to expose the erroneous policies of the English government, and she denounced the ignorance in which British readers were kept concerning the state of the colonies in Canada. No money was properly invested in protecting pauper settlers who were directed to the New World to rid the estates of wealthy Anglo-Irish or Anglo-Scottish landowners or for the benefit of British capitalists having invested in estates in Upper Canada.

**Discussing the purpose of keeping British colonies**

Frances Wright was shocked by the carelessness of the British government towards its settlers and the neglect in which she apparently finds the colony in Upper and Lower Canada. National wealth was spent and squandered by British "statesmen" to maintain boats and a standing army on the frontier in order to maintain their so-called hegemony on the North American continent. Canada was not worth anything for British people, as there seemed to be no future for it under the British flag. Frances Wright posits that public money was wasted in Canada in a vain display of military and national superiority before the Americans. Britain was preserving the Canadian frontier for nothing:

How strangely do statesmen employ money! Hundreds of thousands lodged in frigates larger than ever fought at Trafalgar. Where? Upon the shores of the Canadian Siberia. To do what? To protect wolves and bears from a more speedy dislodgements from frozen deserts, which would little repay the trouble of invading, and some few thousands of people, scattered along an endless line of forest, from the infection of republican principles.
But Frances Wright also bore grudges against the wealthy English landlords who removed small tenants from the Scottish lowlands to claim back the land and establish modern agricultural estates. Enclosure acts had indeed caused serious poverty among day labourers in the Scottish lowlands. While absentee landlords were reaping huge benefits and keeping the price of corn high in the British Isles with the Corn Laws, poverty was rampant in Britain. Frances Wright denounced the policies voted by oligarchs wasting public money in warmongering in North America instead of helping starving peoples at home and abroad. In the following extract, the young traveller adopts an ironic tone. For the times, her remarks were very seditious, particularly when she derides British kings, comparing them to the "Incas of Peru".

What a magnificent idea does this convey of the wealth of that country which could thus ship treasures across the Atlantic to be flung into the wilderness! How flourishing must be her condition! How full to overflowing her coffers! Surely her people must be princes; her merchants, kings; and her kings, the Incas of Peru!

Frances Wright clearly seconds her Scottish fellow Robert Gourlay, in his attacks against colonial policies. Her travel account on Canada was a way to acquaint her metropolitan readers with Gourlay's work, a clear continuation of Scottish resistance to English rule at home and abroad. Gourlay's denunciation of British colonial malpractices in Canada, and Wright's testimony on the "discontented" state of Upper Canada, attracted the attention of Edward Gibbon Wakefield in the years following the publication of Frances Wright's text, as we shall see. Wakefield used her testimony on colonial neglect and mismanagement to elaborate new colonization plans for the British Empire and develop his first theory on a reformed Empire. Frances Wright's attack against the Colonial Office on the question of the mismanagement of Canada as well as her introduction to Gourlay’s statistical works inform Wakefield’s first writings. Frances Wright posed a crucial question to the people of Britain, challenging here the current
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It must be noted that the question was finally raised in 1824 by one radical MP, Joseph Hume, who attacked the illiberal Tory policies regarding the expenditure of substantial sums of public money on the administration and defence of the Empire, particularly in Canada. Before this debate, the House of Commons had kept its distance with colonial administration and politics, which was the prerogative of the Colonial Office. From the time this financial issue was debated in the House onwards, the British Parliament became involved in colonial affairs, particularly the Whig and radical opposition, who focused on the political and economic aspects of Tory colonial management.

In the final paragraph of Letter XV before the Wright sisters "strike south for the States", the young travel writer personified the political tension and competition between the two "empires" in North America, in a sentimental scene. The personification of the two nations also involved some gendering as England was described as "the armed enemy", while America represented a feminine figure. Frances Wright described America as "she", "for her", using italics to outline the isolated defenceless peaceful nation regularly chosen as a target by masculine warmongering Britain. America supported and embodied feminine and humane values, whereas the imperial system as used by Tory Britain in Canada was aggressive and masculine.

For her, it may probably be as well that she has an enemy skirmishing at her doors. Peaceful as she is, it serves to keep alive her spirit, which might otherwise relax too much. If their object [her enemies'] were to increase her energy and keep alive her national feeling could they take surer means than by pointing canon at her gates? (147)

All in all, the prospects of Canada, with which Frances Wright seemed hardly concerned with the exception of the fate of its emigrants, appeared rather hopeless and gloomy in her account. She contrasted the future development of the

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mismanaged colonies with the well-planned progress of the American nation westward. National management of the land and humanity towards poor emigrants characterized the American Republic. The English colonies had none of the keys to success. The British government had no plans for Canada, no project for its displaced populations who were sent directly to the backwoods, and dispersed in all directions. Canada was bound to remain a mere "frontier", and "the poor man's country". These colonies displayed to the rest of the world the failure of Tory governments at home and abroad. Canada was a "desert" in the hands of the English. The only hope that the poor and ignorant souls that lived in this "Siberia" might entertain was that America would one day annex them and offer them self-government and liberty:

Some say she [America] is ambitious of conquest, and that her invasion of Canada, both during the Revolutionary and the late war, proves it. She was certainly ambitious of dislodging an armed enemy, and of turning hostile fortifications into inoffensive villages. Had she obtained possession of the Canadas – what then? She would have said to them as he said to Louisiana – Govern yourselves. (147)

After her visit to Canada, she offers some advice to settlers though emigration was not her main concern in the book. Here again, she praised the great management of the land in America and the incentive provided by the idea that the settlers would leave their cramped aristocratic motherland for a New World where liberty and independence were protected by a democratic constitution. This land of free institutions "generates in this people a spirit of daring enterprise as well as proud independence."(101) She encouraged educated and enlightened British men, as well as hard-working yeomen from Scotland to abandon their mother country and to move to America. According to her observations, the most refined enlightened families would play a very useful part in the villages near the forest settlements.

As it is men of property and gentlemen accustomed to all the refinements of society are found among the first occupiers of the wilderness. When Mr Wadsworth settled in this district, he formed the advanced guard of civilization. (101)
Small independent Scottish farmers could look for a farm in these already cleared states, leaving the actual frontier to experienced American settlers. Frances Wright believed that "the Scotch emigrant would probably find it peculiarly suited to his habits and constitution." She does not hide her anti-English feelings in the advice she provided to future emigrants to settle in America: "A friend to the latter (England) can perhaps hardly rejoice in this; to see England drained of her best citizens may justly excite the grief of her patriots, and the jealousy of her rulers. And yet, what would the latter have?" She was very critical of those whose purpose has been to detract settlers from going to America out of patriotic support for the Tory government:

It is idle for travellers to deface this Hesperia; they may deceive the many ignorant and a few wise but what then? Are the English yeomen who object to tithes, taxes and poor-rates kept to their sacred hearths only by such gossiping as this? (138)

In this far from glorious comparison with America, Canada is used as a paradigm to reflect the incompetence, tyranny, warmongering and bribery of England and the neglect in which the country held her colonies. In contrast, America is repeatedly described as a generous, beautiful land. Shortly after leaving Canada, she devotes an entire letter to the neighbouring American state of Vermont where she states the word "progress" has been invented: "The American verb to "progress" is certainly not without its apology; even a foreigner must acknowledge that the new kind of advancement which greets his eye in this country seems to demand a new word to portray it. (157)" Far from the "cabin of logs in the savage forest" and "all the trains of evils and privations which must be found in a Canadian desert", in Vermont, Scottish emigrants would find "a healthy climate, a hilly country, affording either pasture or arable land" for "the frugal, hardy and industrious Scotch farmer" who would "find himself at home." (161)
Lower Canada: the deficiencies and weaknesses of English Tory policy in the Empire

For two days in September 1819, the Wright sisters' centre of interest was apparently Montreal. Like Francis Hall⁹⁰, a couple of years before them, whose book Frances Wright uses as a guide, they were impressed by Lower Canada at first. The landscape around Montreal, along the St Lawrence at least was a scenic relief from the dreariness of the no man's land they just crossed on their way from Kingston: "the fair seigniory [sic] of Montreal, rich and undulating lands sprinkled with villas and bounded on one hand by wooded heights." However, like Francis Hall, Frances Wright could not help but declare the uncultivated land beyond the seigneuries a proof of the Canadiens' laziness. She was struck by the fact that the peoples of Lower Canada seemed completely estranged from Upper Canada, as they "do not appear to know much concerning each other.(143)" Her comment pointed to the fact that there was neither colonial cohesion nor imperial planning on the Canadian side of the North American continent. The metropolitan government appeared to have neither the will nor the wish to promote a more organized development of the colonies. She indicated that the only will to work together might come "from a common detestation of their republican neighbours", each colony having this hatred for the Americans fostered "by the jealousy of the power and wealth of the republic, and by the influence of the priests.(144)"

Contrary to Frances Wright's habits when visiting American villages, no account of human interaction or actual conversation with Canadiens was given in Letter XV beside "a passing salutation easily winning a smile and courteous obeisance" as, she underlined, peasants used to wave at coaches on the side of the road in a French countryside. Since she did not mention any encounter with the inhabitants, it appears that her primary sources on Lower Canada came essentially from Francis Hall's account. Her theoretical developments on government or on

⁹⁰ Hall, Francis (Lieut.), Travels in Canada, and the United States in 1816 and 1817, London, Longman and Hurst, Rees and Orme, and Brown, 1818.
the Catholic church were already found in Hall's views on Lower Canada. So Frances Wright provided her female pen friend with clichés that were already circulating at home. Her remarks were not far from observations regarding French peasants by British travellers to the continent in the post-revolutionary decade. In Lower Canada, she describes the population as composed of French peasants who share the same "national physiognomy" and lack of education:

He eats his crust, or shares it with the passenger right cheerily; his loyalty transferred from King Louis to King George, sits equally light on his light spirits. [...] Too poor to be oppressed, too ignorant to be discontented, he invokes his saint, obeys his priest, smokes his pipe, and sings an old ballad, while shrewder heads and duller spirits enact laws which he never hears of and toil after gains which he contrives to do without. (144)

The "shrewder heads", the political leaders, were a group of "enlightened" French Canadian MPs who "call themselves democrats", indicating that some elements of democratic rule existed in Lower Canada, contrary to Upper Canada, she pointed out. Frances Wright refused to endorse the anti-French feelings that seemed to run among the Tory colonial leaders. According to her, the apparent lack of education and refinement of the French MPs, a recurrent cliché in the local English press, contrasted with the courage that many members of the House of Assembly displayed in resisting unjust English laws:

A body of men who have frequently made a stand for important rights, and in the persons of some of its members endured arbitrary imprisonments for conscientious and constitutional opposition to the dictum of the governor and Legislative Council – that such men should invariably be a crowd of illiterate peasants is not easy of belief. (146)

After a short paragraph on the description of the colonial institutions to which Frances Wright added a comment or two concerning the oligarchic tendencies of the colonial constitution, particularly the Legislative Council whose members were appointed for life by the governor, the female traveller went on to examine why liberal ideas were not progressing in this part of Canada.

According to Wright, liberal or radical democratic ideals seemed to be barred from Lower Canada because of the "ignorance and infatuated superstition"
which still pervaded this society in the hands of priests. The development of the colony seemed to have come to a halt, "in status quo", as the peasantry had not changed its habits and manners from the time "when they first migrated from their native France.(144)" In a previous letter, in which she had shared her romantic vision on the Indians, she had placed the French Canadian peasants below these true "lords of the wilderness": "From their inferior acquaintance with the science of government and from their being less practised in the exercise of steady industry, there had always been a lesser gap between them and the wild hunter, than between the latter and the English."(113) 

Frances Wright's prejudices against the Canadiens, also shared by Francis Hall, heightened when she noted the French population's rejection of the enlightened ideas of the American Republic. The hatred was kept alive by the Catholic church on the one hand, and by the successive English governors on the other hand, for strategic reasons. The ascendency of the Catholic religion over the majority of the French peasantry led the English population "to laugh at the superstition of the former.(145)" However the Tory government was to blame, according to Frances Wright, for its lack of ambition and control over its conquered colony:

The government, however, leaves Protestant ascendancy make its way here as it can, which, unbacked by law, makes its way very slowly. These national and religious jealousies have occasionally produced bickerings and even political disturbances. (145)

In Lower Canada, her attention focuses, after reading Francis Hall's account92, on the preservation of these strong "popish influences (144)". Her attack against Catholic ascendency is very direct. The French population, in spite of the fact that they are governed by a parliamentary monarchy, and that they have received some measures of self-government in 1791, as well as full preservation

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91 Frances Wright, p.113. She also adds: "Many wild Indians have a mixture of French blood in their veins, and in the miserable remains of the old French settlements in the western territory is found a mongrel population but little removed from the half-civilized savage."

92 Lieutenant Hall mentioned "the influence of the priests is probably injurious, as it affects mental improvement, beneficial with respect to morals. Religion, or rather superstition, and morality, are so blended in the mind of the Canadian that were the former shaken, considerable time must elapse before any basis could be raised on which to found the latter.", *Travels, op.cit.*. p. 151.
of their French language, Catholic religion and French code of laws by the Quebec Act in 1774, still live under the absolute control of priests who "continue to hoodwink and fleece the people." (144) The French revolution had not started any radical, anticlerical ripple through Lower Canada, which had ironically been "guarded from the earthquake by British protection."

She uses this issue to further demonstrate the corruption and fraudulent practices of the Tory government in the colonies. In Lower Canada, Frances Wright denounced the strong collusion between the English government at home and the Catholic hierarchy in Canada and in Rome. Each party seemed to gain something in the barter, she suggested. But at home, British subjects were not aware of this heretical collusion initiated by the "London Cabinet". According to her, secret dealings seemed to go on between Rome and London:

You may learn some curious particulars here concerning the policy of the London cabinet, as connected with that of Rome. Among other things, a request has lately been referred to the Pope that he will raise the bishopric of Quebec into an archbishopric, and the prelate of this Canadian diocese is now about to embark to Italy to receive from the hands of his Holiness this addition to his honours. (144)

Wright reminded her reader that in exchange for the preservation of loyalty among the ignorant, uneducated French, the latter were "exhorted to remember in their prayers the pious prince who, though ruling in the land of heretics, bears thus in remembrance the servants of the most High." Here Frances Wright launches her second scathing attack against the British monarchy. Writing from a distance and under the cover of private correspondence, the young female author seems out of control and out of check as she furthers her seditious enterprise against the "prince of England" whom she seems to accuse of popish views. The final purpose of this secret collusion in Lower Canada, according to Frances Wright, was to protect the French population and the Canadian provinces at large from American republicanism:

The proximity of the States and their growing power and, worse of all, their institutions civil and religious are naturally looked upon by these shepherds
of the flock with suspicion and terror. As the union of Canada to the republic would of necessity pave the way to their downfall, interest binds fast their loyalty to the ruling powers; these again, equally jealous of the States and aware of the precariousness of the tenure by which they hold their colonies, pay much deference to the men who hold the keys of the people's minds. Thus goes the world! (144)

Frances Wright also sent out some warning to her readers. Predicting the demise of Tory power in Canada, due to the unnatural and dangerous *entente* to which the English had subscribed, she forecast that a people kept in ignorance and ruled from abroad by "shrewder heads and duller spirits which enact laws" might be led to react violently against its ruler. Present in her mind was the example of the American colonists whose liberal revolution had not served as lessons to Tory rulers in England. She noted to this effect the on-going tensions and "bickerings" between the Canadian peasants and the "new English population" whose "national and religious jealousies" had already produced some political disturbances before the outbreak of the late war. The opposition press had been "forcibly put down, arbitrary acts passed, and imprisonments, without reason assigned or trial following", "the parties made war on each other", "they had recourse to vexatious measures" (145). This situation seems to remind her of previous episodes in the history of Tory rule in America or Scotland when the Habeas Corpus had been suspended and arbitrary arrests carried out on seditious activists. These tensions had occurred prior to the American Revolution in New England, or in Scotland in the 1790s when corresponding society members had been arrested and deported after the French revolution. Mrs Millar, Frances Wright's pen friend and her husband had had to flee Scotland for America in 1793 after they had printed Paine's seditious *Rights of Man*.

She speculated that imperial policies in Lower Canada based on the preservation of strategic English interests against American ones, fostered by the collusion between king and pope, would bring trouble to the British crown in the years to come. Her predictions would be fully realized in December 1837 when "nationalist" uprisings broke out in Lower and Upper Canada after fifteen years of
discontent. Among the reasons that enabled her to predict the fall of the British Empire in North America was the lack of "love for the British" in Lower Canada. What kept Lower Canada together in 1819 was the common hatred of the French inhabitants and of the new English settlers, for the Americans: "antipathy towards the heretical Americans was as powerful an incentive to loyalty as could have been a love to the British; this last it will never be easy to excite." Frances Wright's analysis of the troubled political situation in Lower Canada was very shrewd.

Frances Wright also raised a question in the name of her reader, which she hypothetically addressed to the imperial government: "You will ask, perhaps, whether some pain is not taken to amalgamate the old with the new population or to break down the strong national distinction [...]?" (146) At this point, again, the validity and legitimacy of the Tory government were challenged. Indeed to the question that any imperialist visitor might have genuinely asked, Wright answered by a further attack against the "temporal powers" which ruled the metropolis and the colonies by proxy. She further accused the "London Cabinet" of collusion with the Catholics, "perhaps it is considered as equally the interest of both to leave the Canadian to sing his song and tell his Ave Mary in the language of his fathers." (146)

Pursuing her comparison between the system of government in England (and in its colonies) and in America, Frances Wright practically suggests the development of a form of political acculturation of Lower Canada in the same way as the Americans had assimilated the French settlers of Louisiana, after its purchase in 1803: "It is curious to compare the stationary position of the French Canada with the progress of the French Louisiana. Not sixteen years since this vast territory was ceded to the United States, and already its people are nationalized.(146)" Inspired by Frances Wright's demonstration, we will see in the following section that Lord Durham also took up the example of French Louisiana (and its successful assimilation of the French colonists in "less than a generation") in his chapter on the necessary eradication of the French nationality in the
Canadian colonies. According to Frances Wright, the imposition of a liberal system of self-government, released from colonial trammels, as well as the imposition of the English language in public schools, as Americans did in Louisiana, would free Lower Canada from the iron grasp of Catholic priests.

The so-called "dull letter" on Lower Canada, as Wright described her own prose upon closing Letter XV, was in fact the most openly critical and opinionated text to be found in the travel narratives published before or after 1821. The Tory Quarterly Review attacked the book, particularly the Canada letters, as "a slander and an insult to the king and church", claiming the author was not an Englishwoman but a male writer hired by radicals to attack the government. Other Tory periodicals reacted as violently, denouncing the insulting tone of the author. All this publicity attracted the attention of readers to her book, more particularly that of radical and Whig thinkers.

Her apparently naïve rhetorical questions about the state of affairs in North America captured the attention of radicals, Utilitarians and reformers concerned respectively by democracy, free trade and laissez-faire. Canadian colonies were uneconomical and their military protection fostered tensions between fast growing Britain and the new trading nation America was becoming, as Frances Wright seems to suggest in her conclusion:

How strangely contrasted to this [enlightened America] is the position of these provinces [Lower and Upper Canada] – expensive appendages to a distant empire, military depots, in short, into which England throws her armed legions to awe the peaceful population of the neighbouring republic. Is there not some erroneous calculation here? (147)

Frances Wright’s contribution to the colonial debate was very timely. Radicals saw oligarchic Tory rule in Britain as despotic. Utilitarians and colonial reformers were interested in salvaging the British colonies from the hands of Tory rulers. Jeremy Bentham, the founder of Utilitarianism, invited Frances Wright to

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93 The Quarterly Review, May 1821.
his house after reading her work in 1821. She stayed with him over a year during which she learned much from Bentham's circle of friends among whom was Francis Place, the radical thinker and trade-union leader, James Mill, the political economist and historian and Elizabeth Fry, the prison reformer (Edward Gibbon Wakefield’s cousin). One of the immediate results of these repeated denunciations of Britain's ill treatment of its emigrants in Canada, by Frances Wright and Robert Gourlay, was the fact that the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Emigration felt influenced by public pressure to set up new regulations concerning the transportation and the establishment of pauper emigrants in Upper Canada. From 1823 onwards, enough food had to be provided on board the boats, which were not allowed to embark more passengers than the boat could hold; a surgeon had to be on board and transportation to the place where the paupers were to be hired had to be taken care of by the landlords or land companies which sought labourers from Ireland or Scotland. Such good intentions were however short-lived as in 1826, these generous measures were repealed by the Committee as it was too expensive a scheme, all the more so as English labourers would now join the ranks of the poor emigrants and public money, out of the poor rate, would have to be invested in their transportation and settling. Tories and Utilitarian reformers had to look at cheaper ways of conveying emigrants to Canada.

Frances Wright's text also had an impact on further imperial schemes, by influencing the views of at least one prominent colonial reformer. Her method of analysis of the progress of the American nation, i.e. a systematic comparison between successful America and the mismanaged English colonies, inspired Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the leader of the colonial reformers from 1829 on. The colonial theorist clearly employed her method when he put forward his

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96 Report from the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Emigration from the UK, 26 May 1823.
97 Report from the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Emigration from the UK, May 1826.
argument in *England and America* in 1833. Besides, further references to Wright's thought-provoking text were to be found in Wakefield and Durham's *Report on the Affairs of North America* in 1839. Lord Durham had made up his mind on how to solve the "French" problem in Canada before he had even set sail for the colony, in June 1838. Durham had read extensively on the subject of Lower Canada. He was accompanied on his mission to Canada by Wakefield who also had an extended bookish knowledge of the colonies through the reading of numerous travelogues. Several intertextual references to Frances Wright's text are to be found in Durham's *Report* as shall be seen. Particularly noticeable was the similitude of arguments between Wright and Durham when he criticized the imperial Tory rule in Lower Canada, notably the strategic blunders in preserving the French language, religion and laws. Durham also revisited Wright’s solutions on how to "nationalize" French Canadians.

**Frances Wright's travel narrative and its impact on Edward Gibbon Wakefield's "imperial project."**

Frances Wright’s *Views* were read by prominent philosophers and statesmen, in Britain, France and America where she was invited to give lecture tours to develop her ideas on anti-slavery, on the woman’s question and on general social and political reforms for America. In Britain, her book was hailed by reformers and detested by Tories but her career as a woman of letters did not take off because she left England one year after her book was published, for France then America where she was celebrated for her eulogy of the new nation. Nonetheless her observations, comments and blunt conclusions on the mismanagement of the colonies in North America and the defects of imperial administration were read attentively by at least one British colonial theorist, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, as his early contributions to the colonial debate show.

Coincidentally, Wright’s book received some attention in the periodicals in 1822 when Canadian colonies were in the public eye, with the publication of
petitions and statement of grievances signed by members of the Assembly in Lower Canada. Their purpose was to convince Wilmot Horton, the secretary to the colonies, and some prominent members of Parliament not to ratify the Union of the two colonies that had been pressed by British merchants in Lower Canada and the Tories of Upper Canada. The French Canadian MPs received great support from Utilitarians, particularly from Lord Brougham and his *Edinburgh Review*, who began to herald the need for more liberal political reforms in the Canadian colonies and a better political representation for the colonists, and to attack the Tory government’s neglect towards its white colonies. A delegation of French Canadian MPs came to Britain in 1828 to defend their cause and to inform British MPs about the arbitrary rule of successive Tory governors. A special committee on the civil government of Canada was henceforth created in May 1828.

Clearly, Frances Wright’s text was published one year before the defects of imperial administration were beginning to be criticized both in North America and in Britain by colonists and by Whig politicians. She was able to prepare British opinion for the complaints of the French Canadian colonists before the delegation of Canadian MPs brought further light to their cause: a need for greater control over their own colonial affairs.

Edward Gibbon Wakefield did not intervene in the colonial debate in 1822 and he must have come across Frances Wright’s text three or four years later when he began his intensive research on the states of the British colonies. In their respective biographies of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, A. J. Harrop and Richard

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98 For the ministry Huskisson, the recently appointed colonial secretary argued: “Here, in the midst of the wilderness, flourishes the French feudal system, and the custom of Paris of centuries ago. The result is that Englishmen in Canada are as much like aliens and settlers in a foreign land, as an equal number of British subjects, who should have sat down in the centre of France in the thirteenth century.”, quoted in Burroughs, *The Canadian Crisis*, op.cit., p. 31.

Garnett both noted how Wakefield, the popular colonial theorist of the 1830s and 1840s, the so-called "Builder of the Commonwealth", boasted about having read "all the books" that had been published on the British colonies. Travelogues about North America and Australasia were his primary sources and the basis of his knowledge on the colonial world. Before the first visit he made to Canada in 1838 with Lord Durham, Wakefield had never set foot abroad. Among these books, Wakefield read Frances Wright's controversial but acclaimed account on North America. He must have become acquainted with her work through their mutual utilitarian friends such as the Mills, father and son, Francis Place and George Grote or through his cousin, Elizabeth Fry, an anti-slavery campaigner and prison reformer who visited him in Newgate every week when she came to teach the children of imprisoned families. From 1817 onwards, Fry also enquired into the welfare of prisoners who had been deported to Australia. She was equally interested in new abodes for those who wished to leave Britain after serving their time in jail, hence her interest in this new literature about the colonies.

From Newgate, where Wakefield was serving a four-year sentence between 1826 and 1830 for having abducted a young heiress, he began to reflect on a political or a public career. After having published a report on prison reform that had been noted by the Benthamites, he turned his attention to the subject of

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101 A.J. Harrop, op. cit., p. 85.
102 There is no list of the works Wakefield read to elaborate his famous "systematic colonization" plan, but the method used by Wakefield in England and America, to compare the merits of the British colonies and America, as well as his subsequent comments which echoe Wright's, combined with the fact that he claims having read all the books on North America which were brought to him by his cousin Elizabeth. This leads me to believe that he must have been very familiar with the work. Similarly, Wakefield also read Gourlay, copying his statistical tables to make his point without ever acknowledging having read Gourlay. The latter publicly accused Wakefield of plagiarism however.
103 John Stuart Mill and George Grote (radical MP and historian) became active members of Wakefield's National Colonization Society formed in 1830.
104 Frances Wright’s text also became a source of useful information for anti-slavery activists in Britain, as she provided details on the organisation of anti-slavery groups in the US, as well as a strong denunciation of slavery in the South.
105 A.J. Harrop, op. cit., p. 86.
colonization, as he wrongly believed he might be deported to Australia. Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the grandson of the juvenile literature authoress, Priscilla Wakefield, was about to play a major part in the making of the new British Empire. Reading about the state of the colonies in Australasia and in Canada, he must have come across Frances Wright's travelogue during these four years. Thanks to her work, his attention was attracted to Canada and to Robert Gourlay's text. Following his readings of both texts, Canada played a central part in Wakefield's "imperial project" for a new Empire, which he then tried to impose on the reading public and the British government. Canada was "doomed" in 1821, according to F. Wright; Wakefield tried to devise a plan that would save the colonies.

**Wakefield's imperial project: a liberal Empire for England.**

Between 1829 and 1849, Wakefield designed and perfected a comprehensive system of colonization that he managed to impose on the public through numerous publications and numerous articles in the periodical press. James Spadding writing for the *Edinburgh Review* in July 1840 noted the great popularity of Wakefield's ideas among his readers:

[...] this sudden rush of adventure and concern for the opposite corner of the globe, must be attributed to a discovery in colonization, now familiarly talked of under the name of "the Wakefield Principle" which some friendly newspapers hold up as the one thing needful to make mankind rich, virtuous and happy [...] a specific for all the disorders of the world, so simple and so efficacious that the whole efforts and skill of the Colonial Office can hardly prevent it from taking effect.\(^{106}\)

Wakefield's "imperial project" also gained supporters among Whig political leaders who transposed Wakefield's system to the white colonies from 1831 onwards.

Wakefield's purpose was to create a great British empire on the model of the Greek Empire. He particularly admired the “liberal” organisation of the Greek colonies in autonomous societies that were the replica of the mother country. In spite of their political autonomy, or so he believed thanks to the political autonomy which had been granted to the Greek settlers, political, social, cultural and economic links had been naturally preserved with the mother country. The whole concept was based on liberal - economic and political - principles. The central and dynamic element of what was soon to become known in the periodical press as the "Wakefield system" was the "human factor". His liberal colonies would only be peopled and ruled by liberal-minded settlers who would "naturally" preserve the ties with the mother country, which in turn would not need to resort to any forceful means of assimilation or control.

According to Wakefield, the ideal settlers would be found among the "best classes" or the "most desirable" classes of England: the middle classes. From 1830 onwards, the "imperial project" that Wakefield would gradually expose to the middle-class public and some influential political leaders, essentially relied on their genteel qualities as will be seen in the following pages and in the next chapter. Wakefield empowered the bourgeois public before the upper-class political leaders had yet acknowledged the political, economic, and social force of the freshly enfranchised "middling sort". The new British Empire was from the onset designed as a bourgeois Empire and his theory was informed by texts written on the colonial world, by men and women. For instance, Frances Wright offered him some interesting contrasting views on America and Canada that he integrated in his first treatise on the colonies in 1833. Similarly emigrants’ narratives, like Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada*, enabled Wakefield to perfect one of his theories according to which middle-class women were essential elements to the success of his "systematic colonization" plans.
Canada at the centre of the "Wakefield system": from theory to practice.

The Canadas became central to Wakefield's plan as early as 1826 when the colonial theorist became acquainted with the poor state in which British visitors, particularly Frances Wright, had found the white colonies.

In 1826, at Newgate Prison, Edward Gibbon Wakefield became interested in the way land was used or disposed of in the "new" colonies. Some of his cellmates were convicts who had been deported to Australia for some years and had returned from there. Wakefield spent his days reading and conversing with inmates. His friends visited him in prison and brought him various personal accounts and travelogues on Australasia and Canada. Most of them were purely descriptive, unlike Frances Wright's diatribe about the mismanagement of the British colonies in Canada that she compared to the "sole Empire" in North America, the American republic. Her text contrasted with a number of male travel narratives, namely because she clearly exposed the absence of an imperial project in Britain. With her narrative and the convicts' reports on Australia, Wakefield could establish that successive Tory governments had brought about the fall of the British Empire.

The comparison between England, in fact the English colonies, and America, as developed by Frances Wright, opened up new fields of reflection for Wakefield the reformer. According to Frances Wright, Upper Canada - in the hands of local conservative political oligarchies - was literally given away to land jobbers, while in Lower Canada, the Catholic clergy kept the upper hand on public land as part of the colonial barter they had struck with the colonial authorities. On the other hand, Wright, and with her Wakefield, admired the frontier management of the American government. There, Frances Wright states, land sales were controlled by law and new frontier lands were opened up for settlement only when all previous land had been cleared:

[In Canada] European emigrants are perhaps given to roam too far into the interior of this continent. [in America] The older states have still sufficient
of vacant lands to settle down multitudes, and as I have before remarked, men have usually many things to learn when they arrive in this country.\textsuperscript{(161)}

Where wonders had been performed in the American states, as Wright incessantly showed to her readers, in Canada mismanagement, private interest and lack of control had caused misery to the population, which was uncared for, dispersed and isolated in the woods, miles away from any community. Furthermore, while Americans were striving to build up welcoming communities on the frontier, Upper Canada provided no incentive to do so. Besides, who would want to live in pauper communities? Following Frances Wright's remarks, Wakefield directed his attention to Robert Gourlay's account on Upper Canada. Wright had described his text as a great source of information on the misuse of waste lands in the colony. Gourlay's work had hardly been noticed by reviewers before Wakefield read his volume on Canada\textsuperscript{107} and began promoting Gourlay's remarks on proper land sales as his own. Gourlay accused Wakefield of having stolen his statistics and his new system for colonial land distribution, after Wakefield published his \textit{Letter from Sidney} in 1830\textsuperscript{108}.

The system of land jobbing denounced by Gourlay and Wright still continued in the 1820s. It was amplified by Wilmot-Horton's policy on pauper emigration to Canada, now funded by parishes. In 1823\textsuperscript{109} and 1825\textsuperscript{110}, £15,000 and £30,000 pounds respectively were voted to put into practice emigration schemes advocated by the Tory under-secretary to the colonies who wished to settle British paupers in Canada\textsuperscript{111}. He ignored the statistics issued by Robert Gourlay and set up an official plan for "shovelling out paupers". In 1826 and 1827, Wilmot-Horton set up two Committees of the House of Commons to report

\textsuperscript{107} Richard Garnett, \textit{op.cit}, ch. 3.
\textsuperscript{108} All Wakefield's texts have been edited by M.F. Lloyd Pritchard, \textit{The Collected Works of Edward Gibbon Wakefield}, Glasgow, Collins, 1968.
\textsuperscript{109} Parliamentary Papers, 1823, vol.xiii, p. 301
\textsuperscript{110} Parliamentary Papers, 1825, vol. xviii, p. 358.
\textsuperscript{111} Wilmot-Horton was under-secretary from 1821 to 1828, under Lord Barthust who was in charge of the Colonial Office from 1812 to 1827.
on the subject of emigration as a palliative for pauperism\textsuperscript{112}. The committees met at a time of industrial slump and a deep trade depression and their inquiries lasted for two years. Reverend Malthus was invited to give evidence before one of the select committees. Both committees laid great stress on the necessity of emigration from Ireland to Canada, but they also advocated emigration from England. This system was considered far more economical than raising the poor-rate in southern parishes\textsuperscript{113}. In his final report, Wilmot-Horton, who chaired one of the committees, recommended that the scheme should be seen as a relief for "redundant" paupers. But no regulations were passed to ensure that these British men and women would be treated respectfully upon their landing in Upper Canada. They were at the mercy of the land companies and land speculators who, pretending to look after these pauper families, collected the parish funds and sent them to the backwoods of the colony.

In 1817, Gourlay had made the startling proposal that wasteland in the colonies should be sold by the Government instead of being given away. The benefit of this auction should then be used to aid immigration to the colonies. Wakefield "borrowed" this idea from Gourlay's accurate analysis about the Canadian backwoods. Righting the wrongs of land disposal in Canada became the founding principle of the Wakefield system, the blueprint of the first British imperial project in the 19\textsuperscript{th}-century.

Wakefield's reading and thinking about the British colonies led to a first publication, \textit{A Letter from Sidney}, first printed in instalments in the \textit{Morning Chronicle} from August to October 1829, then in book form in 1830. While still in prison, he also published a short \textit{Sketch of a Proposal for Colonizing Australasia}. In it, he developed his first economic formula by which a balance could be achieved between land and settlers, particularly in Australia, which was still quite the \textit{terra nullius} for metropolitan minds. The first step towards colonization, according to Wakefield, was the selling of the land at a "sufficient price" which

\textsuperscript{112} Parliamentary Papers, 1826, vol. iv, p. 3, and parliamentary papers, 1827, vol. v, p. 7
meant that the Colonial Office should weigh on colonial governments to sell average land plots for a good price. With the money thus collected they could then organise emigration schemes. Among the settlers required for these new estates, Wakefield already suggested to select settlers carefully. Emigration to the British colonies should be seen as a positive prospect not a punishment for the British populations. Emigrants must see the colonies in a positive light, in the same way as many saw America, while Canada still bore the stigma of "the poor man's country":

No pains should be spared to teach the labouring classes to regard the colonies as the land of promise, which it should be their highest ambition to be able to reach. Nor does this matter concern the poorer orders among us alone: in the colonies, a large proportion of the children or grand-children of the highest families in this land must be contented to fix their abode, unless they resolve to drag on a life of dependence and indigence here.114

He suggested that a ratio would be effective: five couples of indentured servants for one couple of middle-class background. Gradually, these indentured servants, able-bodied farm hands selected for their qualities (decency, youth and hard work) would save enough money to buy their own plot of land on the fringe of the settlement. Thus the settlement would gradually expand as new families cleared new lands. Reasonable management of colonial land and selected emigration were, according to Wakefield, the first principles of "sound colonization." A contemporary commentator, Samuel Sidney, noted that Wakefield's little book, Letter from Sidney, was a sensation in the literary and political world of London115, while A.J. Harrop, his biographer, underlines the "revolution implied in the Wakefield principles"116.

The book was published anonymously. Wakefield mocked the fashionable style of travel writers that he thought would have more weight on his readers, as the letters would sound authentic, reflecting personal experience. Wakefield

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115 A.J. Harrop, op.cit., p. 52.
116 A.J. Harrop, op.cit., p. 54
adopted the epistolary style that Wright had successfully adopted, producing a series of fictitious letters in which he pretended to be a settler in New South Wales writing to a friend in England. The letters were written in the first person, and their author used them to put forward his thesis through facts and examples. He represented himself as a free settler having taken possession of an immense tract of land near Sidney that did not thrive, because of the scarcity of labour. In each letter, Wakefield developed the wrongs of colonial expansion for lack of sound management. Then he exposed what seemed to him the positive steps which should be taken by the Colonial Office in London, if they wanted to seriously colonize Australasia or Canada: the regulation of the disposal of public lands and an incentive to attract labourers. Wakefield knew that settlers' accounts, which were quite a novelty at the time, were bound to attract the attention of his readers, more than a treatise on colonial policies. The authority of a settler or a traveller was not contested, nor was the representation of the colony in which he had lived and had acquired first-hand knowledge.

Adapting Gourlay's conclusions on Upper Canada to colonial planning, Wakefield tried to establish a method, which he described as an *Outline of a System of Colonization*. It was published for the first time as an appendix to the *Letter* in the 1830 book. Wakefield's proposals were revolutionary for his times as he envisioned a system that would construct a lasting and strong Empire for Britain. He also accompanied his work by articles published in reviews like The *Quarterly Review* where he seemed to target Tory periodicals and their readers in 1829. In them, on several occasions, he praised the anonymous thesis of the settler from Sidney, thus publicizing his own work to attract the attention of readers.

In one of these “puffing” articles, Wakefield resumed Frances Wright's criticism on the cost of maintaining a standing army in Canada for British tax payers\(^\text{117}\). Wakefield reminded his readers that the Roman Empire - which had

\[^{117}\text{Wakefield, E.G., "Sketch of Proposal for Colonizing Australia", The Morning Chronicle, October 1829 and Anon., "On the State and Prospects of the Country", The Quarterly Review, April-May 1830 (article clearly attributed to Wakefield by two of his biographers.)}\]
been a source of inspiration for Tory policy makers since the 18\textsuperscript{th} century - , had eventually crumbled because of its lack of liberal colonial policies, echoing here the thesis of one of his ancestors, Gibbon. The Roman Empire had expanded thanks to military rule, controlling each province they acquired by placing military governors and legions that eventually had overburdened its expenses. The Greek Empire on the contrary, and the "American empire" as described by Frances Wright, had fostered new communities whose populations were greatly attached to their government\textsuperscript{118}. A Tory Empire versus a liberal one, such was the alternative that Wakefield tried to popularise among middle-class readers. In the wake of Adam Smith, Frances Wright had asked British Whigs and reformers to reconsider the benefit of keeping an Empire. Wakefield went further by condemning mercantilism, which necessitated armed forces to control the colonies. Free trade and free independent communities within the English Empire would create as much trade in peaceful conditions\textsuperscript{119}.

\textit{Reforming the imperial project in the Canadas (1831-1839)}

In 1829, in his \textit{Outline of a System of Colonization}, Wakefield had used New South Wales as an example of a colony that could still be reformed, as it was yet underdeveloped since the wrongs in the Canadian colonies seemed impossible to right after so many decades of mismanagement. But in 1833, in \textit{England and America} Wakefield tackled the case of Canada. In this now comprehensive "system of colonization", Wakefield followed the example of Frances Wright's rhetoric of comparison. With it, Wakefield tried to convince his reading public that the English colonies in North America could still be reformed by developing new imperial policies. Such policies should begin by exposing the flaws of the actual system of management in Canada then by suggesting ways of reforming the political system. This meant allowing further political independence to these

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{118} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{119} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
colonies and, more particularly, allowing settlers themselves to sit in local assemblies. Local oligarchies should be replaced by more liberal-minded settlers who would look after land sales and emigration schemes in the best interest of the community in the margins. England should look to America to find the necessary inspiration, suggested Wakefield, after having read, under Frances Wright's signature (Letter XVII), the wonders that a liberal state system had brought to local populations in America.

To this end, the Colonial Office should, according to Wakefield, select emigrants among the "best classes", i.e. the middle classes, and promote their settlement in Upper and Lower Canada, in the same way as America was happy to receive "many accomplished and liberal minded gentlemen from France and Ireland", according to Wright (138). Wakefield modelled his harmonious colonies on the Greek colonies where free trade and self-government had been practiced in these replicas of the mother country, but also on the successful New England colonies described by Frances Wright, like Vermont for instance. The success of the ancient empire and the new empire relied on their policy of colonization that promoted "a mixture of all classes of society". This element of Wakefield's colonization plan for the Empire encouraged many young men from the middle classes to emigrate to Canada or Australasia to "colonize" the Empire. Wakefield's discourse on the duty of these "best classes", and particularly women to whom he looked to develop his harmonious communities abroad, had a great impact on emigration narratives written in the 1830s and 1840s as we shall see in the following chapter.

The Colonial Office and the Wakefield system.

Under Wakefield's influence, a new school of colonial reformers was starting to emerge and their convincing pamphlets and books began to change

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120 E.G. Wakefield (anonymous), "On the State and Prospects of the Country", Quarterly Review, April 1830. The text is often quoted in travelogues written and published between 1831 and 1833. For instance in William Cattermole's volume.
British people's views on the question of emigration. In 1830, he formed the National Colonization Society whose members were listed in an appendix to *England and America* in 1833. British readers discovered that John Stuart Mill, Charles Buller and Lord Durham, who had rallied Wakefield's society after Wakefield supported Durham's campaign in favour of middle-class suffrage in the 1831-32 debates, all supported his ideas. The reformers' mission was to purge the press of the old ideas on the colonies, in the same way Frances Wright had wished to "change the tone and somewhat correct the views of the leading British periodicals" on America.\(^{121}\) Political circumstances had changed in Britain. The Whigs had won the election in 1830 and a series of social, economic and political reforms were on their agenda. Liberal-minded reformers, Utilitarians and radicals were working towards the transformation of Old Britain into a modern nation. This included new perspectives on nation building and by extension on Empire building. Upper-middle-class interests were also growing and agitating for a Reform Act at home. They too turned their eyes to the white colonies where some of them could find a springboard to better their political, financial or social situation if Wakefield was to be believed.

Wakefield's ideas on colonization did not lack exposure. Beside the platform of the *Morning Chronicle*, Wakefield found some supporters for his cause in *The Spectator*.\(^{122}\) Radical newspapers also relayed his liberal model of Empire which advocated the abolition of free grants of land in the colonies, an ugly form of vested interests denounced by Frances Wright and Robert Gourlay, against what was now considered as the commonwealth of British people, their colonies. Wilmot-Hortonism was attacked in the press by Charles Buller, describing it as "the shovelling out of paupers" to the detriment of the development of the colonies which now required a selection of qualified...

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\(^{121}\) Frances Wright, *Biography, Notes and Political Letters of Frances Wright d'Arismont*, New York, 1844, p. 16

\(^{122}\) *The Spectator*, March 13, 1830, published an article in which the "new colonization" system and the emigration system as practiced by Wilmot-Horton, are compared. Canada is used as the example of a great colony "sacrificed" to vested interest and expediency policies. The journalist concludes by praising the Wakefield scheme as "one of the highest examples of human ingenuity."
emigrants, samples of the best elements among British society at all levels. Furthermore, Wakefield insisted on the idea of "concentration", as opposed to dispersion as in the Canadian bush. Land ought to be under the control of some colonial authority, as in America. He developed this point in an article, entitled "The Cure and Prevention of Pauperism by Means of Systematic Colonization", published in *The Spectator*, on April 3, 1830\(^{123}\) in which he presented Canada as a counter-example, almost doomed from the start of its colonization. He reproduced here some arguments already put forward by Frances Wright. Considering the apparent failure of British North America in terms of colonial expansion, with paupers dying in the woods, he developed a sound plan for successful colonization. He partly referred to it in *England and America*, published in 1833. In one of his notes under the heading "The Wealth of England", he refers to the two Canadas as being clearly neglected by the mother country, which had abandoned the land to "land jobbers" instead of wisely and efficiently controlling its distribution. Wakefield and Wright's utilitarian tendencies clearly combined here when Wakefield alarmingly connected the lack of interest of England for its colonies, with the possible decline of its wealth in the near future:

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[...]
\text{a history of colonization would show that all new colonies, having a vast territory at their disposal, have prospered or languished accordingly as the governments by which they were founded took care or neglected to dispose of the land to be colonized with a view to a combination of power among the colonists. In the case of the last colony founded by England, [he had just evoked the Canadas], the greatest pains were taken to disperse the colonists, to cut up their capital and labour into the smallest fractional parts whence a miserable failure with all the elements of success}^{124}.
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Since Wakefield's name was still attached to the scandal of a prison sentence, it was left to his political friends to begin to exercise an important influence on the shaping of the second Empire, in his name. For instance, Lord Durham was the son-in-law of the Whig prime minister Lord Grey. John Stuart Mill was editor of the *Westminster Review*, Charles Buller was an MP. In 1831,

\[^{123}\text{Quoted by A.J. Harrop, *op.cit.*, p. 56.}\]

methods of assisted emigration which had been implemented in Upper Canada by Wilmot Horton's ministry to promote the interests of land companies and Tory land proprietors, were abandoned when the new Secretary to the Colonies, Lord Goderich, appointed by the new Whig prime minister, Lord Grey, and his under-secretary Lord Howick became convinced that the huge sums spent were not conducive to any improvement, either for the British Isles or for Canada. The repeated critical accounts written by travellers about the lack of prospect in Canada for poor settlers had served as a powerful campaign to deter emigrants, and more particularly respectable emigrants, from choosing Lower or Upper Canada.

In 1831 Lord Howick and Lord Goderich, convinced by Wakefield, both established a new system of land sales in Australia and in Canada forbidding the free disposal of land. Land now had to be sold by the local government and taxes collected to improve the colonies. Part of these taxes should also be used to attract good settlers. In Canada, the Canada Company, and a decade later the Hudson's Bay Company set up offices in London and in Canada to accompany the selection of settlers and their settlement on plots of land purchased by them prior to their departure. The Colonial Office had been convinced that a proper system of colonial development was needed. From 1831 onwards, a new series of texts on Canada were published: emigration pamphlets, directed at promoting Canada as "a land of promise", in accordance with the instructions of Wakefield. Catharine Parr Traill's first motive in writing *The Backwoods of Canada* would be to criticize these ready-made, formatted and unauthentic propaganda pieces.

**Frances Wright, Wakefield and Durham's imperial project: "official nationalism" for Canada**

The "human factor" in Wakefield's system of colonization became all the more essential to Wakefield's theory in 1838. Once again, the Canadian colonies were at the centre of his empirical and imperial observations. However, this time Wakefield was able to see the colonies for himself. In fact, in 1837-38, the
Canadian colonies caused great trouble to the mother country as French Canadian nationalists and radical British settlers rebelled in Lower and Upper Canada respectively. The "national and religious bickerings" that Frances Wright had predicted would worsen in Lower Canada, had indeed occurred in less than one generation.

Both groups had come to armed rebellions after local hierarchies had abused their oligarchic powers against the patriotic interests defended by the rebels. It was the tense situation that Frances Wright had exposed to her readers in Letter XV. Indeed, if land sales had been controlled and pauper "shovelling" stopped, following Parliamentary regulations voted in 1831, the local Tory cliques still kept local assemblies and cabinets under their firm and self-interested control. At the heart of the dispute were land taxes and the manner they should be spent. On the one hand, patriotic leaders, speakers at the colonial assemblies, like Louis-Joseph Papineau in Lower Canada and William Lyon McKenzie in Upper Canada, promoted the patriotic interests of the community while on the other hand non-elected cabinets (composed of the English merchants in Quebec City and Tory landlords in York) overruled their decisions and planned to use the taxes for their own interests. Seen from the metropolis, and thanks to the various misrepresentations circulating in Tory newspapers abroad and at home, the insurgents had been described as French Canadian demagogues or harsh Republicans by those who held colonial power. Frances Wright had also acknowledged party politics in her account on Lower Canada in 1819, but she had stated the French Canadian MPs were “democrats”. Both "rebel" parties had repeatedly asked Britain for measures of responsible government to no avail\textsuperscript{125}.

In 1838, Wakefield unofficially went to Canada with Lord Durham who had been officially appointed to bring back order and good government to his young Queen's colonies. Durham had hired Wakefield to work as his amanuensis. He had the expertise of the colonial theorist and he would be able to suggest

\textsuperscript{125} Brown, George W., Building the Canadian Nation, Toronto, J.M Dent and Sons, 1955, ch. XXIII.
reforms. Upon his return, Lord Durham published a *Report on the Affairs of British North America*. This major text, a white paper for the modern British Empire according to historians, formulated the final "political" measures that had been only hinted at by Wakefield in *England and America*. The report was designed by Durham and Wakefield as a larger-than-life demonstration of their imperial project.

Historian Janet Ajzenstat has established that Wakefield wrote large sections of Lord Durham's *Report*, particularly the chapters on the land system, on the selection of desirable settlers and on the political autonomy of the colonies. Wakefield had carried out an investigation of the various systems of representation used in America, and in Canada. With Frances Wright's account, he had found a description of the legislative system used in Lower Canada, as well as examples of "direct democracy" used in the Republican states. Durham and Wakefield concluded that the constitutional problems of the Canadas would be solved by introducing the comprehensive English constitution in the "white" colonies. In fact, they seemed to suggest that Britain should follow "the older British colonial policy that wherever a man went he carried with him the rights of an Englishman, whatever these were supposed to be." In fact, this policy had been developed quite pragmatically by British settlers in America before 1763, as explained by Frances Wright.

In *Views of Society and Manners in America*, Frances Wright had indeed shown in Letter XX that new and old settlers displayed "a unanimity of sentiment throughout the nation(186)" thanks to the liberty and constitutional rights that the republican system guaranteed to all Americans. Universal suffrage and easy access to property were offered to new settlers. In return, Wright said, how could settlers turn against their government and leave their new communities:

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126 Lloyd, T.O, *The British Empire*, op.cit., p. 159-160
128 Herman Merivale's comment on responsible government proposed by Lord Durham to colonists, *Lectures on Colonisation and Colonies*, op.cit., Lecture IV, p. 103.
They will more readily acquire an accurate knowledge of their political institutions and learn to estimate the high privileges which these impart to them, and thus attaching themselves to their adopted country not from mere sordid motives of interest but also from feeling and principle, become not only naturalized but nationalized (138).

Wakefield shared her ideas on attachment to the colonial communities and on the role of responsible government to achieve this sentiment of attachment. Wright described the manner in which national identity could be fostered by the spread of liberal political principles. The Colonial Office, thanks to the implementation of the full English constitution, including universal suffrage, would foster English nationalist feelings in its white colonies, among French settlers in Lower Canada but also among disappointed British emigrants in Upper Canada. What settlers sought, according to Wakefield and Durham's analysis, was responsible government, that is to say making the executive and the legislative accountable to the people in the colonies. They both believed that as in the Greek colonies, autonomous communities, fashioned after the motherland, would grow and flourish under good government and law if the settlers were given the political autonomy they asked for. Frances Wright had noted how great the discontent was among the settlers who found themselves dispersed and cast off to the "Siberian desert" in Upper Canada. They were gradually nursing anger towards the home government. Wakefield must have been impressed by this argument when he stated in England and America that settlers discarded to the woods, would either grow "fanatically proud of their own wild country" or leave the colonies for Ohio. Clearly, the British Parliament voting responsible government measures for the white colonies in Canada as Durham suggested at the end of his report would guarantee a lasting adhesion to the imperial project for new waves of settlers.

Durham and Wakefield suggested that the Whig constitution would foster attachment to the mother country, as well as "Englishness" among the settlers,

129 Wakefield, England and America, op.cit., p. 466 (italics in the original text).
new and old. Benedict Anderson analyses this form of imperial nationalism imposed by the English constitution as "official nationalism." They only had to turn to America to look at the manner in which powerful symbols of the nation were developed to maintain the spirit of attachment high among the old and new settlers. Central to this now comprehensive imperial project was the eradication of any dissident nationality or patriotism as, according to Frances Wright, naturalization and nationalization should feature high on the priority list of a national government.

Durham's *Report on the Affairs of British America* was highly praised by Whig historians for its enlightened radicalism: the project of political independence for the colonies and the federation of autonomous English communities. But his *Report* opened with a first chapter on the state of affairs in Lower Canada where the necessity to "naturalize" and to "nationalize" was a priority for the statesman. Durham attributed the stagnation of the colony to the past mismanagement of Tory governments, particularly their collusion with the Catholic clergy and the demagogy of Tory governors towards the underdeveloped French Canadians. Durham was obviously inspired by Frances Wright's description of Lower Canada. He also evoked some of her conclusions on the fate of the French in Canada. As we recall Wright expressed very wry and opinionated remarks on the fate of the French in the British Empire.

Discussing the case of Lower Canada was an opportunity both for Frances Wright and for Lord Durham to criticize Tory English imperial policies. Both reminded their readers that since 1763, the conquered French population in Lower Canada, formerly New France, had been allowed to preserve their Catholic faith, their French code of laws, and their language. These measures had been voted by a Tory Parliament to foster loyalty to the British king among the French elite. It had been above all a strategic measure devised to keep revolutionary ideas, and revolutionary Americans, at bay in the province. This loyalty was a guarantee for

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the Tory government at home that America would not invade the Canadas and annex them. For that purpose, a "thorough detestation of their republican neighbours" was encouraged by the priests "as the union of Canada, to the republic would of necessity, pave the way to their downfall, interest binds fast their loyalty to the ruling powers."(144)

To solve the Catholic problem in the colony, an anomaly in the "Protestant ascendancy" that had spread over North America, Frances Wright had proposed to follow one American example of successful integration: French Louisiana. Up until the Purchase, she said, Louisiana had been arrested in its progress. After 1802, great progress had been made to remove the French character of the population: "Not sixteen years since this vast territory was ceded to the United States and already its people are nationalized.(147)" Frances Wright added that if the British were willing to copy the American nation's assimilating principles then "a population as simple and ignorant as that of French Canada" would be "transformed, in the course of one generation, into a people comparatively enlightened [...] distinctions of manners, feelings, and language between old and new population" would gradually disappear, and "in the course of a few generations they will be mingled into one."(146)

Durham took up the example of French Louisiana to introduce his so-called humanitarian policy on the fate of the French peasants, with "no history and no literature." In his description of the assimilation of the people of Louisiana, he insists on the role played by the "aspiring" men who had found rewards in accepting their naturalization in governing their state. Providing them with the English constitution in a newly united large Canadian province would necessarily offer French Canadians the opportunity to be nationalized and to share "in a few generations" the “distinctions of manners, feelings and language” of the English settlers. Durham exposed the necessity of a political union of Upper and Lower Canada. This policy would be voted in 1840 and enacted in 1841. Wakefield then

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131 (her italics)
followed up on Durham's proposal by a long development on "systematic colonization" putting forward the necessity of developing middle-class emigration to Canada. There the "best classes" of the mother country, particularly genteel women, would preserve the manners, feelings and language of the English nation. Durham's Report on British North America staged the ideal Empire of Wakefield. To further the promotion of his imperial project and to make sure that it would not be shelved by Durham's enemies or his own, Wakefield managed to publish long extracts of the report in several newspapers at home before MPs and even the Queen received the full text for preliminary reading. The Canadian colonies received great exposure in the national press and became for a while the epitome of the ideal British Empire for the reading public, as we shall see in the next chapters.

Wakefield returned to Canada in the 1840s to observe the working of responsible government in the colonies and to report on the use of Crown Lands. He used his observation to perfect his settlement plan published in 1849 and to put it into practice in two occasions. First he put his "Art of Colonization" into practice by setting up an emigration scheme in New Zealand choosing two locations for these new settlements at Christchurch and Canterbury, in 1850-52. Second, in 1850, Wakefield's theory on the selection of the emigrants and the selling of Crown Lands were also used in Canada where it had all begun with the founding of Vancouver's Island which was first opened to settlement in 1850, under the supervision of the Hudson's Bay Company which had received a Royal Charter to conduct its colonizing mission in British Columbia. Enquiries and debates in the British press had preceded the selection of the "colonizer". The plans had been made quite clear to the company or landlord who would eventually take up the daunting task of creating a white middle-class colony on the West coast of Canada, the "last jewel of the Crown". "Systematic colonization" was part

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of the deal. From land sales to the selection of the emigrants according to ratios, the Wakefield system was outlined for those who would take this colonial project in hand.

Therefore, his "system of colonization" as he described it, and the abundant literature about it, I would argue, could not have been produced by Wakefield without looking at the margins of Empire, particularly at Canada which became familiar to him after reading a travel narrative written by a young Scotswoman whose clear denunciation of the state of the British American colonies stood out among other conventional and consensual male travellers’ reports. Furthermore, as will become obvious in the following chapters, his colonization system was perfected by the reading of other personal narratives about Canada written by middle-class women.

**Canada through women's eyes: Frances Wright’s aesthetic discourse**

Frances Wright was the first British woman to visit Canada and to "produce some knowledge" about it. How did her aesthetic impressions support her imperial account of Upper and Lower Canada? Contrary to previous accounts by men of America and Canada which tended to remain neutral and bland when it came to evoking native landscapes, Frances Wright’s empathy with, or rejection of the scenes she viewed dominate her narrative. Her desire to engage with the landscape in America contrasted all the more with her refusal to engage in a description of the Canadian landscape. Her physical interaction with the new countries, expressed in her aesthetic discourse, then echoed her imperial discourse

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135 Patrick Shirreff, a Scottish visitor to Canada, published *A Tour Through North America* in Edinburgh in 1835. Shirreff was one of the rare travellers that reflected on the idea of gendered representations, particularly when in his preface he compares his own account on America with those of two ladies before him, Frances Wright and Frances Trollope. About the former, he notes that her work "is likely to produce, in a few years, the usual improvement of a century" in the Canadas and about the latter he emphasizes "her caricatures of manners and institutions" which "fostered the prejudices of many of the inhabitants of Britain and which engendered dislike to political changes taking place in that country [America]."
and reinforced it quite strongly. When visiting American settlers and their new environs, Frances Wright’s sentimentalism was so high that she felt her emotions rushing to her mind and to the page. She revealed to her correspondent a thirst for knowledge and a strong desire to interact with the American landscape upon her landing: "I desired to look anxiously and inquiringly inwards" (7-8), willing to let her “compassion” flow when she felt like it.

Geography and the choice of the itinerary might be influenced by gender to begin with, as Mary Louise Pratt posits when she analysed the behaviour of 19th century travellers in Latin America. Men tended to visit both urban settings and unsettled parts of a country, but they preferred to visit the wilderness whenever they could. In the wilderness, in the Canadas of the 1820s for instance, their "masculinity" was tested and their male expertise in mapping and surveying could be put into practice. Canada was a challenge and an adventure for many male visitors.

By contrast, Frances Wright’s reluctance to venture into Canada, which she described as a mere outpost, where polar winds blew even in early September, reflected her lack of geographical knowledge and her absence of interest in it. She had no wish to map or to survey, quite the contrary. Most of her travels had so far taken place in settled parts of America, taking her from the comfort of inns to patrician homes, as if those houses and villages had sprung up with no effort in America:

Looking round in wondering admiration at this house of enchantment – for truly, containing, as it did, every conveniences and luxury that art could afford and planted down thus in the bosom of the wilderness, it seemed like nothing else than some palace of the genii – while thus gazing and admiring a pleasing young woman entered, the wife of a neighbouring settler. (103)

Frances Wright and her sister enjoyed visiting "civilized" parts of America like quaint villages in New England or lively cities. America was depicted in the light a true pastoral dream whose easiness and peacefulness is enhanced by the sympathy and enthusiasm that the female traveller conveys to the page:
To the right stretches a scattered village of neat white houses that have just started into being, from the bosom of which rises the spire of a little chapel, flashing against the sun; behind barns, stables and outhouses, and to the right a spacious and well-replenished garden, with orchard, laden with all varieties of apple, pear and peach [...] Like one of the patriarchs of old, he [Mr Wasworth] looks round upon his flocks and herds, all the reward of his own industry, the work of his creation. In truth, it cheers the spirits and does the heart good to see these things. (98)

Clearly contrasting with the dullness of Canada, the American landscape, urban or rural, appeared to Wright's readers to be very picturesque. In his essay on picturesque travel, published in 1789, William Gilpin noted that unexplored country was the ideal setting for the tourist136. Besides, picturesque discourse (popularised by Gilpin at the end of the 18th century and Uvedale Price137 at the beginning of the 19th century) offered travellers, both men and women, a flexible series of conventions that enabled them to describe the landscape surrounding them. At first the picturesque was not a mode that suited women, but gradually women seemed to have wrested it away from men. Travel narratives written by women at the turn of the century displayed this particular mode of landscape "narration" which seemed to express women's empathy with the foreign landscape and to reflect their personal submersion in the foreign land. Apprehending a foreign landscape in a British conventional mode with the tools of the picturesque enabled women to master the landscape and to transform it into some familiar British scenes.

William Gilpin, who at the time did not envisage that the picturesque conventions could be used by women138, stated that the main pleasure of picturesque travel lay in the power of landscape beauty "to affect the observer emotionally", who then marvelled at "the enthusiastic sensation of pleasure that

fills the soul. In other words, picturesque vistas, or the rendering of a landscape into a picturesque vista in a textual sketch, implied a necessary response to the surroundings. Victorians would describe this as a typical "feminine" response to the world. With the picturesque mode, women's "passivity" (a form of antipathy) and "empathy" could both be expressed, as is the case in Wright's landscape rendering. When she felt no personal interaction with a landscape then she displayed "passivity", as in Canada. On the other hand, "empathy" to the congenial American landscape led her to write lengthy picturesque descriptions for her readers.

Frances Wright's enthusiasm for the American countryside with its open and endless vistas contrasted with her lack of aesthetic response to the enclosed monotonous Canadian forests. In one of the public lectures she delivered in America, during a visit in the 1830s, Wright confessed to her audience that her first representations of America had been greatly influenced by her subjectivity, and her youthful admiration for the liberal country. She admitted having projected her political discourse onto the landscape. She evoked her "ardour" which had been "too great" and her "enthusiasm" which had led her "to view America as under a 'Claude Lorraine tint'." Wright also admitted that women had the tendency to evoke landscapes by projecting their body and mind into it. She admits having involved herself in the description of the American landscape "beyond reason". Her descriptions of the open vistas and the endless prospects of the American unsettled land had involved the "mind's eye", she says. It is true that most of her descriptions begin with the expression "What I saw and felt".

Pondering on the power of the American landscape to elicit such emotion, which

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139 Gilpin, Observations, relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, quoted by Lueck, op.cit., p.12.
140 Frances Wright, Course of Popular Lectures, as Delivered by Frances Wright with Three Adresses on Various Public Occasions, New York, 1829, p. 8-9.
141 Ibid
142 Ibid
produced such great "effect on the eye and the mind"143, she refers to its "intrinsic qualities that affect the spectator" with "extent, weight, depth". "Everywhere you turn in America", she explains to her female correspondent, there is a "scene for Claude to gaze on."(129) Such is her analysis of the American landscape and her state of mind in Letter XIV, near Lake Erie, two days before crossing the border to visit Canada.

When the Wright sisters reached Canada, which they described as a mere "frontier", their female rejection of the woods reinforced the impression that Canada was nothing more than a "desert". There, she did not even wish to consider the visual perspective that surrounded her as her mind was disturbed by her anti-British feelings. She refused to see and to describe what she considered not worth viewing or describing. She merely glanced at the Canadian landscape from the boat from which they never seemed to disembark. She peremptorily declared the forest "savage", the wind "polar", the frontier scenery "monotonous", the silence "profound", and cedars "black". Clichés abound on the page. Short scenes of desolation and dreariness were described under black or greyish colours. Her "feminine" response to the landscape displayed a refusal to interact with the British colonial world with either her mind or her body. Her political discourse was metonymically prolonged and reinforced by her disengagement from any aesthetic discourse.

Frances Wright emphasized her "gut" feelings towards the area. She irremediably condemned Canada and pronounced it "ugly and cold". She stated that she did her best to circumvent the uncivilized and "savage forests" from Niagara to Kingston to Montreal. According to the binary gender-specific analysis, feminists evoke a form of "passivity"144 to describe women's refusal to interact with landscape or scenery, an apparently common feature in their

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143 In Observations on the Western Part of England, Gilpin had referred to the influence of picturesque beauty on the mind: "The beauteous forms of nature and art thus impressed on the mind…", quoted by Lueck, op.cit., p.12.
travelogues, when the female visitors were more interested by "urban-based rather than rural" areas\textsuperscript{145} for instance.

When, in Letter XV, Frances Wright recounts her visit to Canada, her so-called feminine empathy (highly displayed in America) where "every scene speaks to the heart if not to the eye (96)" clearly shifts to a more passive form of discourse, which Mills describes as "agentless\textsuperscript{146}". Frances Wright used general comments that disengaged her from the actual narration of her visit to Canada where "the eye is tired with the contemplation of dreary forests and wide watery wastes (143)". This willing passivity or open disregard for the Canadian provinces might explain the absence of interaction between the female traveller and the settlers which we noted in the first section of this chapter where "there is little in such scenery to talk or write about", yet she admits "it has its effect on the mind.(143)" as the dreariness of her surroundings seems to weigh on her. Refusing to interact with the landscape could be read as an act of defiance towards the colonial world.

Upper Canada offered no interest to her. The landscape and its "savage monotony" was plainly described as empty of people and empty of living sounds (143). Pratt suggests that this lack of interaction with a landscape empty of people or where people are represented as mere traces, as is the case in this representation of the shores of the St Lawrence at Montreal, might indicate that the traveller is reducing this society to "vestiges of the past\textsuperscript{147}". Wright's aesthetic discourse was used rhetorically to convey or echo her colonial discourse quite powerfully.

The overall representation that is conveyed by Frances Wright to metropolitan readers was that Canada was unwelcoming to women, that it was a man's preserve, and that it lacked civilisation and comfort, a visit "which she [I] certainly should not choose to experience a second time.(142)" "Dull" Canada was

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\textsuperscript{145} Pratt, Mary Louise, Imperial Eyes, Travel Writing and Transculturalisation, London, Routledge, 1992, p. 151.\\
\textsuperscript{146} Mills, Sara, Discourses of Difference. An Analysis of Women's Travel Writings and Colonialism, London, Routledge, 1997, p. 75.\\
\textsuperscript{147} Pratt, op.cit. p. 130
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reflected in the "dull" letter she wrote to Mrs Millar. Canada discursively represented the uncivilized state in which the Empire lay. As Pratt notes women "proposed narratives that are emplotted in a centripetal fashion around places of residence from which the protagonist sallies forth and to which she returns."\(^{148}\)

Frances Wright clearly placed the "centripetal" force in America, as the Scottish girls hurried back south to civilization, after turning their back to Canada (148). Authoritatively she relegated Canada, the paradigm for the British Empire, to the margins of the real imperial centre - America. Frances Wright's aesthetic discourse on Canada, or lack of it therefore also supports her "production of knowledge" about Canada for her readers.

It will become evident in the course of the following chapters that in the first half of the 19\(^{th}\) century, in Canada, gentlewomen emigrants and gentlewomen travellers resorted to the conventions of the picturesque to apprehend the colonial landscape. Gradually the aesthetic response to the landscape became a characteristic of feminine writing in travel texts. This aesthetic discourse which some female travellers used to describe and enhance, or to reconstruct and colonize, expressed their viewpoint on the colonial world, when other discourses, political, social or otherwise, were not available to them or suited to them.\(^{149}\) This discourse on the landscape, in the margins of the actual narration, became central to women's texts about foreign countries. Besides, empathy with the landscape revealed the state of mind of the emigrant or traveller, and the way she positioned herself in the foreign or familiar landscape.\(^{150}\) The Canadian landscape, and the literary response it elicited was at the core of their female experience. In 1820, the American landscape was at the core of Frances Wright's emancipation experience, while the Canadian landscape reminded her of the trammels and weight that patriarchal and imperial rule imposed on its subjects.

\(^{148}\) Pratt, op. cit. p. 157-159.


\(^{150}\) Indira Ghose apparently noted the same use of the picturesque in 19\(^{th}\) century travellers' perception of India, particularly texts by women travellers in the second half of the century, The Power of the Female Gaze, op. cit., p. 38.
With this case study of the first physical representation of Canada by a woman, one can conclude that female travellers are no longer average tourists, in search of domestic vistas or virtues that many scholars have described, but on the contrary they are able to develop stronger colonial and imperial discourses than men. Wright herself describes the way her perception of the landscape leads her to ponder on the destiny of a nation:

When you look on the young thickets and thriving trees [visiting a recently settled village in New York State], think that young as they are, they are as old as the country – old as the date of its national existence – you find yourself strangely wondering at the wealth and energy that surround you; and recalling the rapid strides which these states have made from unknown colonies to a vast and powerful empire.(15)

In Canada, women travellers' interaction with the landscape, the physical involvement of the self in the foreign land, the bodily inscription into it, or its rejection reveal and support the political discourse on the colonies. This will be revealed in the following chapters through reference to popular accounts of Canada by Catharine Parr Traill, Anna Jameson and Susanna Moodie.

Johanes Fabian explains, without referring particularly to women that "the texts produced by travellers do not simply reflect a pre-given reality, but create the world they purport to describe." I believe this theory applies particularly well to the discursive power of women travellers. This I hope has been shown in my analysis of Frances Wright's idealization of America, as the country she discovers accordingly echoed the literary and political representations she had developed prior to her voyage. Still referring to travel narratives, Johanes Fabian states that "knowledge is not produced from a transcendent position at all, but is a product of social and 'sensuous interaction'." This has also been clearly the case of Frances Wright's interaction or lack of interaction with the landscape. Knowledge about America results from Frances Wright's "sensuous interaction", while in Canada, the absence of knowledge about or the refusal to produce knowledge

about the colonies results from the lack of "sensual interaction". Women travellers seemed to have tools that differed from men's when apprehending a foreign land but these marginal physical and textual tools provide powerful comments, which reinforce their political comments. Elizabeth Bohls underlines that sensuous interaction was considered by the 18th century picturesque conventions as rather lowly. Gilpin recommended that the male gaze should remain only attracted to the landscape for aesthetic reasons and should remain aloof, or disinterested towards the scene described. Men viewers tended to believe in a uniform or universal aesthetic appreciation. Bohls sets out to show that women travellers at the turn of the century began to expose "the flawed logic" behind this disinterested and uniform male gaze. Women travellers, as is the case with Frances Wright here, gradually adapted this aesthetic language to their own agenda, "reappropriating" it.

With these paragraphs, I hope to have shown that a trend in the representation of the foreign land had already been started, penned by young Scottish middle-class female visitor from the Georgian era, to North America. Afterwards, women were able to adopt discourses of hegemony by conveying personal views on the state of the colonies, by relaying official colonial discourses, or creating new ones. Aesthetic responses to the North American landscape revealed great differences of perception between men and women travellers. In the same way, it also elicited different responses on the part of emigrants like Catharine Parr Traill and visitors like Anna Jameson. Jameson, a great admirer of Mary Wollstonecraft's social and political agenda, pursued that tradition of female appropriation of the language of aesthetics in her Canadian travel text. Central to her account of Canada, she placed the will to "see" the

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country with her "soul and senses\textsuperscript{153}\), to feel "the excitement caused by various picturesque effects.\textsuperscript{154}\), and to be "translated."

\textsuperscript{153} Jameson, Anna Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada, (1838), Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1990, p. 57.

\textsuperscript{154} Ibid. p. 19, see chapter 4.
CHAPTER 2

"A Woman's Pen Alone…" Catharine Parr Traill's The Backwoods of Canada (1837)

In 1839, Herman Merivale noted in his fourth lecture on "Colonization and Colonies", that the general public in Britain seemed now to be convinced that the manifest destiny of their nation relied on colonization. Indeed he affirmed before his Oxford students that "the peculiar and unselfish interest with which schemes of colonization are regarded by almost all classes of society" indicated that the public had "sanguine hopes" and they were ready to "make sacrifices for their promotion". Merivale attributed this well-shared concern and enthusiasm for colonization to the campaign launched by the colonial reformers under the leadership of E.G. Wakefield. We know that Wakefield himself based his principles of colonization on his own reading of travel texts and emigration narratives. Frances Wright's Views was one of them. So too was Catharine Parr Traill's The Backwoods of Canada, a valuable source of information on women in the colonies.

Indeed, women gradually began to form an essential pillar of the "Wakefield scheme". He touched upon the subject in England and America, particularly in one of the appendices that he entitled "The Art of Colonization." There, Frances Wright's description of genteel families in America and particularly the women's participation in community building on the frontier influenced Wakefield. From the involvement of many genteel British emigrants in colonial communities, "the advanced guard of civilization" as Frances Wright liked to call them, Wakefield concluded that middle-class women were essential to the establishment of homes on the frontier, thus appropriating Wright's observation. Displaying a certain freedom of action in these communities yet free

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of public/private spheres, they participated in the formation of a certain social hierarchy within the community. As Frances Wright had shown in Letters XI and XXIII, gentlewomen were seen as the source of moral values, education and common sense in frontier settlements. They were the pillars of the homes:

> You find yourself, in a few minutes, one of the family; frankness and friendliness draw forth the same feelings from you; you are domesticated at the hearth and the board, and depart at least with heart overflowing, as from some home endeared by habit and sacred associations. (97)

Wright also noted that in frontier communities, women were valued for their own worth and qualities (161). Wakefield clearly saw the colonial communities as an extension of the private spheres over which women ruled supreme. This "woman question" section of the imperial project was further developed in 1849 in his *Art of Colonization*. There, the role and functions of gentlewomen emigrants in the colonies were clearly established and their contributions further promoted, at least in theory.

In this chapter, I will show how Wakefield's six-month visit to Canada in 1838, as well as his reading of major narratives about Canada, some written by women, particularly Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada*, influenced this part of his finalized "system of colonization." I would also like to show that the Canadian provinces of Upper - and in a lesser way Lower Canada – became central to the development of women's colonial discourse in Britain by examining Catharine Parr Traill's personal views on Empire building in Upper Canada. She was the first middle-class woman to publish a settler's narrative about Upper Canada in the metropolis. Her insider's perspective on life in what appeared from the metropolis as the actual "backwoods" of civilization, changed the already clichéd representation of Canada, “the poor man’s country” that the British public had held since the 1820s when travellers like Frances Wright, and statesmen represented and envisaged the colonies as dumping grounds for unwanted populations. Traill’s work had a great impact on the representations that circulated in the public sphere on the colonial world which Canada came to embody in the
1830s. We will see that her so-called domestic representations of life in the colony, the first social consideration of its kind, also influenced Herman Merivale's lectures on colonization and colonies published in 1842, particularly when the latter tackles the social characteristics of colonists. Catharine Parr Traill put forward her own feminine conception of the colonies, stating that middle-class families could settle there and live a happy life while accomplishing their colonial duty.

We will see how Traill's manuscript written in the margins of the Empire by an author whose expertise essentially resided in domestic pioneering, was circulated in the metropolis where it provided an important input to the public debate over the search for an "imperial project" for Britain. Traill, with the distance and hindsight provided by emigration, triggered off questions on issues pertaining to this "imperial project": the desirable social quality of the new emigrants for the Empire as well as the issue of the participation of women in Empire building, while at the same time crossing the boundaries of the autobiographical genre - or at least the boundaries established for published autobiographical texts written by Victorian women - Traill reveals her inner struggles in a colonial environment so far unknown to her British public. Gradually shedding her ethnocentric English values and perspectives on the New World, she records how she came to uphold the values of the Canadian margins and its colonial communities, while resenting the imperialist approach of England towards its colonies, as well as the far-too-superior attitude of the English middle classes at home. With Traill, a new "post-colonial" perspective, however anachronistic this may sound, dawned on the metropolis. The female author also makes clear that her "woman's pen alone", as she describes one of her feminine talents in the introduction to The Backwoods, was most capable of rendering the domestic world of Canada in which she now lived and worked, as well as the sentiments of affection and love she felt for her colony as a mother whose children were growing in this budding nation.
Before analysing Catharine Parr Traill's representation of her colonial duty in Canada and before tackling the analysis of her reflections on her new status, it is necessary to consider the form her testimony took: that of a genteel British woman colonist in the uncivilized and remote white Empire. Following Simon Gikandi's leading development in *Maps of Englishness*, I would like to focus firstly on the manner in which colonial subjects write their identities within the cultural totality established by imperialism. Gikandi analyses post-colonial texts written in the former non-white British colonies where imperialism had taken its toll on the native population. I will show that British colonists - considered as "colonial" by the imperial centre - also had to rewrite their identities within the cultural totality of English imperialism before 1867. This experience of "in-betweeness" forms the gist of the personal narratives written by British gentlewomen in the margins, from the 1830s onwards.

Published in London at the end of the year 1836, Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada, being Letters from the Wife of an Emigrant Officer, Illustrative of the Domestic Economy of British America*, was the very first text devoted entirely to Canada written by a resident who was still in the country at the time of writing. The book, a series of letters from Catharine Parr Traill, an educated gentlewoman, to her mother and sisters in England, recounts the first years of her emigration and settlement near Peterborough, in Upper Canada, after her husband, a retired army officer, decided to settle on his land grant. The letters record the personal hardship and doubts, then the hopes and enthusiasm of the female author as she gradually becomes acquainted with the Canadian wilderness that would become her home for the rest of her life. The book sold very well, went through several editions well into the 1850s and no one seemed to question the validity of a woman's representation of the colonies.

Traill's text was thus the first account of a British settler still living in a white colony revealing to her British readers some personal reflections on her

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"intimate Empire\textsuperscript{157}". In the "Canada mania\textsuperscript{158}" of the 1830s during which the Victorian public seemed to (re)discover their North American colonies and the potential they offered for emigration and speculation, numerous texts were available in London. Readers wishing for information on Upper Canada could for instance, buy one of the travel narratives that had been published in the previous decade or one of the few personal narratives written by so-called settlers published at the beginning of the 1830s. In fact, many of these texts turned out to be commissioned pamphlets published in the wake of the 1831 Land Sales Act that applied to Canada. So-called personal accounts of emigration written by settlers, were in fact fictitious as many were written by land speculators having invested in one of the land companies; or land jobbers trying to sell land in Canada to ignorant emigrants. While travelogues were based on already compiled statistics, Catharine Parr Traill's "genuine" colonial narrative stood out among these "commodity" texts. Her manuscript was different from the other literary productions on Canada. Her authentic account and her insider's contribution to the knowledge of the white colonial world were valuable for the Victorian public. Traill was one of the first British gentlewomen to emigrate that was educated enough to write about this new experience for her middle-class fellows\textsuperscript{159} on the one hand, and to have literary connections in London to publish her narrative, on the other hand.

Traill's text also broke new ground as, in the course of her personal impressions on the New World, she adopted quite an intimate tone to reveal her ambivalent feelings towards her mother country, suggesting that new bonds were drawing her to her adopted country. Likewise, the text took the form of an autobiographical account narrated in a series of letters to her mother and sisters.


\textsuperscript{158} This expression is used by Susanna Moodie in \textit{Roughing It in the Bush} (1852) to refer to the 1830s when her husband and herself were seeking information on Canada and the colonial world in general. (see chapter 5)

\textsuperscript{159} Mrs Simcoe and Anne Langton are also well-known Canadian emigrants today as their unpublished materials have been edited by archivists. Both had left diaries which had not been published in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century.
though such intimate narration was much frowned upon in Britain in the 1830s. But the novelty that the narrator introduced concerning Canada seemed to have overcome the impropriety that the publishing of a woman's autobiography in the public sphere represented.

In *The Backwoods of Canada*, Traill also provides an invaluable account of what post-colonial literature scholars describe as the "in-between" position of the exiled or the emigrant, which reflected the ambivalent position of the writer/colonist, also a "colonial subject/object" for the metropolitan readers. In other words, Traill was gradually questioning her identity: her identity as a gentlewoman in British society transplanted in the colonial world and that of an English woman in Canada. In so doing she offered readers of the metropolis some inkling of new problematical issues about the building of the Empire. Her personal account reflected on the human dimension or the human factor already evoked on paper by Wakefield. Indeed, if Empire building had been discussed in newspapers, in brochures or in Parliamentary committees, in economic and utilitarian discourses, the discourses produced had been quite abstract and even sterile and one-sided as they were produced in Britain. Establishing an "imperial project" in Canada or in other colonies could not be as "systematic" as Edward Gibbon Wakefield predicted. One also had to take into account the reactions of the dutiful colonists once they were transplanted in the white colonies.

Women settlers too had an important, if not essential part to play in the "backwoods" of the Empire. Traill's message was registered by Edward Gibbon Wakefield and integrated in his own *Art of Colonization* as we will see. If the British liberal public had believed that extending "Englishness" to the Empire would be part and parcel of an economic and political extension, Traill seemed to belie this metropolitan representation of Empire building. To readers who wished to read beyond the Utilitarian message that her publisher Charles Knight had tried to impart to the manuscript – a practical settler’s guide to emigration –, Catharine Parr Traill offered a different perspective on the realization of the imperial project. If transferring populations was the simplest part, implementing English
values in the Canadian world was the most difficult part. Traill is a good example of resistance to the imperial plan as she revealed some new sentiments of allegiance and attachment to Canada, as if she was "going native". In fact, her "woman's pen alone..." enabled Traill to reflect further on the question of feelings, or "sentiment" of attachment embodied in her truly maternal concern for the future generation of "Canadians", beginning with her own children. Such personal concern for the colonial world and its inhabitants was absent from male travellers' or male settlers' narratives.

Locating and selling the backwoods of Canada to the British public

Ruth Parkin-Gounelas states that it takes a single narrative to allegorise the colonial experience in the New World. Traill's first personal narrative of the Empire by a female writer accomplished just that. The narrative published in 1836 recounted the previous three years in the life of an English gentlewoman emigrant in Upper Canada. The manuscript opens with the narration of the emigrant's Atlantic voyage in 1833, as she and her husband were already halfway between England and Canada. The book closes on a series of personal reflections and feelings on her new life in Upper Canada in her recently erected home in the backwoods, near Lakefield. Canada, presented at first as a wild, foreign world, a mere wilderness, is gradually domesticated by the emigrant. Such is also the impression that her readers come to share as the wilderness of the backwoods is progressively "tamed" and "domesticated" for them.

This intimate narrative about Canada was not "challenged" before 1848 when Frances Beavan published a copycat narrative with her Life in the Backwoods of New Brunswick. Her work went unnoticed in the reviews. The author merely listed a series of anecdotes about life in another Canadian colony,

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For instance, such a questioning on the notion of "national" attachment was absent from Traill's brother settler's narrative, the only male version of a "colonial autobiography" written in Canada, published in 1853. Samuel Strickland, Twenty Seven Years in Canada West, London, Richard Bentley, 1853.

Ruth Parkin-Gounelas, Fictions of the Female Self, op.cit., p. 62.
New Brunswick, devoid of any personal feelings or questioning on her new status in the margins. Then in 1852, Susanna Moodie, Catharine Parr Traill's sister and neighbour in the backwoods, since she too had emigrated to Upper Canada in 1832, also published her personal narrative of life in Canada. Susanna Moodie's *Roughing it in the Bush* became as popular as her sister's earlier narrative and resumed her remarks and questioning about the experience of "in-betweenness" and "going native." She took Traill's final conclusions on the fate of the colonies a step further by placing Canada above the mother country in terms of moral progress and social virtues. I wish therefore, in the first instance, to analyse the literary form taken by these female emigrants' narratives by extending the characteristics of Traill's text to Susanna Moodie's text.

Catharine Parr Traill, the author, narrator and central character of this first "colonial autobiography" was born in the Strickland family in 1802 in England. The genteel family lived in Suffolk on an estate owned by Mr Strickland, a dock-manager who had encouraged his six daughters and two boys to read and write. Catharine's father died when she was sixteen. He only left a small inheritance for his family to live on. The Strickland girls, yet unmarried and considering themselves as "blue-stockings", soon realized that their economic independence could only be obtained by their pens. Susanna (later Moodie), Agnes, Eliza and Catharine launched into writing careers, publishing moral tales, juvenilia and poetry which they tried to sell to some home-circle literary magazines which were flourishing by the mid-1820s. After a rather long period of spinsterhood for Catharine, she and Susanna both married within a few months. Their spouses were two half-pay officers from the 21st Royal Scottish Fusiliers who had served and fought during the Napoleonic wars.

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162 Traill's correspondence has been edited by Carl Ballstadt, Elizabeth Hopkins, Michael Peterman, *I Bless you in My Heart*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1991. They also provide excellent biographical and background information, pp. 3-29.
Canada, a new abode for the middling sort

After 1815, opportunities had been offered to the two officers to leave the army with their full pension, or to receive half their pension and free land in the British colonies. In 1831, Susanna's husband, John Dunbar Moodie had just returned from South Africa when he met her and decided to marry, hoping his young wife would follow him back there. He had spent ten years on a farm in South Africa and he had returned to England to find a publisher for his personal narrative. His narrative was typical of the popular adventure narratives in India or Africa. In 1832, John Dunbar Moodie and Susanna settled in Upper Canada as, according to Moodie, his wife had refused to return with him to dangerous and wild South Africa. Moodie had become acquainted with emigration to Upper Canada through conversations with his brother-in-law with whom he attended one of William Cattermole's public conferences on emigration to Canada.

The financial situation of former British officers was never comfortable at home, as we gather from the letters exchanged between Susanna and John Moodie, or Catharine Parr Traill and her friends. Each family breadwinner looked in vain for possibilities of staying in England, to maintain their family in a decent way, before taking the irreversible decision to settle in Canada. On many occasions, they had to swallow their pride and beg high-ranking officers, or publishers, or wealthy members of their families for help as this extract from one of John Moodie's letters reveals:

Having vainly endeavoured to procure advancements in my profession, I am at length compelled to remove with my family to Upper Canada, where I hope to procure a sufficient subsistence by farming [...].

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164 The Moodies' correspondence has been edited by Carl Ballstadt, Elizabeth Hopkins, Michael Peterman eds, *Letters of Love and Duty. The Correspondence of Susanna and John Moodie*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1989. The three scholars also offer a wealth of biographical details on various members of the Strickland and Moodie families, pp. 2-17.
166 *Letters of Love and Duty*, p.31, extract from John Moodie's Letter to Lord Lynedoch, 24 March 1832.
Catharine Parr Traill's husband, a widower with grown-up children when he married her, had been expecting to receive some inheritance from his father's estate in Scotland. He never received the allocation. Many of these demobilized or half-pay officers as they were called had chosen a military career because their upper-class or upper-middle-class families had lost their status, estate or wealth, or because they were the youngest male siblings in the family and as a consequence they were not entitled to inherit land or money. The army had been the only opportunity they had found to keep up their family status and to maintain their rank by serving the country. With their demobilization from the army, they lost both status and pay. In her preface Catharine Parr Traill wishes to make this point clear to the English public.

It is a fact not universally known to the public, that British officers and their families are usually denizens of the backwoods; and as great numbers of unattached officers of every rank have accepted grants of land in Canada, they are the pioneers of civilization in the wilderness, and their families often of delicate nurture and honourable descent, are at once plunged into all the hardships attendant on the rough life of a bush-settler.

She states that by her social status, she could not be mistaken for a pauper emigrant. She also underlines that emigrating to the British colonies would soon become a desperate alternative to social downfall at home, for middle-class families. In 1836, emigration for families from the "middling sort" still seemed unnatural. The metropolitan middle and upper-class readers for whom she writes the book had the right to know that genteel families were struggling in Canada to expand their white Empire.

The emigrants to British America are no longer in the rank of life that formerly left the shores of the British Isles. It is not only the poor husbandmen and artisans, that move in vast bodies to the west, but it is the enterprising English capitalist, and the once affluent landholder, alarmed at the difficulties of establishing numerous families in independence, in a

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country where every profession is overstocked, that join the bands that
Great Britain is pouring forth into these colonies.\textsuperscript{168}

According to the writer, these families should not bear any longer the
stigma of immigration that the British public usually attached to lower-class
emigrants, convicts or paupers. This new category of educated and well-mannered
middle-class emigrants acted as the torchbearers of English civilization in these
new regions.

However, immigration to one of the colonies did not seem to be an
immediate choice for many army officers. For a year or two Traill and Moodie
tried first to find positions in civilian life in Britain. But competition was fierce,
and positions were hard to find for these men. The coming to power of "new"
middle-class men from the entrepreneurial classes, enterprising young men who
were not necessarily born into wealthy families, made competition ever fiercer as
they too pursued the Bourgeois Dream of wealth, status and political power at
home\textsuperscript{169}. This new class of entrepreneurs was often described as relentlessly
money-driven and prompted by ruthless liberal principles. In order to maintain
their status, Traill and Moodie had to find a position in which they could afford to
start a family and support a middle-class household in which the hiring of
numerous servants was a sign of social success\textsuperscript{170}. No professional position could
pay an income large enough to offer a man and his future wife such a lifestyle. In
the early decades of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, money was to be made by capitalists in the
wake of the industrial revolution. In such a social context, many "demised" or
deluded army officers, once engaged to young ladies, thought of settling their
genteel families in Canada, hoping to establish themselves as gentlemen farmers
in a budding colonial society. Edward Gibbon Wakefield had fostered their

\textsuperscript{168} All subsequent quotes are taken from Catharine Parr Traill, \textit{The Backwoods of Canada}, (1836),
\textsuperscript{169} Cannadine, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 173
\textsuperscript{170} Davidoff, Leonore and Catharine Hall, \textit{Family Fortunes, Men and Women of the English
bourgeois hopes in his "systematic colonization" theory by promising middle-class emigrants the status of small squires and social leaders in the newly formed communities of Canada and Australasia where cheap land and an indentured labour force would jointly offer them new opportunities to prosper.

Catharine Strickland then married Thomas Traill in 1832. That summer, they emigrated to Upper Canada where Catharine's brother Samuel had settled previously in a small community in the backwoods near Lakefield. The Traills seemed to have discussed the "chances and advantages" of emigration together, as Catharine explained in a letter to her close friends in England, the Birds. The married couple began there a long life of pioneering, more often than not punctuated by long periods of debts and poverty. So that in 1836, when the manuscript she had sent to her sister Agnes in London, in order to find a suitable publisher had been rushed through print by Charles Knight, desperately seeking new manuscripts for his Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, her pioneering experience had just begun, but she knew that the family would not be returning to England.

As for the Strickland sisters who remained in England, they too went on to establish a small reputation for themselves in the literary world of London. Agnes Strickland became the biographer of the Queens of England and served as literary agent for Catharine Parr Traill, while Eliza worked in the periodical publishing world and contributed to placing her sisters' Canadian short stories and other pieces in Scottish and English periodicals.173

Gentlewomen emigrants in men's travel accounts about Canada: a "rare avis".

The British public had hardly been aware of the presence of middle-class settlers in Upper Canada, let alone of the fact that middle-class women could have

172 Catharine Parr Traill to Emma and James Bird, Reydon House, 13 May 1832, I Bless You in My Heart, op.cit.
173 Carl Ballstadt et al., I Bless you in My Heart, op.cit., p. 16.
left the safety of the mother country to struggle in the backwoods of Canada. In fact, gentleswomen settlers had rarely been mentioned in travellers' accounts or in residents' sketches prior to the issuing of Traill's text. Patrick Shireff's travel narrative was the first account in which the author devoted a few paragraphs to two examples of middle-class families in his *Tour of North America* published in Edinburgh in 1835.

In 1833, during his visit to the backwoods of Upper Canada, and more precisely to the Lakefield community, north of Peterborough, the Scottish farmer-cum-traveller, Patrick Shireff was seeking land opportunities for his fellow Scottish tenant farmers to start a new life in better conditions than at home. He also considered the prospects, or rather the lack of prospects that Canada offered to middle-class gentlemen and independent farmers like himself. He provided the example of two families struggling and experiencing hardships as they had believed they could find better prospects in Upper Canada than at home. In two log cabins, he encountered two female settlers from the middle class. Coincidentally, Shireff stopped at one house where he knew a Scots family had recently settled down. For lack of evidence it is impossible to establish for certain that the middle-class couple Shireff met in the backwoods were the Traills, but many details provided by the traveller, seemed to indicate it could be them. Besides, the world was rather small in the British colonies, as Shireff recalls, after having encountered by chance several acquaintances from home as well as former school friends, in the few weeks he spent in Canada.

Shireff described the living conditions of the T-- family: "Mr T-- had only reached Canada the year before, and was not perhaps fairly set down. The farm he had purchased was mostly cleared, he was summer fallowing. Mrs T-- apologized for the mean appearance of her house, she was baking her own bread […]"

After observing this gentleswoman during the evening he spent with the family, he

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174 Patrick Shireff, *A Tour through North America, together with a comprehensive view of the Canadas and US, as adapted for agricultural emigration*, Edinburgh, Oliver and Boyd, 1835
176 Shireff, *ibid*, p. 165.
concluded that middle-class women were essential to the survival of their families in the woods, and what was more they "shone in the bush", an expression that Traill and Moodie also resorted to in order to describe their success in domesticity. Shireff greatly admired this young woman's talents: "Observation convinced me females get sooner reconciled to their duties, and discharge them with better effect than males [...]" Shireff already noted a sort of symbiosis between the context of the colonial world and the absence of restriction on women's tasks and accomplishments. Canada seemed to be an ideal setting for gentlewomen where they expressed their resourcefulness while Mr T—seemed to pine: "They [gentlewomen] never appeared to so much advantage as in Canada [...] their exertions induced me to regard many of them as heroines."

Shireff's account probably did not circulate much outside the circle of educated farmers in Scotland, for whom the book was intended, so it went unnoticed among the larger reading public. However, one has to be struck by the unusual representation of women in Upper Canada he provides here when the rest of his visit to the province led him to consider that the country was not fit for educated farmers. He underlines and praises the essential role played by women in the bush. For him, the backwoods could become the natural realm of middle-class women and the incentive to their husband's exertion in clearing land. He equated Canada with women as if the country was a vast domestic sphere. Catharine Parr Traill's narrative would lead her readers to share similar perspectives on her new realm in the woods.

**Challenging the masculine, imperial representation of the colonial world**

Shortly after her arrival in Canada, in letters she exchanged with some friends in London, Catharine Parr Traill shared her anger towards those who were circulating false representations about Canada at home: men "who write only to

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177 Shireff, *ibid*, p. 165.
178 Shireff, *ibid*, p. 338.
sell their book. The Traills and the Moodies' expectations about Canada were greatly disappointed soon after their arrival in the country. Catharine Parr Traill's husband hardly recovered from the disappointment he felt when he beheld the poor, uncleared farm they had pre-empted in the colonial outback. Her private correspondence reveals that Mr Traill was often affected by bouts of depression, leaving his wife to deal with the everyday business on the farm.

Catharine Parr Traill's preface that she writes in the third person opens with a condemnation of so-called settlers' accounts and emigration brochures that turn out to be propaganda for land companies:

Truth has been consciously her [Traill's] object in her work, for it were cruel to write in flattering terms calculated to deceive emigrants into the belief that the land to which they are transferring their families, their capital, and their hopes, a land flowing with milk and honey, where comforts and affluence may be obtained with little exertion. (9)

Similarly, the first remarks about Canada she sent to her friends at home also point to the disgust in which she held emigration pamphlet writers as well as land company agents whose books had provided her husband with so-called "true" information on Upper Canada: "When they talk of the advantages and comforts of a settler's life, they pass over the intervening and necessary hardships and privations and talk of the future as if the present." Traill's incentive and motivation in the writing of her first book resided in this truth she felt she owed to other middle-class women whose husbands would make the terrible mistake of emigrating after having read pamphlets and travel narratives.

Writers on emigration do not take the trouble of searching out these things [sad tales of distress], nor does it answer their purpose to state disagreeable facts. Few have written exclusively on the "Bush". Travellers generally make a hasty journey through the long settled and prosperous portions of the country, they see a tract of fertile, well-cultivated land, the result of many years of labour [...] they see comfortable dwellings, abounding with all the substantial necessaries of life; the farmer's wife makes her own soap,

179 Letter to James and Emma Bird, written from Westove, Douro, on 7 January 1834, in I Bless You in My Heart, op.cit.
180 ibid.
candles and sugar [...] He concludes, therefore, that Canada is a land of Canaan, and writes a book setting forth these advantages, with the addition of obtaining land for a mere song; and advises all persons who would be independent and secure from want to emigrate.(85)

Among those authors who deceived educated emigrants like her husband or her sister's husband, she blamed William Cattermole whose popular conferences on "Emigration to Canada" her husband and brother-in-law attended prior to their departure in the summer of 1831. His so-called true representation of Canada further misled numerous emigrants when his lecture was published in book form. Catharine Parr Traill directly attacked Cattermole's false representations of Canada in a half humorous, half bitter dialogue she staged between a disappointed returning emigrant and her freshly landed husband in The Backwoods of Canada:

Some of the emigrants appear to entertain the most sanguine hopes of success, appearing to foresee no difficulties in carrying their schemes into effect. As a contrast to these there is one of my countrymen, just returned from the western district on his way back to England, who entreats us by no means to go further up this horrid country [...] He had been induced, by reading Cattermole's pamphlet on the subject of Emigration, to quit a good farm, and gathering together what property he possessed, to embark for Canada. [...] (42-43)

Once the unfortunate and misled emigrant managed to sum up his story to the freshly landed couple of emigrants, Mrs Traill concludes, in an accusing tone which she places in the mouth of the poor English farmer: "He ended by execrating those persons who deceived the people at home by their false statements, who sum up in a few pages all the advantages, without filling a volume with the disadvantages, as they might well do.(43)"

She wished to write "a faithful guide" intended for the "mistress" of the house who could then prepare herself for the worst as a good dutiful soldier: "forewarned, forearmed" was one of her maxims. In the second paragraph of her

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preface she establishes the essential contribution and value of the "woman's pen" which "alone can describe half that is requisite to be told of the internal management of a domicile in the backwoods." Since the so-called domicile in the backwoods was no more than a log cabin with hardly any distinction between within and without, Traill indicated to her female readers her management of the household in Canada would be greatly extended to the outdoors. The author, reflecting on her own position in the management of her home and farm in Canada, placed the burden of righting the wrongs of men's decisions, and supporting their partner's fledging confidence on women, "the person on whose responsibility the whole comfort of a family depends – the mistress, whose department it is 'to haud the house in order.'"

By placing the representation of Canada provided by the "woman's pen" above that of men's representation, by opposing her woman's "truth" to men's "deception", Catharine Parr Traill was simply wrestling away from British men the production of knowledge on Canada. She positioned her own text, and the truth she exposed about the backwoods, above the false representations produced by fake settlers and by imperialist visitors. Cosgrove and Domosh describe this "text" wrestling as follows: "Debates over interpretations are not about which is the most 'truthful' or 'authentic', but instead are part of a 'social and political struggle for the production of meaning. She was vying with men over issues of authority and legitimacy; according to her the most legitimate persons to represent Canada were men or women living in Canada, educated settlers who were able to write, not English visitors. Her approach partakes of post-colonial literary challenges to the imperial authority. She posited that authors had to belong to the margins to write about them. Imperialist accounts about Canada were no longer needed since local middle-class settlers could provide their own representation of the New World.

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According to Foucault, the construction and representation of knowledge are ideologically informed. So we must recognize that the problem of representation is in fact a problem of who constructs meaning. Traill suggested that British male narratives published in London were commissioned by the Colonial Office or by private land companies. Their purpose was to sell Canada to the public in order to make private profits for themselves and shareholders. Traill challenged their position as if she was empowered by her new double status: that of "colonial" and that of *female* settler.

The debate she opened up centred over the question of mimesis, about which representation among these texts, by men or women, was the most "truthful" or "authentic". But in fact the debate reflected a social, political and geographical struggle for the production of meaning between London, the centre, and its margins, Canada. The "crisis" of representation about Canada was in fact a crisis of authority. Firstly, it was a crisis between men and women: were women able to represent Canada truthfully? Secondly, Traill felt empowered in her auctorial authority over representation thanks to her colonial status, that is to say her day-to-day, intimate knowledge of life in the margins. Imperialist narratives and pamphlets written by so-called emigrants, in fact land agents for the Canada Company or the British Land Company, simply "objectified" the colonies, selling it as a product. Traill had nothing to sell and only provided a useful account of life in Canada as she clearly stated in her introduction:

> The simple truth, founded entirely on personal knowledge of the facts related, is the basis of the work; to have recourse to fiction might have rendered it more acceptable to many readers, but would have made it less useful to that class for whom it is especially intended.(13)

Homi Bhabha describes such an early sign of resistance to imperialism, as "an enactive enunciatory site […] a process by which objectified others may be turned into subjects of their history and experience." With her "woman's pen

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alone", Traill, the Canadian female settler sets to take over the narrative of Canada.

**Women and colonial autobiographies.**

Between 1836 and 1867, if we consider the nine texts produced on Canada by settlers and which took the form of what I would describe and define as "colonial autobiographies", six were produced by women, while the seventh text was written by Traill and Moodie's brother, Samuel Strickland who published *Twenty-Seven Years in Canada West, or The Experience of an Early Settler* (1853) with Richard Bentley.

The *Backwoods of Canada* was thus the very first text published in Britain by a gentlewoman to take the form of a personal narrative about her life in the white colonies of the Empire. I consider this autobiographical text, as well as Susanna Moodie’s, as forming a sub-genre or a sub-category of the autobiographical genre which can be called "colonial autobiographies." Traill and Moodie's texts present the most observable and comparable elements from which a grid can be drawn on the features of the sub-genre. Their sisterhood and literary affinities might also explain the similarities to be found in the form of their personal narratives. I wish to focus on these semi-fictional autobiographies from the perspective of social history. Central to my reading of these texts is the question of a sense of place for these English women in the colonial world. Locating Canada for the British public provided them with the opportunity to resume their literary careers, using their Canadian experience to publish in England, and then to locate themselves on the British publishing market. Locating Canada for their metropolitan readers also enabled them to locate their feminine selves in the colonial world. So how did they inscribe themselves in the New World, and consequently, what representation of their new realm, as well as themselves in it, did they compose for the metropolitan public? How did they
represent their colonial life and their new emigrant status, in fact their new self, to their readers?

Over less than two decades, between 1836 when The Backwoods was released and 1854 - when Susanna Moodie's second personal narrative about Canada failed to attract readers -, six “personal narratives”, written by middle-class British women having immigrated to Canada, were published in Britain by prominent publishers such as Charles Knight, Otley and Saunders or Richard Bentley. It is time to analyse these colonial women’s autobiographical writing practices through the marginalized category of "women's autobiographies from the colonial world", from the double perspective of historical and cultural analysis. What form did these "colonial" autobiographical narratives take? Did the colonial background enable women to negotiate their entry into the autobiographical genre, which was still a male preserve in the second quarter of the 19th century? In the colonial context, from the margins of Empire, the female autobiographers seemed to have created a new hybrid sub-genre which located itself in the margins of several 18th and 19th-century sub-genres: domestic memoirs, spiritual autobiographies, confessional narratives and even men’s adventure narratives. In her essential work on women's autobiographies from the Empire which includes one chapter on Traill and Moodie's settler's narratives, Gillian Whitlock warns us that there is more than meets the eyes in these apparently mundane and secondary texts: "Autobiographic texts in the field of colonial and postcolonial culture will raise issues of power and privilege, marginality and authority, truth and authenticity in ways which may disqualify them as autobiography as it is conventionally understood."

Had they remained in Britain, these female authors would not have been asked or authorized to publish such a piece of non-fictional personal literature. Personal restraint and privacy restrictions meant women did not expose private thoughts to the public. Linda Peterson notes that in the cultural and literary landscape of the early and mid-Victorian era in Britain, autobiographical writings

184 Gillian Whitlock, The Intimate Empire, op.cit, p. 15
seemed to have been confined to famous male artists or prominent professional men. They followed the two canons of white male autobiographies established by Augustine for the spiritual type and Rousseau, for the intimate confessional style. The genre engendered other sub-genres like memoir writing, or personal narratives reserved for upper or middle-class women and intended for a female audience as men would only read them for amusement, as Linda Peterson contends in *Traditions of Victorian Women’s Autobiography*. Among these works, spiritual autobiographies by unknown women or personal recollections by public women artists found their way into publication, thus opening up vistas on women’s private selves which were still overlooked by the patriarchy as unworthy of notice for the larger reading public. They displayed to the public narcissistic behavior or self-indulgence deemed unsuitable and unthinkable for women though the form of the spiritual autobiography seemed more acceptable than the scandalous memoirs of the female artists. This strict gendered classification reflects the rigid cultural, political and social boundaries established by Victorian society and which confined women to the conventional and constricting domestic world and words. Middle-class women in particular were not supposed to take up the pen, let alone express their inner self on the page, which on publication would find its way into the public domain. Traill, Beavan, Burlend and Moodie became exceptions to this rule.

In fact, George Gusdorf in his "Conditions and Limits of Autobiography" noted that autobiography writing in the 18th and 19th century had been a genre reserved for a very select group, mainly men who had been raised in the Christian "tradition of self-examination." What prompted the autobiographical writing of these select individuals was the "conscious awareness of the singularity of each individual life." In placing their life before the public, somehow egotistically, first

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as a subject/object for self-reflection and second as a model of inspiration for their readers, Gusdorf suggested male authors ("subjects") took themselves "for object." Gusdorf was pointing to the notion of didactism that autobiographical writings and the self-objectification of the subject necessarily led to. In the early Christian tradition, authors were exemplars whose lives could inspire readers.

From this definition, it is clear that Victorian women, in spite of the tradition of self-examination inculcated by their Christian upbringing, could not expose themselves to the public without trespassing the limits imposed on them by society. Decency, propriety and restraint did not agree with such displays of egotistic, didactic self-examination. However, the curiosity of metropolitan readers for “exotic” and unknown locations, as well as the eagerness of some publishers to publish commodity books, prompted some female authors to believe their lives, or at least a portion or an aspect of their lives, might set them apart from the rest of the group because of "the singularity of it", as was the case when Richard Bentley suggested to Susanna Moodie in 1853 that she should hurriedly write a sequel to *Roughing It*, about her eventful life in Canada. Then female settlers might develop a conscious awareness of the fact that their lives were different, encouraging them to go public. Within the circumstances of their emigration, they could thus propose the narrative of their lives as "exemplars" for their readers.

All these elements pertaining to autobiography writing were to be found among individuals from the middle class having recently emigrated to Canada. A few individuals represented by Traill or Moodie led a "singular life", under exceptional conditions for genteel women. A portion of their lives, the time they spent in the colonial world, placed them apart from their middle-class fellows at home. Their life in Canada was singular and as such these women writers "seized on themselves for object", to quote Gusdorf. They launched into the narration of

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their lives in the backwoods or in the bush, conscious of the exposition they were letting themselves in for. However the didactic or pedagogical purpose of the personal narrative in the context of emigration propaganda in England for instance, shielded them from harsh criticism on authorial egotism. For publishers, particularly Charles Knight as we will see, the autobiographical memoirs of the female emigrant were designed to attract more settlers to Canada.

In fact, many readers at home were first and foremost interested in the representation of Canada from within thanks to these providential insiders’ views. Catharine Parr Traill also acknowledged their interest and curiosity for exotic Canada in her introduction to *The Backwoods*:

> For those who, without intending to share in the privations and dangers of an emigrant's life, have a rational curiosity to become acquainted with scenes and manners so different from those of a long civilized country, it is hoped that this little work will afford some amusement [...] (13)

The personal mode of narration did not seem to matter. For those who were seeking authentic facts about the colonies, they could read these texts as instances of records of colonial life or of social observation in the manner of Harriet Martineau's *Society in America*. In other words, these colonial autobiographies were read in many different ways by readers. The novelty of the colonial background they evoked combined with the Canada mania that seemed to have struck the publishing world (more than 49 texts on Canada were circulating in the 1830s according to the British Library catalogue) must have overshadowed the otherwise improper accounts of their lives in Canada. Canada and the spectacle of Empire they provided their readers with, enabled female writers - from the margins - to negotiate their entry in the public sphere of book publishing at home.

*Meeting the constraints of reception in the metropolis: a Canadian book to rekindle the female emigrants’ literary careers*

If any tension or constraint was felt by the female colonial writers it was in the composition or production of their texts to meet the requirements of the
Victorian publishing world. For them it meant anticipating the desire of the public for serious and useful information as well as for entertainment. Whatever the ultimate design or message of the authors of these colonial autobiographies, the form of two "personal narratives" out of the four listed below, was fashioned to meet the constraints of reception. This might also explain the ease with which these two texts, *The Backwoods of Canada* and *Roughing it in the Bush*, found a publisher and a public compared to Frances Beavan's *Life in the Backwoods of New Brunswick* published in 1845 or Rebecca Burlend’s *A True Picture of Emigration or Fourteen Years in the interior of North America: being a full and partial account of the various difficulties and ultimate success of an English family who emigrated from Barwick-in-Elmet near Leeds in the year 1831*, published in 1848. The latter texts went unnoticed as far as one can judge from the absence of reviews in periodicals or the fact that there was no second edition.

Indeed, Traill and Moodie’s texts displayed the literary expertise that the authors had developed in their youth when the Strickland sisters were trying to make a name for themselves in moral tales, juvenilia or poetry writing. Judging from their early correspondence to each other as well as with their friends, the Birds or the Harrals, all involved in publishing home circle magazines, the two emigrants had developed an awareness of the expectations of the middle-class reading public mostly composed of middle-class women like themselves or their sisters. For instance in a letter to her sister Susanna in [Spring 1830], Catharine Strickland gives instances on how to place a juvenilia or moral tale for the price it is worth: "Tell Kitty she must not take a penny less than £25 for her MS of Trials. It will print into ten sheets and that a low estimate is worth £2.10 a sheet. If the Quakers will not give it she must try elsewhere." Or further down she continues with a piece of advice to Susanna regarding a harsh editor Mr Shoberl who ran the *Forget-Me-Not* magazine: "Jane [their sister] had a letter from Pringle today refusing her Deserter and Coquette and seems to say he shall refuse to find admittance for any but first rate articles. I hope he will consider your Winter as such." In Ballstadt et al., *I Bless You in My Heart*, op.cit.,p. 31-33.
circles in London and were able to target the right publisher or the right reviewer when they began promoting their sisters' texts\textsuperscript{189}. Here again the novelty of Canada for the reading public enabled them to overcome the restrictions imposed on middle-class women wishing to launch into a career as professional writers in Victorian Britain\textsuperscript{190}. They had been unable to "make it" or to make a name for themselves as writers before their departure and they were now taking advantage of the Canadian context to find a public. The demand of the British reading public regarding domestic life in the colonies was increasing as the Empire expanded and some educated, middle-class migrants left the mother country or might consider doing so\textsuperscript{191}. These readers required "truthful" and practical information on the New World that women emigrants then set out to provide. They were expected to offer personal thoughts and reflections on the colony and its management for this was their expertise. While their middle-class femininity had barred them from the writing profession in England, it was their femininity and their colonial domestic knowledge about Canada that empowered them and established their authority as female writers in the public sphere at the centre of the Empire\textsuperscript{192}. Thus, these British women writers in exile in the Canadian backwoods sensibly crossed the gendered boundaries of autobiographical literature to meet market demands for colonial narratives. Susanna Moodie was even asked by Richard Bentley to express as many personal feelings and personal


\textsuperscript{191} There was no sponsored emigration to Canada beyond the 1830s, to the exception of private schemes set up by landlords. Independent farmers or demobilized soldiers could buy land through one of the land companies based in Upper Canada, being then directed to a specific part of the province, but travel expenses had to be paid by himself and his family, Marjory Harper, "British Migration and the Peopling of the Empire", in Andrew Porter ed., *The Oxford History of the British Empire, The Nineteenth Century*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 82-84.

\textsuperscript{192} See Deirdre David's argument about female novelists in the introduction to *Rule Britannia*, op.cit, p. 5: "Powerful codes governing the middle-class British woman – her importance in cultivating the private, domestic sphere, her imagined moral superiority and capacity for sacrifice, her supposed incapacity for sustaining intellectual activity – were sufficiently in ideological place at the beginning of the Victorian period for them to become available to an emerging and adjacent discourse: that of writing the imperial nation."
anecdotes as she could on her life in the New World, when he was seeking material for a sequel to *Roughing it in the Bush*. This encouraged female writers to leave aside the traditional editorial requirements for female modesty. We will see with Susanna Moodie's ill-fated second narrative that the demands of the reading public which created their popularity in England could also turn against them and their texts, once the novelty of Canada wore out in the metropolis.

Attracting the reading public meant providing them with all the necessary literary ingredients. Traill and Moodie, in their prefaces, made clear they had in mind their readership when they composed their Canadian manuscripts. This was reflected in the difficulty they both encountered when seeking to conciliate their own purposes with the desire of the metropolitan public. This challenge represented two antithetical forces. On the one hand, they wished to write their "personal" account of a settler's life. On the other hand, they had to focus on the "narrative" aspect of it.

The first concept, the "personal", required they adopt a confidential, confessional, authentic and autobiographical perspective in their manuscripts, while the "narrative" aspect demanded they fashion a story out of their lives, positioning themselves as a central character in a personal fiction composed of amusing and entertaining elements. In other words, they seemed to admit their work was constantly poised between a literary narration, with "amusement" and ways "to diversify [the] subject", and the requirements of a truthful account of one's life in the backwoods, which Traill describes at the "real unadorned facts of life", as "these exhalations in behalf of utility", she adds, "in preference to artificial personal refinement, are not so needless as the English public may consider." But texts which had started out as non-fictional texts about the reality of life in the backwoods somehow obeyed the exigencies of going public. Traill clearly had the English public in mind as she addressed them at least twice

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in her short introduction. Attracting the reading public easily led these non-fictional pieces to take the final form of semi-fictional texts or so it seemed. Of all the writing settlers, Susanna Moodie was probably the author who tended to embellish her narration the most, as she "packed" her texts with anecdotes, whereas Traill's text was less adorned. However in the metropolis, Moodie's "amusing" narration about Canada rendered disservice to the colonial world as many readers attracted by the "amusement" and the "narrative" looked at Moodie's text as a semi-fictional representation of Canada and disregarded the serious intent of the testimony. But in the 1850s, personal narratives on Canada no longer caught the attention of the public. Canada's novelty had worn out and Moodie seemed to provide only an entertaining exotic version of it. Readers turned to new colonial horizons and locales to seek new amusement and to gather new information on the Empire.

Even if Canada had been used as a key to negotiate these women writers' entry into the metropolitan publishing world, it also appeared that their "marginal" position might limit them terribly as they were dependent on the whim of the public. The hoops through which the authors of these early colonial texts had to jump in order to publish at the centre of the metropolis in the first part of the century, also represented the discrepancy or gap that was opening up between the two cultures: the culture of Empire, produced in the margins, and the metropolitan culture. This gap would gradually grow into a major discrepancy between the content of the "colonial" texts and the expectations of the reader in the metropolis. After Susanna Moodie's lack of success with her second Canadian non-fictional piece, the British public's disinterest for things pertaining to Canada led Moodie and Traill to turn to a new audience who shared their North American culture and interest. From 1852 on they began to publish in America, where after seeing their texts reprinted illegally, the two sisters eventually managed to negotiate new contracts by revising their manuscripts. Hence *Roughing it in the Bush* for Susanna Moodie - which was released under three different titles at least -, and Catharine Parr Traill’s *Canadian Crusoes* and *Female Settler's Guide*, along with
some sketches on England and English manners were redesigned by the two “British” emigrants to appeal to American readers. Opportunities to publish and to sell their texts seemed to supersede the actual topic they wrote on.

Prefaces and didactic messages of the colonial autobiographies.

Prefaces played a central role in women's non-fictional writings in the 19th century. This paratext whose function we will also examine in travel texts in the following chapter, served the purpose of negotiating their entry into the public world of non-fictional publishing. Prefaces or introductions were a sort of negotiated contract between the author and her publisher, as well as between the author and her readers. In these non-fictional life narratives, prefaces were challenging spaces where the female writer had to establish both her auctorial authority on the topic of Canada, and "the singularity" of her experience before placing her personal life before her readers who would then "peep" at her and her domestic world in the backwoods.

French literary theorist Gerard Genette describes prefaces as part of the paratext that enables a text to become a book. According to him, this liminal "fringe", or margin, is always the "conveyor of a commentary that is authorial." It is a zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition but also of transaction: a "privileged place of a pragmatic and a strategy." Besides using this liminal or marginal text to negotiate the right to publish or to enter the public sphere, Catharine Parr Traill and Susanna Moodie also used it to address the reading public in a didactic manner by providing a gist of their argument, in order to justify their writing, as well as to favour "a more pertinent reading" of their texts. These prefaces also reflect the autobiographical mode in which the female authors were placing themselves. There they must justify their reasons for

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195 The expression "to peep" was used by Patrick Shireff to describe his impression after reading Frances Trollope's travel book on the domestic manners of the Americans.
publishing and they have to put forward their auctorial authority. Clearly, the female authors used this space to pause and reflect on themselves, at a time when, their manuscript then completed, they could look back on their personal journey now on paper. Therefore prefaces, the first margin of the texts, provide social historians with significant sites of personal uncovering or unmasking. There the female emigrant authors come forward and try to locate themselves geographically (in Canada), socially (as part of the middle class, as exiles or emigrants) and politically (as Liberal, Conservative, pro-English or pro-Canadian).

The autobiographical pact

In this specific colonial context, the self can be open to question in the self-positioning act of writing. Genette describes these paratexts as "thresholds" or "borders", as characterized by an authorial intention, an assumption of responsibility and the idea that some crossing over must be done by the author from his/her sphere to reach the public. Generally speaking as we will see in the following section, English publishers seemed to appropriate the colonial text. But this appropriation, at least in the texts under study here, left the paratext untouched when it was written by the authoress herself. So while the writer was dispossessed from the main body of her text, the preface represented her only space of empowerment and the trace of her authority over the manuscript as well as the crux of her own inscription in the text.

These liminal pages also form interesting “autobiographical acts” to use French critic Philippe Lejeune's expression. The prefaces or the introductions enact a pact between the female autobiographers and their English readers, but also between their English selves, their colonial selves and the metropolitan readers. In their preface, by establishing their authority, here as middle-class female settlers in Canada, they "commit" themselves, to quote Lejeune, to a

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difficult exercise. They must locate the self which fluctuates between the "colonist", the settler performing her/his imperial duty, and the "colonized subject/object" offering themselves to the curiosity of the English readers, or the woman of letters in exile. Which one of these do they wish to be?

Traill and Moodie go even further in their contractual "commitment" as they intend and promise to "tell the truth" about Canada. Thus they clearly determine for the reader how s/he should read the text, orientating his/her own interpretation. By the same token, they assert the superiority of their representation of the colonial world over the wealth of men's travel narratives and propaganda pamphlets commissioned by imperial institutions. Lejeune also describes these autobiographical pacts as "calls" to the readers. The French critic analyzed thousands of published autobiographies, and thirty years after his first work On Autobiography, he notes about autobiographical texts that in prefaces/introductions there was always "the same recurring discourse addressed to the readers […] they are propitiatory preambles, oaths or addresses to the people […] such a discourse necessarily contains its own truth; it is not a simple basic assertion, but a language deed performing something." I also believe that these prefaces are the key to the message these women writers wanted to pass on from the margins to the centre and it is therefore the task of the social historian to decipher the actual "call" from the margins to the imperial centre.

In their prefaces, which read like a contract between the narrator and future readers, Traill and Moodie developed the main concerns that prompted them to write narratives about their lives in Canada. First they felt they were entitled to do it as they had lived in the country for a certain number of years. Traill establishes her authority as one of the "female members of these most valuable colonists" who now leave "the shores of the British Isles (10)." True knowledge of the new country could only be experienced and written about by real settlers. Each woman then made clear in her preface or introduction the

198 Lejeune Philippe, Signes de vie, le pacte autobiographique 2, Paris, Seuil, 2005, p. 120, (my translation)
number of years she spent in the backwoods or the bush and she put forward the notion of personal acquaintance, and even personal hardship in Canada to justify the text. Traill wishes to warn educated female settlers "in order to enable the outcoming female emigrant to form a proper judgment of the trials and arduous duties she has to encounter.(9)" Their new status as settlers, participating in the development of new communities in the colonial world also seemed to authorize them to speak against imperialist travel accounts circulating at home, written by men whose contribution to the colony was null. Traill, along with other superiorly-educated wives of former British officers, contributes to the development of the colony as "this family", she states, "renders the residence of such a head still more valuable to the colony"; and to “the half-pay officer, by thus leading the advanced guard of civilization […] (11)" So they clearly chose to position themselves as female colonists and colonials in the margins.

Yet, they do not leave aside their femininity as they see it as an advantage over male visitors who clearly ignored the domestic life of settlers in their travel narratives. Catharine Parr Traill explained that she "was desirous of giving [the wives and daughters of emigrants of the higher class] the advantages of her three years' experience"(10). Instead of the typical dismissive or self-undermining disclaimer usually found in women's non-fictional texts at the time, Traill was very assertive in the preface. She insists on several occasions that "the simple truth, founded entirely on personal knowledge of the facts related, is the basis of the work…"(13) Her position as a middle-class, educated, gentlewoman settler for once enabled her to take up the pen for less-prepared women settlers already struggling in the woods. She presents herself as accomplishing a mission or a duty towards her female companions who might one day leave England for Canada and endure the patriarchal command of emigration and colonization: "It will be seen, in the course of this work, that the writer is as earnest in recommending ladies who belong to the higher class of settlers to cultivate all the mental resources of a superior education, as she is to induce them to discard all irrational and artificial wants and mere useless pursuits (11)." She reminds her readers that Upper Canada
is composed of "rough districts" to which "gentle and well-educated females, soften all around them by mental refinements (11)." Her social status and position in the margins and at home is therefore recalled to her English readers, as the same time as it enables her to establish herself as a sort of educated "clerk" or "bard" of the New World and its rough districts, as well as a spokesperson for half of the population that now lived in Canada - women.

Traill and Moodie's experiences have been truly lived in their flesh and their bones. In their introductions, they even suggest some intimate connection with the land; Moodie mentions she would reveal the "secrets" of the New World, while Traill argues women are the true settlers of the land: "The hardships and difficulties of the settler's life, therefore, are felt peculiarly by the female part of the family (12)." She introduces herself and women settlers she has encountered in the bush as pillars of the home and of the community as a whole. The colonial community she suggests, relies essentially on home-making which she presents as "the pleasure of superintending a pleasant, well-ordered home (10)." Clearly, from the first pages of these first autobiographical accounts, Canada was presented as being intimately linked to women. Shireff had already mentioned this particular connection, Anna Jameson would further Traill's line of thought by observing instances of remarkable intimacy between gentlewomen and the Canadian bush.

**The form of colonial autobiographies.**

The first element pertaining to autobiographies is the “mirror-effect” as George Gusdorf described in his "Conditions and Limits of Autobiography". The autobiographer consciously or unconsciously reflects on his/her past life or on a time that has passed from a point further in time when he/she places enough distance to reconstruct the "meaningful sequence of events" which gradually brought him/her to "the point where she/he is now".

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Traill, Beavan, Burlend or Moodie chose to write about their experiences in Canada after some years had elapsed and after they felt some useful lessons might be drawn out of their experiences for the readers at home. In the case of Susanna Moodie whose narrative appeared the most fully fleshed and elaborate, she waited nineteen years before she felt she had completed her personal journey in Canada, having reached a point in life from which she felt she could comfortably reflect on her life journey. The ambiguity of the word "journey" enabled these gentlewomen writers to articulate a parallel between the actual journeying of the self from England to Canada, and the personal journey in life which encompassed a notion of moral progress. In the colonial autobiographies written by women, as the analysis of the only male version of it, Samuel Strickland's, did not include any self-reflection, women equated and drew a logical parallel between their moral progress and their emigrant status. In fact, Catharine Parr Traill and Susanna Moodie both attributed their own moral improvement and regeneration to their emigration and their harsh life in the Canadian bush. Traill closes her introduction on those valuable lessons which she wishes to pass on to her English readers, describing them as "not devoid of moral instruction.(13)"

Similarly, the "mirror-effect" - which Gusdorf designated as the general concept presiding over autobiographical writings -, takes a double meaning in the colonial context. The "mirror-effect", the action of self-reflection and self-examination, can be realized when enough distance is placed between the author and his/her former self. Distance could be represented by the years that elapsed between the moment of birth, or any significant departure moment in the early life of the autobiographer, and his/her contemporary self at this "point in time" when he/she decides to look back. In the context of emigration, the "mirror-effect" can be triggered off by the "temporal distance" between the moment when the emigrant left the shores of his homeland and the time when he/she sets out to write his/her memoirs. Hence the importance of stating the number of years that each female settler has spent in the bush before looking back comes to the fore.
In the colonial context, however, the "mirror effect" is reinforced by the "physical distance" the autobiographer places between his/her former self, the person s/he was when s/he lived in the mother country, and his/her new self after all the years spent in the colonial world. These are the two main characteristics of "colonial autobiographies". On the one hand, the colonial context and the experience and hardship learnt from bush life, transformed the female settler in such a way that self-reflection or self-examination could only point to the moral progress or transformation of the autobiographer. On the other hand, looking back on her former self, after many years spent in the margins of the imperial centre, leads the female author to question the identity of the former self, i.e. her English identity.

A transient self, from emigration to integration

The personal life journey of these gentlewomen writers become particularly interesting for themselves and for the public when the writers evoke their inscription in the colonial context. In fact, the colonial autobiographies about Canada all begin when the English gentlewomen become "colonial". The life narratives are thus clearly delineated in time and space. Meaningfully, they do not open on the authors’ childhood or in their life in Britain prior to their departure, but the texts all begin with the emigrant’s physical journey to the New World, with the crossing of the ocean. Traill and Moodie anyway, seem to be “born” to their new life with the physical separation from the mother country, when they realize they have "become aliens and wanderers in a distant country", as explained by Traill in her preface to the Backwoods (12). From the time of their separation from the mother country to the end of the autobiography, Traill and Moodie give the impression of being in transition or in a process of metamorphosis.

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As for the end of this "life journey" in the colonial world, it seems to correspond to the moment when the gentlewomen emigrants feel they have achieved a point in their new life, perhaps a turning point. Upon reaching this particular point, they judge that their colonial life forms a "meaningful life of events" to quote Lejeune, that can be reconstructed and out of which some lessons can be drawn for themselves and for their readers. In the case of these colonial autobiographies, the female authors conclude their journey by a chapter pointing to a successful integration in the colony as well as to the realization that there is no turning back for them, no return to the mother country.

Throughout this life journey and its narrative, Traill reflects on her English self and on her first "metropolitan" detestation of the backwoods before finally admitting having shed her "metropolitan" ways. At the end of The Backwoods, she is now "going native" and looking forward to her family future in Canada. In other words, her migrant's journey ends when the "aliens and wanderers" that she and her family have been, do not consider themselves as migrants anymore. They are now settled in the bush where she inscribes herself in the colonial environment that she has domesticated. This process is already well described in her introduction when she sums up the various stages through which emigrants must go, revealing a personal and intimate experience that was unknown to her English readers:

Children should be taught to appreciate the devoted love that has induced their parents to overcome the natural reluctance felt by all persons to quit for ever the land of their forefathers, the scenes of their earliest and happiest days, and to become aliens and wanderers in a distant country, - to form new ties and new friends, and begin, as it were, life's toilsome march anew, that their children may be placed in a situation in which, by industry and activity, the substantial comforts of life may be permanently obtained, and a landed property handed down to them, and their children after them.(12)

Socially speaking, Traill offers a tale of personal success to her readers as she seems to idealize the Bourgeois Dream many families, placed in their former
situation, were seeking in England: the comforts of life and a landed property as a reward for hard work and personal sacrifice.

Morally speaking, Traill also suggests that she has been transformed by her Canadian experience having been revealed to herself and having found in herself unknown virtues and resources while living in the woods. Canada enhanced many qualities in her that would have remained untapped or unknown to her if she had stayed at home. Traill praises the unexploited virtues that ladies of the higher class possess and which are finally revealed in the backwoods where they "find remedy in female ingenuity and expediency for some difficulties" and where "they encounter the rest with that high-spirited cheerfulness of which well-educated females often give extraordinary proofs. (10)" Besides according to the educated female emigrant, Canada also enabled her to rekindle her spiritual life, as she describes the backwoods as providing her or any emigrant, with all the isolation to pray and to be in communion with God:

To the person who is capable of looking abroad into the beauties of nature, and adoring the Creator through his glorious works, are opened stores of unmixed pleasure which will not permit her [the female emigrant] to be dull or unhappy in the loneliest part of our Western Wilderness. (12)

The colonial autobiographers all devote their first chapters to their crossing of the Atlantic. This moment seemed almost sacred and as such was staged as a first Canadian rite of passage for English middle-class emigrants. David Bentley considers it is not a journey of excursion and return as found in travel narratives, but an "intermediate stage in a process of frequently reluctant removal from the cherished home. (201)". David Bentley also quotes historian Arnold Toynbee who in the 1890s in his essay "The Stimulus of Migration Overseas" already underlined that in transmarine migration, "the social apparatus of the migrant had to be packed on board ship", and then "unpacked again at the end of the voyage before they can make themselves at home." This social apparatus, composed according to Toynbee, of "all kinds of apparatus, persons and property, techniques and

201 Bentley, "The Atlantic crossing as a rubicon", op.cit. p. 94.
institutions and ideas" might at times not fare well and "anything that cannot stand
the sea voyage" had "to be left behind." Traill and Moodie's autobiographies
followed this progress: the colonial world, Canada, acted as the breaker of the
English social apparatus as they started to unpack and reassemble it in the New
World.

Self-reflection and moral progress

In order to convey their didactic message, the autobiographers must make
sense of their own lives, by introducing some "meaning" in these sequences of
events that made their life so "singular" when compared to the majority of their
middle-class, metropolitan peers. Philippe Lejeune analyzes the unique pattern of
autobiographical writings as follows: "a retrospective prose narrative that
someone writes of one's own life, stressing the individual [singular] aspects of
one's life, and emphasizing the formation of his own character [identity]. Self-
examination and self-reflection were already part and parcel of 18th and 19th
century personal writings and private personal habits among men and women. The
idea of moral progress that accompanied the notion of meaning or purpose that
individuals had to give or find to their own life, partook of their Protestant
upbringing and more specifically of the new evangelical tradition of self-
 improvement to which Traill and Moodie adhered. Looking back on their former
English selves, and considering how these "metropolitan" selves had progressed
over the years spent in the Canadian bush, was naturally one of the obvious ways
to write this "retrospective prose narrative", while at the same time "emphasizing
the formation of one's own character [or identity]" implied considering their
gradual shedding of their "metropolitan" habits to adopt "native" ones. The female
writer had to find some spiritual "meaning" to her life, and some reason for her
presence in the woods, in order to explain that her destiny had been "singled" out
and placed in the Canadian bush by the hand of God for a reason. Susanna

Moodie’s autobiography relies heavily on this evangelical tendency, as we will see in the chapter devoted to Moodie’s narrative.

Conveying to their readers the meaning of their lives in the bush comes down to placing themselves as "examples". In this narration of their personal eventful lives, they adopt a didactic tone, which at times becomes patronizing towards future middle-class emigrants. The overall impression readers might have felt in these reconstructions of these two settlers' lives, was a sense of superiority on the part of the two women as if they had found some meaning to their lives and some purpose in removing themselves to the colonial world. In Traill’s case, the author sums up her rationale and purpose in writing in her introduction. She presents herself as speaking up in the name of other educated, middle-class women who like her have followed their dutiful husbands to the bush in order to accomplish their civilizing mission in rough districts. They would have liked to have been warned ahead of time of the hardship, trials and "arduous duties" that awaited them in reconstructing a decent comfortable life for their partners and families. By providing useful tips and remarks based on her own experience, Traill expects to provide some lessons of moral instruction to her readers at home among whom some will never set foot in Canada.

Self-reflection and moral progress are therefore staged for the readers. First they are staged in conversations between what appear to be the author’s old self and her younger self. Catharine Parr Traill, for instance, fashions her "moral lessons" from the woods, which she has learnt the hard way she says, around dialogues between her former naïve self impersonated by a recently-arrived emigrant, - who has read all the books he/she found on Canada -, and her older self played by experienced settlers. Susanna Moodie adopted the same dialogical form between young English upper-middle-class Susanna, full of dreams, hopes and above all prejudices and older, wiser, almost anti-English, middle-class Susanna who has been transformed morally by the painful experience in her "prison in the woods". Both authors adopt a sanctimonious tone and construct
their own narratives into moral tales of endurance and hard labour rewarded in the colonial world.

Key moments in their own meaningful reconstruction of their migrant life are also staged. Both writers emphasize the moment of the turning point in their own life journey when they realized that they would never go back to their homeland and that they had to accept their new land for all its worth. This moment, central to their "narrative of identity" as well as to their "narrative of character", is presented by both female narrators in the form of epiphanies. Upon these intimate moments, triggered off by self-examination during which the female settler finds herself in the solitude of the bush, surrounded by the magnificent Canadian woods, the writers realize the meaning of their new life in Canada. They present it as dawning on them from above. In the Canadian woods this revelation is brought to them by "looking abroad", as Traill suggests in her introduction. These moments are on the cusp between the old self, looking back nostalgically, and the new self, on the point of adopting Canada as their new home. Traill writes emphatically:

As I sat in the woods in silence and in darkness, my thoughts gradually wondered back across the Atlantic to my dear mother and to my old home; and I thought what would have been your feelings could you at the moment have beheld me as I sat on the cold mossy stone in the profound stillness of that vast leafy wilderness, thousands of miles from all those holy ties of kindred, and early associations that make home in all countries a hallowed spot.(100)

Traill's readers were invited to share this intimate moment when the female settler considered the "sacrifice" she had made for her family but also for the mother country when she became a colonist: "It was a moment to press upon my mind the importance of the step I had taken, in voluntarily sharing the lot of the emigrant – in leaving the land of my birth, to which, in all probability, I might never again return.(100)"
Traill dramatically stages this epiphanic moment in Letter VII, almost halfway through her narrative. Addressing her mother, and her readers in a confessional mode, she continued:

Great as was the sacrifice, even at that moment, strange as was my situation, I felt no painful regret or fearful misgiving depress my mind. A holy and tranquil peace came down upon me, soothing and softening my spirits into a calmness that seemed as unruffled as was the bosom of the water that lay stretched out before my feet. (100)

For Traill, in the peaceful and sheltering shadow of the backwoods, this was a moment of acceptance of her new fate, accepting her duty as British colonist working for the Empire, "voluntarily sharing the lot of the emigrant". She suggests she had sacrificed her happiness to fulfill this colonial duty, in a manner reminiscent of Evangelical parables. Now she has to reconcile herself with this destiny. From that moment on Canada is presented as her "land of adoption", in now familiar surroundings and the homeland of her children.

True to her need to communicate to the English reading public the struggles which middle-class families were going through in the backwoods of Canada while some successful bourgeois families at home were living leisured lives, she constructs a tale of sacrifice which she extends to the lives of other middle-class settlers around her so that it becomes the narrative of a small diaspora whose hard work and voluntary migration was eventually rewarded by "delight" and "gratitude". She enlarges the narrative of military service and royal duty of her husband to other demobilized British officers in Canada who had also left England. She and other genteel women had obeyed the superior military engagement of their officer husbands and enrolled in this colonial mission: "we have fully made up our mind to enter at once, and cheerfully, on the privations and inconveniences attending such a situation" and to do "our settlement duties"(72) while "those that revel in the habitual enjoyment of luxury" would never experience the true Christian sign of hard work rewarded.(72)
Traill adopts here a new narrative mode by globalizing her experience into a community experience, thus giving the impression that Canada and its backwoods are essentially peopled by deserving middle-class, military families, who have made the sacrifice of leaving the mother country to build its Empire. She resorts to the collective pronoun "we" to refer to other families: "we shall not be worse off than others who have gone before us to the unsettled townships, many of whom, naval and military officers, with their families, have had to struggle with considerable difficulties, but who are now beginning to feel the advantages arising from their exertions. (72)" These families have left for the same reasons as the Traills, as they too must have struggled financially in the mother country, and "are persons of respectable family and good education." However, Traill does not overtly admit to having made the choice of Canada in order to avoid social demise at home. Canada is not presented as the last resort for families like hers but rather as a continuation of military service for her and her husband, as they had "determined to go at once to the bush, on account of our military grant..." (72)

According to critic Marylin Belenky\textsuperscript{203}, there is a "women's way of knowing", i.e. of representing, that is "contextual and connected, that does not submerge the subjective into the objective, and that questions the notion of single authority and one truth." This seemed to be Traill's comment too, when she suggested that women alone could provide "honest, decent facts" on the reality of the colonial life, which had been so distorted in the public sphere by men's texts, aiming at attracting other male settlers. Traill implied that if men did not mind being lied to and dreaming impossible dreams of lands of milk and honey, women at least, who embodied responsibility and reason, demanded that the imperial centre provide truthful accounts. Aware that transporting their family to the New World was a difficult endeavour, they needed to know and be prepared for the harsh realities of life in North America: "She prefers honestly representing facts in

their real true light, that the female part of the emigrant's family may be enabled to look them firmly in the face."(10)

I have suggested that Traill was challenging men's authoritative representations of the Empire. She also wrested away from the imperial centre and the public sphere the monopoly of discourses on Empire building. Clearly, in the mind of the British public, if Empire building had been a vague project in the hands of the Colonial Office, associated with pauper shovelling, with Catharine Parr Traill's popular narrative the British public, men and women, realized that the Empire was now the concern of the middle classes and of women, "the active and cheerful partner" (12). It involved individuals like themselves and above all gentlewomen who committed themselves to building lasting communities for the Empire. Her personal narrative served to popularise the "imperial project" among the British public by bringing it boldly to life. However the original "imperial project" was designed to maintain the ascendancy of the mother country over the colonies. Catharine Parr Trail did not yet try to remove the Canadian margins from the shadows of the homeland. But Susanna Moodie would carry on this project and oppose the “imperial project.”

With these "colonial autobiographies" and their hybrid form, one comes across the first instances of what post-colonial theorists describe as the "appropriation of English genres" and "their subversion through the emergence of another voice"(204), which we could describe as the female colonial voice in this case.

The Intimate Empire205 – Canada as an extended locus of domesticity

I see the concept of intimacy with the Empire as central to the representation of Canada in Catharine Parr Traill, Anna Jameson, and Susanna

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205 Whitlock, Gillian, *The Intimate Empire, Reading Women's Autobiography*, London, New York, Cassell, 2000, p. 2. Gillian Whitlock's careful reading led her to examine "how subjectivity has been produced, imagined, scripted and resisted in the colonial world205."
Moodie's works. Contrary to Mrs Beavan or Mrs Burlend's accounts of the colonial world in which the women settlers merely provided general descriptions of the colony rather than limited geographical descriptions of their immediate settlements, Catharine Parr Traill and Susanna Moodie brought to the page the everyday life, the "manners" and the customs of the New World, within and “without” doors by representing the daily routine of their family and their small community in the woods. With this renewed perspective on the colonial world, thanks to the addition of the domestic aspect of it, Traill and Moodie challenged imperialist views that represented the Canadian colonies as a mere territory of the Empire, one of the settlement destinations opened up on the pink imperial map for Britain's unwanted population. In fact, the white colonial world had only been represented by visitors who never pushed open the doors of the log cabins. Patrick Shireff's Tour of North America published in Scotland in 1835 was the exception to the rule. The authors of the other numerous travel narratives and emigration pamphlets remained aloof and stayed away from any sort of interaction with the domestic world of the colonies. The purpose of imperial reviewers was to assess Canada's commercial potential for the sake of land investors in the metropolis or land company shareholders residing also in the metropolis.

In the narratives written by female emigrants, Canada had substance and life, it was peopled and it was given a past and a future and it was not just about land clearing and wood felling. Female settlers suggested that this brochure version only represented half of Canada. They saw it as their task to narrate the other half of the colonial world, its flesh and blood colonists. However narrating the "without" and the "within" of life in Canada could be a double bind. By revealing how gentlewomen had established their homes in the woods, by making successful stories out of these pioneer tales, by representing Canada as a domesticated environment penned by female settlers, Canada could also appear as "domesticated", tame, conquered, sitting quietly in the margins of the imperial centre.
It was explained earlier how these gentlewomen settlers derived their writing authority from an intimate knowledge of the new world. Each of them established her authority and negotiated her entry into the literary market at home thanks to the novelty she was bringing to her readers, her close relationship with Canada, her insider's views. Contrary to the authoritative imperialist rendering of the Canadian colonies found in emigration pamphlets or in military officers' surveys of the Empire that formed the bulk of the volumes published on Canada before 1836, Traill and Moodie established an intimate connection with their metropolitan readers. A tone of confidence, personal feelings, moments of self-reflection about the new country could best be conveyed in the traditional form of female private writings: the exchange of private letters with a female pen friend or in the form of a diary.

For instance Catharine Parr Traill adopted the traditional and realistic form of the settler's correspondence with her relatives in England. By shaping her narrative into a collection of letters home she was able to convey her personal views to more or less fictional correspondents, her mother and her sisters, Eliza and Agnes. Women travellers had already published their accounts of European countries in this accepted guise since the end of the 18th century. As we observed with Frances Wright's letters from North America, letter-writing offered the female writer the opportunity of expressing her inner thoughts about her surroundings as she would do if her letters to her friends or family remained unpublished. The immediacy of the letter also provided a greater intimacy with the pen friend with whom the female settler could use the first-person narrative and write in the present tense, which guaranteed an unmediated description of the country thus brought to life.

Furthermore the form adopted by Traill for the narrative of what gradually appeared as "her" Empire, also reflected the purpose of her narration: to bring the Empire to the centre of the bourgeois public sphere, and to produce some new

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truthful knowledge about it. By resorting to the series of letters home, Traill initiated a dialogue with the mother country. In fact her mother and sisters who were at the receiving end of the letters embodied the metropolis and the curious metropolitan readers. Traill introduces her correspondent in Letter I as her "dearest mother" who "expressed the wish that I should give a minute detail of our voyage. (15)". Satisfying her readers' curiosity also guides Traill's extensive description of the colonial surroundings. In Letter XI, Traill tries to answer all her family's queries, "with respect to the various questions to which you request my particular attention.(145)" In fact, most of detailed descriptions of society, manners, geography and local history begin with calls to her readers, such as "but it is now time that I give you some account of...", "you will perhaps think it strange that..." or "I shall begin my letter by a description of the bush..." But Traill's metropolitan readers only found one side of this dialogue, the Canadian side, as the answers to Traill's letters were not provided. The overall impression the metropolitan reader felt was that of being deprived of his own voice while the Canadian correspondent, the authoress, had wrested away from her readers the possibility of expressing themselves or of counter-arguing or if they did, it was in the answers provided to their unregistered questions.

In one of the central letters of the book, Letter XV, Traill describes the great progress of Canada and praises the advances of its new society. But her excitement is tempered straight away by the thought that her readers at home, particularly her female readers, might find her remarks out of place. Traill anticipates her correspondent's reaction, as if realizing the discrepancy between the old and the new world, between what was proper conduct at home for women, i.e. limiting her remarks to a general description of the environment, and what women seem to be allowed to do and say in Canada, in expressing their enthusiasm for this new world and its future for instance. Here Traill voices her female reader's reaction upon reading the emigrant's enthusiastic words about the colony:
All this, my dear friend, you will say is very well, and might afford subject for a wise discussion between grave men, but will hardly amuse us women; so pray turn to some other theme, and just tell me how you contrive to pass your time among the bears and wolves of Canada.(210)

In *The Backwoods* at least, some dialogue exists between the margins and the centre, allowing us to note the progressive gap that Traill sees between the two worlds. Whereas in *Roughing it in the Bush*, Susanna Moodie uses the diary or journal form to build her settler's narrative. She does not attempt to establish a dialogue between the New and the Old World. Her narration remains one-sided and magisterial, giving full voice and full power to the Canadian margins to express themselves.

The dialogue then goes on through *The Backwoods of Canada*. Traill echoes her mother's or sisters' questions and queries about Canada in some of her letters which she conveniently uses to organise and shape her own demonstration. The metropolitan curiosity is immediately answered by Catharine Parr Traill's fully-fledged and well-prepared developments. By using the characters of her educated mother and sisters as respondents, she constructs many rhetorical exchanges with her readers which cover all the questions that educated middle-class women could possibly ask about her personal comfort, such as "You wish to know if I'm happy and contented in my situation [...]?(216)" or "I could hardly help smiling at your notion that we in the backwoods can have easy access to a circulating library. (234)"

With this series of letters written by the wife of an emigrant British officer, readers entered the intimate world of the mother-daughter's or sisters' domestic confidence and shared with the writer the immediate sentiments or feelings that she openly consigned to the page for her mother or sisters who knew her well. Traill expressed her inner thoughts and her personal remarks on her new experience which she introduced by stating for instance "I must freely confess to you that I do prize and enjoy my present liberty in this country
exceedingly."(217)" as if admitting that she liked a country different from her motherland, would be frowned upon.

Conventional barriers were less high between mother and daughter than in essay writing for instance. Tone and style followed suit. Besides, by establishing a female environment which she stated concerned middle-class female readers whom she appealed to to in her preface, Traill could step out of the conventional mode of description required from travellers, and set about to describe what she assumed mostly interested women: her everyday life in the woods, her moments of dejection, her nostalgic remembrances. She also focuses on the domestic details that she knew would answer the curiosity of her sisters at home. Traill clearly reminds her readers that in spite of her emigration and removal from so-called civil society at home, she and other emigrants from her own class had retained the status and values which characterized them, while participating in the everyday life and advancement of the colony and their new community. Could the Traills have found their Bourgeois Dream in Canada? Such seems to be the point that Traill is making in this extract in which she opposes the advantages of life in the New World to her former life in narrow-minded, etiquette-ridden Britain:

Our society is mostly military or naval; so that we meet on equal grounds, and are, of course, well acquainted with the rules of good breeding and polite life; too much so to allow any deviation from those laws that good taste, good sense, and good feeling have established among persons of our class.

Yet here it is considered by no means derogatory to the wife of an officer or gentleman to assist in the work of the house, or to perform its entire duties, if occasion requires it; to understand the mystery of soap, candle and sugar-making; to make bread, butter and cheese, or even to milk her own cows; to knit and spin, and prepare the wood for the loom.(219)

Catharine Parr Traill and Susanna Moodie, by appropriating and representing Canada with their gentlewomen’s pens, described their New World as a locus of white middle-class women domesticity. Traill concludes her tale of domestic accomplishment by insisting on the fact that:
In these matters we bush-ladies have a wholesome disregard of what Mr or Mrs So-and-so thinks and says. We pride ourselves on conforming to circumstances; and as a British officer must needs to be a gentleman and his wife a lady, perhaps we repose quietly on that incontestable proof of our gentility, and can afford to be useful without injuring it.(219)

This representation had a lasting impact on the metropolitan readers' perception of the white colonial world where it seemed to promote the "imperial project" among the middle-class circles as the public sphere was slowly growing into a liberal "bourgeois public sphere". These "colonial" texts about gentlewomen having domesticated and settled the wilderness and appropriated the backwoods in the margins of Empire without losing their status, popularized the "human factor" dimension of liberal Empire building which so far had only been present in the thesis of one Empire theorist, Edward Gibbon Wakefield. The white empire could be peopled by decent English citizens, not by convicts and pauper emigrants anymore. Colonies could furnish new social and economic opportunities for middle-class families who were struggling at home. Wakefield's thoughts on middle-class emigration were influenced by Traill's tale of bourgeois success in the bush as we are going to see.

**Mapping the Canadian woods to locate the feminine self**

Helen Buss, in *Mapping Our Selves*, a feminist literary analysis of Canadian women's autobiographical writings, used the metaphor of "mapping" to refer to Traill's and Moodie's narratives and to other early private writings on Canada by women. "Mapping", a male attribute in imperial conquest was synonymous with surveying the empire. In mapping, male imperialists, visitors or conquerors intended to take possession of territories. As Mary Louise Pratt described in her analysis of early travel narratives, the "monarch-of-all-I-survey"

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attitude meant that male visitors usually stood on a promontory and surveyed the portion of territory which they mapped. However, according to Buss, women also had a feminine way of "mapping" the colonial land, particularly women settlers. While female visitors as we shall see tended to adopt the "monarch-of-all-I-survey" attitude, women settlers adopted a new method of mapping.

In order to master or domesticate their new surroundings, they tried to inscribe themselves into the land. I would add that this mode of apprehension implied a necessary "going nativeness" while the mapping employed by imperialists implied that surveyors remained aloof. Helen Buss explained this metaphorical mapping was found in gentlewomen settlers' narratives by suggesting that: "mapping can be seen metaphorically as joining the activities of self-knowledge and knowledge of the world." Buss sought in the mapping metaphor the formation of multiple identities, as language mapped both the emigrant self and the coexistent world. Such an activity on the part of women was in keeping with their personal narratives, being organized around journeys of self-discovery in which the backwoods of Canada played a central part. Mapping the backwoods for Catharine Parr Traill was part of her own inscription as a settler. As she physically became involved in the landscape by first getting lost, then by building her own home in the woods, she felt her own identity a-changing. Traill mapped the backwoods, her new home, as the wilderness played a central part in her self-transformation from the prejudiced English woman she was in Letter I, traveling first-class, to the most humble Canadian mother she had become in Letter XV. Traill is aware of the partiality with which she describes her backwoods after three years. She writes:

There are new and delightful ties that bind me to Canada; I have enjoyed much domestic happiness since I came hither, and is it not the birthplace of my dear child? [...] Perhaps I rather estimate the country by my own feelings; and when I find, by impartial survey of my present life, that I am to the full as happy, if not really happier, than I was in the old country, I cannot but value it. (216-217)

209 Pratt, Mary Louise, Imperial Eyes, op.cit., p. 201-208.
210 Buss, Mapping Our Selves, op.cit., p.10.
In a series of articles on the question of *Writing Women and Space* edited by Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose, the concept of mapping as practiced by women was also considered as a challenge to the imperial mapping as practiced by men. The authors suggested that gendered spaces should be understood as a response to geography imposed by patriarchal structures. Blunt and Rose added that space as written or mapped by women, particularly in 19th century texts was "a social process of symbolic encoding and decoding that produced a series of homologies between the spatial, symbolic and social orders.\(^{211}\) In other words, mapping the backwoods of Canada through the eyes of middle-class domesticity challenged the imperialist and conqueror's views that circulated in the public sphere at home. Visitors had depicted Canada as a vast desert, a hostile wilderness, a "poor man's country" for male settlers, while Traill, Rebecca Burlend, and Susanna Moodie represented it as family-oriented, communitarian, liberal and welcoming. Traill describes Canada in such terms in Letter XV which throughout is an eulogy of the New World towards which her allegiance seems to develop:

> A land of hope; here every thing is new, every thing going forward […] There is a constant excitement on the minds of emigrants, particularly in the partially settled townships, that greatly assists in keeping them from desponding. The arrival of some enterprising person gives a stimulus to those about him: a profitable speculation is started, and lo, the value of the land in the vicinity rises to the double and treble what is was thought before; so that, without any design of befriending his neighbours, the schemes of one settler being carried into effect shall benefit a great number.(210)

**Canada: a natural locus of domesticity for women**

While the male visitors represented Canada as essentially an outdoor world with no proper "indoors", gentlewomen narratives represented Canada as radiating from the log cabin. In short, the Canadian woods were an extended domestic world, as there seemed to be no boundary between "within" and "without", especially for women as Traill's brother Samuel explains to her in the first months

of their arrival in the bush. She readily passes on the first lesson to her readers: "every improvement within doors or without will raise a sensation of gratitude and delight in your mind.(108)."

In their personal narratives they write about themselves as women taking decisions, undertaking significant actions, and "hauling the house in order." This was a role that was naturally assigned to them by the homemaking context of community building in the colonial world. However, the so-called domestic world assigned to women had no proper limits in the bush, as the spheres had not yet been recomposed. What exactly could be considered "within" doors when log cabins were literally open to the outside ("without") and limited to a few rooms? In fact, women settlers were requested to participate in the management of their small farm by churning butter, making maple syrup, devising new recipes to make bread, which they had learnt from neighbours. Couples also relied on each other and bonded more quickly thanks to the shared activities with the other spouse, "the example and assistance of an active and cheerful partner" (12). Women and men equally played the part of breadwinners. There was no public sphere where men would go and live their life away from their wives and children. Traill insists, in her descriptions of the family's every day preoccupations, on the fact that the couple shares everything, as the collective "we" indicates in several instances:

We hope soon to have a market for our grain nearer at hand than Peterborough; a grist-mill has just been raised at the new village that is springing up. This will prove a great comfort to us; we have at present to fetch flour up at a great expense, through bad roads […] We have already experienced the benefit of being near the saw-mill […] (235)

Clearly, the colonial world as represented by Traill and Moodie in their backwoods was an extension of the domestic sphere over which women presided naturally. This was easily understandable as Traill and Moodie described their so-called domestic sphere, the house, as virtually non-existent in the first part of their narratives. Their families had no log cabin of their own and stayed either in a shanty like the Moodies and Burlends or, as for the Traills, at their relatives'
home. The building of the log houses in the woods was described by the three settlers as a long process since the land had first to be cleared of trees, and stumps, in order to create a tamed space. This was achieved thanks to "cutting-bees" and "logging-bees" which, according to a typical North American tradition gathered the community - neighbours and friends - for a day or two when one family of settlers requested help to clear their land or to erect their log cabin. Before their house was eventually built, the Traills and the Moodies were depicted by both authoresses as "aliens", "homeless" or "wanderers" in the woods. The homeless women narrators then naturally focused on the woods that surrounded them, in an attempt to inscribe themselves in this outdoor world by providing details on familiar garden planting, then on native crop growing and wood-cutting, before evoking the economic development of budding towns. According to them, the whole colony, like their house was in the process of being built. Traill equates her own plot of land with the state of the colony developing slowly but surely to the pride of its emigrants:

> We cannot help regarding with infinite satisfaction the few acres that are cleared round the house and covered with crops. A space of this kind in the midst of the dense forest imparts a cheerfulness to the mind, of which those that live in an open country, or even a partially wooded one, can form no idea. [...] A settler on first locating on his lot knows no more of its boundaries and its natural features than he does of the northwest passage.(162)

Canada was represented by the emigrant writers as undergoing a large logging-bee, or cutting-bee during which Christian values of benevolence and solidarity prevailed. Traill's Evangelical message about the New World, embodied in the solidarity of its people, seemed an open criticism addressed to the Utilitarian discourses that had transformed the spirit of benevolence that had presided over the Old Poor Law in England, into a bitter malevolent prejudiced anti-Christian approach to charity with the passing of the New Poor Law Act in 1834. She seemed to suggest that such an example of Canadian Christian spirit of
support and solidarity could serve as a lesson to her metropolitan readers who might have lost it on the way:

All distinctions of rank, education and wealth are for the time voluntarily set aside. You will see the son of the educated gentleman and that of the poor artisan, the officer and the private soldier, the independent settler and the labourer who works out for hire, cheerfully uniting in one common cause. Each individual is actuated by the benevolent desire of affording help to the helpless, and exerting himself to raise a hand for the homeless.(103)

In the particular episode of the logging bee, the Traills first encountered Canadian folklore and customs. The collective effort of her neighbours to help erect Catharine Parr Traill's log cabin, her family's new home, halfway through her narrative also represented a central episode in the woman emigrant's self-journey. The Traills were a helpless and homeless family that no one had stooped to help in England, while in Canada, each and everyone, whatever their social status, gave them a hand. This episode literally transformed Traill's perspective on social hierarchy and it seemed to loosen her English ways. Moodie also staged similar events in *Roughing it in the Bush*, when, having suffered from utmost poverty upon her arrival, she encountered charity in the woods, as well as the moral support of her community in the Canadian bush.

Traill quickly finds a sense of place in the woods by adopting from Letter VI, the possessive pronoun "our" to refer to the surrounding woods, the local church and the local community. The outside appearance of her house was quite "bourgeois" in spite of its humble appearance. She provides some details of its "native" furnishing: "Canadian painted chairs" in the parlour, "a stained pine table, green and white curtains, and a handsome Indian mat" in the sitting room ("plaited by my friends the squaws"212), and "native fruit and flowers" in the garden, while the female settler is walking around in her comfortable "Indian moccasins".(120).

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212 This remark is added to the description of her Indian mat in the parlour in a letter she sent to her friends Emma and James Bird, Douro, 7 January 1834, in Ballstadt et al., *I Bless You in My Heart, op.cit.*, p. 41.
These female settlers' narratives challenge what Nancy Miller analyses as "the female plot" which she describes as "that organization of narrative events which delimits a heroine's psychological, moral and social development within a sexual fate" that culture has already "inscribed for her" and which is "reinscribed into the linear time of fiction.213 I am not contending that female settlers' narratives radically write off this female plot, far from it as gentlewomen settlers reaffirm the "domestic fate" of women in the colonial world. However, they challenge the typical female plot since in Canada - a locus of domesticity for women -, opportunities were limitless for them in the absence of "spheres". In fact, the authoresses openly challenge the "female plot" by insistently putting forward the narrow-mindedness of the metropolitan discourse on a woman's proper sphere being at her fireside. In Canada, middle-class women who "possess the following qualities: perseverance, patience, industry, ingenuity, moderation, self-denial" could really "shine in the bush" (147). Canada empowered them by offering them the opportunity to display all the abilities that their domestic and literary education had taught them. Canada put all their feminine capacities to the test within the home (the log cabin) and outside of it, in the social interaction that was necessary to form new communities. However, women could only be revealed to themselves and to their inner qualities by living in Canada. Traill insists that gentlewomen who do not share those talents, refinements and moral worth should not travel to the colony:

There is another class of persons most unsuited to the woods: these are the wives and families of those who have once been opulent tradesmen, accustomed to the daily enjoyment of every luxury that money could procure or fashion invent; whose ideas of happiness are connected with a round of amusements, company and all the novelties of dress and pleasure that the gay world can offer. Young ladies who have been brought up at fashionable boarding schools, with a contempt of every thing useful or

213 Miller, Nancy, Subject to Change, Reading Feminist Writing, New York, Columbia University Press, 1988, p. 126
economical, make very indifferent settlers' wives. [...] They find every exertion a trouble, and every occupation a degradation. (146)

Misao Dean in her literary analysis of the early texts written by women in Canada, which she analysed as tropes of femininity, deplores the recurrent scholarly attempts at analysing these texts (particularly Traill's and Moodie's) as an escape from femininity. Many critics, including prominent ones, have considered that Traill and Moodie escaped from femininity by an act of will and even made themselves masculine once they had been given the chance in Canada to discard the restrictions that had been imposed on their gender\textsuperscript{214}. Like Misao Dean, I disagree with this escape-from-femininity interpretation. I will show that Traill in 1836 and Moodie in 1852 provided for their female readers narratives which put forward the triumph of femininity in the colonial world. Susanna Moodie's reconstruction of her personal journey emphasized the "success story" of her social rise from the status of English outcast and penniless wanderer to that of an accomplished, middle-class "homemaker" in a small community in the forests of Canada. The triumph of domesticity and femininity loomed large in these pioneer women's personal narratives in which their husbands' participation or efforts tend to disappear before their own feminine input. Catharine Parr Traill hardly mentioned her husband to the extent that the reader is under the impression that she was left alone to pioneer in the woods. This was in fact close to reality as Traill indicated in her private papers that she was often left alone to manage the farm and the family's debt load\textsuperscript{215}.

Similarly, Susanna Moodie's narrative reflects the idea that the gentlewoman was at the head of the family on several occasions. For instance, thanks to Susanna Moodie's personal domestic talents, writing talents and her own connections in the colony, she managed to save the family from debt and ruin in 1838 and to find a position for her husband as sheriff in a village. This enabled


\textsuperscript{215} Ballstadt et al., \textit{I Bless You in My Heart, op.cit.}, p. 15, see as well at least two of Traill's letters to Susanna Moodie in the course of April 1846, p.53-57.
them to escape the "prison in the woods", i.e. their log cabin, for a more decent house in a small town and a better social status. Susanna Moodie represented Canada as a locus of middle-class domesticity in which women could inscribe themselves and map their personal success. Education also enabled them to assume the role of breadwinners, thanks to their pens. Susanna Moodie sold her poems and short stories in times of dire straits when her husband was physically incapacitated or when their farming activity did not sustain the family. Catharine Parr Traill depicted her great moments of solitude that she eased away by filling them up with intellectual pursuits. Her great personal success was found in her colonial duty, as "denizens of the backwoods" bringing civilization and refinement to the communities of these remote parts. Success had been possible thanks to her feminine, domestic, middle-class skills and virtues, the results of her education and upbringing that Canada had sublimated. For instance, Catharine Parr Traill's superior intellectual abilities and her own "make-do", enables her to domesticate her wild surroundings that she describes as "within doors or without":

Your Canadian farm will seem to you a perfect paradise by the time it is all under cultivation, and you will look upon it with the more pleasure, and pride from the consciousness that it was once a forest wild, which by the effects of industry and well-applied means, has changed to fruitful fields. Every fresh comfort you realize around you will add to your happiness; every improvement within doors or without will raise a sensation of gratitude. (108)

In her preface, Traill insisted on the fact that she was providing a useful guide for all that concerned "the domestic economy of a settler's life". She used the metaphor "to hau[d] the house in order" to refer to the woman's sphere in the colony. The "house" represents the backwoods in which the narrator settled and by extension the whole colony of Upper Canada to whose establishment the participation of women was indispensable according to the author. At last, women felt useful to the community as a whole. Domesticating the wilderness had been a man's task in earlier colonial narratives written by men. After Traill's narrative, it became obvious to metropolitan readers and colonial theorists that "settling" was a
woman's task or at least could not be achieved without the help of women. Domesticity became part and parcel of the female colonist's discourse. Traill answers one of her mother's rhetorical questions concerning "the necessary qualifications of a settler's wife" by restating that she should be "active, industrious, ingenious, cheerful, and above all putting her hand to whatever is necessary to be done in her household.(149)"

Such a position for women, as essential subjects to community building had not yet been prescribed in England. Such a triumphant tale of domestic success for women and their subsequent inscription in the nation building effort was only evoked by Sarah Stickney Ellis in 1839 when she published Women of England. However, conduct books for the expanding middle class - as one could characterize Mrs Ellis' series on Women or Daughters of England -, contributed to the enforcement of the public/private spheres in Britain. However, instead of the triumphant tale of domestic success in the bush which empowered women living in Canada, Mrs Ellis limited women's possibilities of "success" to their fireside in England: "Their sphere of action is at their own firesides, and the world in which they move is one where pleasure of the highest, purest order, naturally and necessarily arises out of acts of duty faithfully performed.216"

In order to participate in the nation's moral and economic progress, women, according to Mrs Ellis, had to do their best to keep a nice house for their husbands to come home to in the evening after a long day's work. Her readers should not get involved in their husbands' outside activities and there was no need for them to bother the breadwinners with the petty details of the household routine. While Mrs Ellis constrained women in England to a small domain, women in Canada, if we take the example of Catharine Parr Traill, ruled over a huge realm in which their "fireside" virtues were extended to the building of a farm, the founding of new communities in the woods and growing villages. If readers looked at the larger picture, Traill also participated in the building of a colony. On many occasions, Traill and Moodie boasted about having taken over

the responsibilities of the breadwinner. One of the most important peculiarities of this new "feminine ideal" in the Canadian woods was women's labour, a criterion that Mrs Ellis considered as non-desirable for her "women of England". Indeed, the little education that women of the 1830s might have acquired through home schooling was of no help for the everyday task of keeping the house in order, according to Mrs Ellis. But for Catharine Parr Traill, education and a finely tuned intelligence were essential in order to "survive" in the bush and to shine in it:

By representing facts as they are in the colony, she [the female emigrant] wishes to prepare the female part of the emigrant's family", so that they "may be enabled to look [the facts] firmly in the face; to find a female remedy in female ingenuity and expediency for some difficulties; and by being properly prepared, encounter the rest with that high-spirited cheerfulness of which well-educated females often give extraordinary proofs. (10)

Traill and Moodie's personal narratives recounted how they had to face the challenges of having to work with their hands and therefore to stoop below their "status". Traill transformed this setback into a virtue. Patricia Meyer Spacks suggests that women often compensate by "transforming difficult reality into glamorous myth.217" Traill's account of the triumph of domesticity in the woods of Canada for educated, middle-class women defined new roles for women in the colonial world. However, assuming the new role of the working woman also implied taking distance with the prejudices against women's work in the metropolis. It seems that the codes of gentility and the actual organization of society taught in Britain, were transformed in the colonial world. Canada challenged even the most basic society's sexual division and empowered women to do so.

In their presentation of their own success in the colonial woods, Traill and Moodie developed a proto-feminist discourse. Deirdre David notes that associating household management to a great success of female accomplishment was not necessarily a sign of sexual submission on the part of women in the first

half of the 19th century218. Traill and Moodie's representations of the essential role of women in the "hauling of the house", "within and without" the log cabin, as the ultimate proof of their feminine intelligence and abilities, were shared by Harriet Martineau for instance. However, Martineau only expressed in 1848, what has since been described as groundbreaking ideas by historians of feminism. Over a decade after Traill's narrative, Martineau published her position on women's education in *Household Education*219. There she attacked the ideas of her times according to which there was no need to educate women to manage a middle-class household. In fact, Martineau, who was herself a great household manager, established that the management of a large house and servants was the utmost proof of domestic genius and intelligence in women. A decade earlier, Catharine Parr Traill had already described her participation in the everyday work on her farm in the woods in such terms. Though she was able to produce goods with her own hands and to manage a family in dire conditions, she was still able to "look abroad" and to find time to think, read, collect flora and record native fauna, and last but not least write. Her personal example illustrated the utmost evidence that Canada fostered intelligent domesticity. In fact she stated that stooping to work for the building of happy and respectable communities in the bush, when you were a colonist - man or woman - was a sign of divine election: "No one would ever despise a woman however delicately brought up for doing her duty in the state of life in which it may have pleased God to call her." (153) She also adds:

> Since I came to this country, I have seen the accomplished daughters and wives of men holding no inconsiderable rank as officers, both naval and military, milking their own cows, making their own butter, and performing tasks of household work that few of our farmers wives would now condescend to take part in. [...] Instead of despising these useful arts, an emigrant's family rather pride themselves on their skill in these matters. The less silly pride and the more practical knowledge the female emigrant brings out with her, so much the greater the chance of domestic happiness and prosperity. (150)

Traill's greatest personal success in Canada seems to have been brought about by a feat of domestic genius. It is described in the maple sugar making episode from which Traill derives more pleasure than in “any other jelly-making” at home, she states. She also manages to make molasses and sugar out of maple trees without any supervision. This personal success proves how adapted she now is to her new surroundings. She writes home and boasts about it (131-132). She includes this native recipe as part of the domestic economy appendices of her Backwoods. She also refers to various ways of making tea or coffee like Canadians or even like Indians. In fact, she takes great pride in managing her house and garden like a proper Canadian settler, going as far as adopting some native women's uses at times (121-122).

In 1848, her Female Emigrant's Guide published in England, then her Canadian Settler's Guide published in Canada in 1855, promoted Canadian recipes and folklore. Traill was acting as an antiquarian or collector of national symbols and values of her new nation. In 1836, she already writes about her female, middle-class capabilities to adapt to Canada, by having established a proper, middle-class household in the woods. She also notes that by adapting herself to Canadian ways, she introduces a further gap between herself and her metropolitan female readers. In her narrative, she displays signs that indicate she is losing her English ways in the woods, giving way to Canadian habits.

In the process of emigration and settlement, Traill gained some independence and power her female readers at home could not even consider. However by establishing new parameters for female domesticity, she also placed herself at the margins of the "well-conducted" world of women at their firesides in England. Boasting about her own practical success in the bush which she opposed to her metropolitan sisters’ "silly pride", she also retreated further from the English social norm. She took the risk of displaying features that would gradually be associated with "colonial" women while being aware that her discourse might not be well received among her prejudiced English readers.
In the following chapter, we will consider the reactions of her women readers to this tale of domestic and feminine triumph in the colonial world. For that purpose, we collected Anna Jameson's remarks about Traill's work. Numerous cross-references to Traill's text are to be found in Jameson's *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles* published in 1838. Jameson had been struck by the impression of symbiosis that seemed to exist between educated women colonists and the Canadian wilderness in which intelligent gentlewomen really shined. Clearly Traill, after three years in Upper Canada, had defined the country as a "privileged domestic place", an ideal sought by educated British women reformers in the 1840s and 1850s like Anna Brownell Jameson, Maria Rye, Bessie Parks, Barbara Bodichon, Emily Davies or Harriet Martineau. Canada seemed to offer the opportunities that they longed for in England. Traill's reflections inspired these feminist women in suggesting social reforms on the woman's status in Britain which they hoped a more liberal society would bring about.

**Colonial autobiography and middle-class women's colonial duty in Canada**

The representations of Canada that the female autobiographers provided British readers were a double bind. Indeed, by locating themselves in this New World, the middle-class writers prompted their readers to consider Canada as another locus of domesticity and the Canadian colonies as an extended private sphere. This in a way served the purpose of colonial theorists like Edward Gibbon Wakefield for instance, who wished to preserve Canada under the supervision of the Empire. But Catharine Parr Traill's contribution to the colonial debate was more important than the rest of the female emigrants' texts that were published afterwards, such as those of Frances Beavan or Rebeca Burlend. Traill's narrative was published at a timely moment for the history of the British Empire. Her insider's views on domestic Canada offered an insight into the lives and the feelings of the middle-class, settler communities in Upper Canada at a time when political petitions for more responsible government were sent to London in 1836,
and prior to the armed uprising of late 1837 and early 1838 in both Lower and Upper-Canada. Traill's text must have attracted the notice of the enlightened colonial thinkers and pundits at home. Anna Jameson's travel narrative also benefited from the same exposure in 1838, at the height of colonial tensions between the metropolis and its margins in Canada. If Traill had not really planned on this coincidence between her personal narrative and what seemed to be read as an enlarged imperial narrative, Jameson's publishers, Otley and Saunders, welcomed the woman writer's timely visit to Upper Canada and asked her to write or rewrite her travel narrative quickly in order to fit a larger political agenda.

Women's texts were then launched into the public arena and participated in, and fed the public debate on Empire building. They took part in the "imperial public sphere" described by Antoinette Burton as "that imagined and contested space where unseen communities are drawn together through a shared public spectacle that transcends boundaries of "home" and "away", precisely because it brought colonial "domestic" matters directly to the sightline of metropolitan readers. Many readers must have felt they were "peeping" behind the closed doors of the log cabin, just as Patrick Shireff had felt when he read about the manners of the Americans bearing the female signature of Frances Trollope. Traill and Moodie were both of service and disservice to their new homeland. Catharine Parr Traill's contribution to the production of knowledge on Canada opened doors to Susanna Moodie's personal narration of the New World and to other texts about "domestic" Canada in which the living conditions of the settlers, as well as their middle-class perspective on their colonial fate, contributed therefore to feeding the curiosity of the Victorians. In fact, reading about failing middle-class emigrants also served as a "mirror-effect" in the metropolis in which the (upper) middle classes must have felt reassured about their own success at home when they compared their comfortable situation with the rough living conditions of these genteel emigrants in Canada. Colonial autobiographical narratives also

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fostered feelings of self-satisfaction and self-comfort among the metropolitan bourgeoisie.

**Gentlewomen emigrants and their colonial duty**

There would have been no legitimizing of the middle-class settlers' experience in the bush if Traill and Moodie had not decided to publish and publicize their own experiences, as well as those of their middle-class fellow emigrants in the backwoods. Clearly they voluntarily participated in the spectacle of Empire in order to inscribe themselves and their actions in the margins. They had to perform their colonial duty for the centre and they had to stage this performance in order to make it meaningful and worthy of notice. Moodie and Traill's introduction and preface reveal that the central preoccupation of the two writers was with their reading public for whom the whole work was designed. Traill justified her work by addressing her middle-class readers, whom she believed would be unwilling to hear about struggling middle-class families in Canada, directly: "these exhalations in behalf of utility in preference to artificial personal refinement, are not so needless as the public may consider.(10)" Locating Canada for the British public came down to locating themselves and to attracting the attention of middle-class readers at home to "a fact not universally known to the public", namely that educated settlers were "the pioneers of civilization in the wilderness.(11)" In doing so, Traill revised and embellished the reasons for her family's emigration to Canada. She transformed what had been a desperate life choice for material reasons, into a noble sacrifice in the name of the Empire and for the sake of England and its reading public, leading them to believe that these officers and their families "ha[d] accepted grants of land in Canada.(11)"

Catharine Parr Traill also likened military heroism to colonial heroism as she praised the efforts and courage of the half-pay officer and his family in the bush. He was "serving his country" while his wife was softening and improving all
around her by "mental refinements"(11). Traill and Moodie rewrote their personal journey and hardships into success stories and tales of heroism in the Empire.

However, the personal narratives were also extended to the middle-class families living in the bush and to the community at large composed of poor emigrants as well. In that sense, Traill and Moodie positioned themselves as the "bards" or the "clerks\textsuperscript{221}" of these new communities in-the-making in Canada, in the words of Benedict Anderson. Similarly, Clifford Geertz refers to the part and position of the "story teller" in new communities\textsuperscript{222}. Traill, for instance, suggested she took up the pen in the name of the "emigrants to British America" who were "no longer in the rank of life that formerly left the shores of the British Isles" (10). She also established that the example of her own experience in the bush was comparable to that of other families around them, thus transforming at times her personal narrative into a diaspora narrative of sacrifice and exile of the British middle-class settlers. These "British officers and their families", "denizens of the backwoods" led the "advanced guard of civilization" to build new communities abroad in the margins of their empire: "This family renders the residence of such a head [the superiorly-educated man with resources of both property and intellect] still more valuable to the colony […] he is serving his country as much by founding peaceful villages and pleasant homesteads in the trackless wilds, as ever he did by personal courage, or military stratagem, in times of war.(11)" Catharine Parr Traill participated here in the forming of an "imagined community" whose common traits she was gathering to distinguish its members from the unadventurous metropolitan readers: sacrifice, duty, isolation in the woods had brought these men and women together. Benedict Anderson also observed this phenomenon among British civil servants in India. He describes it as "the pilgrimages in which colonial elites participated which helped to forge an imagined community among certain men and women.\textsuperscript{223}" In other words, Traill,

\textsuperscript{221} Anderson, Benedict, Imagined Communities, op.cit., p. 37.
\textsuperscript{222} Geertz, Clifford, Myth, Symbol and Culture, New York, Norton, 1971, p. 76.
\textsuperscript{223} Anderson, Imagined Communities, op.cit., ch. 3 "Creole Pioneers."
by providing a diaspora narrative based on the "pilgrimages" and actions of these British officers and their families in Canada, was forging an imagined community where there had been none. In placing herself as the female "bard" of this community, Traill also participated in the building of colonial communities in the margins of the Empire.

In a petition she wrote to Queen Victoria on March 26, 1854, seeking some attention and possibly some financial retribution for her colonial duty, Traill presented herself to the Queen as the author of *The Backwoods of Canada* and *Canadian Crusoes*, a children's tale published in 1852. She believed that she deserved some acknowledgement on the part of the government and of the Queen to whom she described "the years of her life" she had spent "labouring with her pen for the advancement of your province of Canada." Retrospectively, Traill presented *The Backwoods* as her own contribution for the advancement of the Empire, "the interest of which [...] she has materially served". In 1854, she was considering herself a dutiful soldier or soldier's wife striving to accomplish some colonial duty. Locating Canada for the reading public in 1836 had also served to gain some public acknowledgement for the dutiful upper-middle-class colonists who were struggling in British America. In Traill's text, Canada served as a locus of identity for those who had been ignored by the mother country from which they had been exiled, like "Canadian Crusoes", desperately seeking attention from the metropolis in order to gain some recognition and some worth. Besides, by extolling the notion of "colonial duty", understood as the "founding [of] peaceful villages and pleasant homesteads in the trackless wilds" (11), she promoted it as a new virtue that was as important as any other "national" virtue in the metropolis. It was now part and parcel of the duties of the new middle classes. Middle-class families could accomplish their duty for their Queen even better in the margins of Empire, rendering them even more deserving servants. Such a dutiful imperial act

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224 Petition to Queen Victoria, 26 March 1854, in Ballstadt et al., *I Bless You in My Heart*, op.cit., p. 90.
also distinguished them from the masses of families who were leading a quiet but useless materialistic life at home, as both Traill and Moodie seemed to suggest in their final pages.

**The middle classes and the liberal "imperial project"**

Catharine Parr Traill had left England with her husband in 1832, at a time when the theories or views on emigration were beginning to change. Pauper emigration was no longer considered a wise idea. Edward Gibbon Wakefield and his influential friends from the National Colonization Society were campaigning to stop "pauper shovelling" insisting instead on the quality of the emigrants that were required for the white colonies. Edward Gibbon Wakefield had published *England and America* in 1833 in which the imperialist had clearly and successfully made the demonstration that the emigration of the "best classes" to the colonial margins would be an asset for community building. These specific emigrants would help develop a liberal Empire and preserve Englishness abroad. Catharine Parr Traill conveniently illustrated his theory but her text also contributed to the elaboration of Wakefield's more defined plan of "systematic colonization" which largely rested on women's contributions.

In the 1830s, when Traill was living and writing her colonist's version of the Empire, white colonies of settlement were still in their early stage of development. Outside white Canadian colonies, whose most developed societies were Upper Canada, Nova Scotia and Lower Canada, other white colonies had been promoted in Autralasia and in the Cape at the turn of the century. The scheme was mostly conservative as the old imperialist principles of mercantilism, military control and oligarchy were still much in place. In the Royal Proclamation of 1763, George III had requested that upper-class military families settle on the fringe of the settlements in North America, in order to prevent any

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227 Ibid., p.127-134.
encroachment on Indian territory on the part of his own ruthless settlers\textsuperscript{228}. In Canada, since the conquest in 1760, the majority of French Canadian settlers had also been ruled by a minority of English upper-class officers and a handful of British merchants. In 1791, Lower and Upper Canada had been granted self-governing institutions which led to the creation of a bi-cameral system composed of a lower elected house and an executive council of appointed members, under the rule of a British colonial governor. These colonial constitutions had been the first improvement on the old colonial system, but colonial oligarchies were still ruling over the colonies as they had kept the control of the executive councils\textsuperscript{229}. In the late 1820s, the Tory Colonial Office was also planning to "create and uphold an opulent gentry" in Australia and in other colonies of white settlement\textsuperscript{230}.

In 1829, in his \textit{Letter from Sidney}, Wakefield, in response to this plan, had underlined the lack of feasibility of such a scheme as no "opulent gentry" would ever leave Britain to settle in Australia or at the Cape. In 1833, in England and America, he suggested that the second "best classes" of Britain, the middle classes, who were struggling in England, should be encouraged to emigrate. Wakefield included "The Art of Colonization", the basis of his "imperial project" as one of the appendices to his 1833 manuscript. He suggested that a method should be established to attract middle-class settlers to the colonies. Clearly he ascertained that colonization could not be implemented without the contribution of the "human factor". Middle-class settlers would be the human factor.

\textit{Under the head of Colonies, we have indeed many treatises; but not one as far as I know, in which the ends and means of colonization have been fully described or even noticed, with so much as a show of method or accuracy}\textsuperscript{231}.

He then developed a method in which the middle classes held a central position. I believe Wakefield distinguished the upper-middle-class families who were gradually gravitating towards the upper class by adopting their manners and

\textsuperscript{228} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{229} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{230} Ibid., p. 135.
politics, from the middle classes of professionals whose (more liberal) voice had been heard in the 1831 (Great) Reform Act campaign. Providing middle-class settlers with land at a good price and establishing them as gentlemen farmers on colonial estates, like small masters of yore, would greatly attract middle-class families whose "dream" it was to fare better and higher socially. These middle-class families would then supervise lower-class families hired as able-bodied labourers whose transfer to the colonies would be paid for by land sales. Young families would be selected and a ratio would be achieved of one middle-class couple for five lower-class couples. The middle-class family, now established as "colonial gentry", would then control land and society as squires had in 18\textsuperscript{th} century British parishes. Gradually, small communities would be gathered. As these middle-class families generally supported liberal ideas, they would create reformed English societies in the margins\textsuperscript{232}.

In the 1830s, the Whig Colonial Office – much influenced by Wakefield's writings\textsuperscript{233} –, gradually envisaged the white colonies of settlement as distant regions where should be transferred "in the greatest possible amount" both "the spirit of the civil liberty and of the forms of social order to which Great Britain is chiefly indebted for the rank she holds among the civilized nations.\textsuperscript{234}\) This had been in 1833, a declaration of Lord Goderich, who was simply restating Wakefield's principle of "extension of the English society" to the New World, as presented in \textit{England and America}. There, Wakefield had extolled the British public and its governments to "imitate the ancient Greeks" and to "take a lesson from the Americans who, as their capital and population increase, find room for both by means of colonization.\textsuperscript{235}\)

For the first time in the metropolis, Catharine Parr Traill evoked this "human factor" in a published narrative. She described the organization of a middle-class society in which the absence of upper-middle-class families or

\textsuperscript{232} Wakefield, \textit{England and America}, op.cit., p. 499.
\textsuperscript{233} Lloyd, \textit{The British Empire}, op.cit., p. 145.
\textsuperscript{234} Quoted by Cain, P.J. and A.G. Hopkins, \textit{British Imperialism, 1688-2000}, op.cit., p. 98.
\textsuperscript{235} Wakefield, \textit{England and America}, op.cit., p. 411.
aristocrats, led the bourgeois to become the true leaders of the community. Traill indeed gave her middle-class readers an account of the social organization of a "frontier elite" where bourgeois morals and manners ruled in the absence of the prejudiced and traditional views of the upper-class families. She offered a firsthand account of the opportunity for the middle classes to fulfill their "Bourgeois Dream" when she told her family in Letter XV about the best settlers that seem to be naturally selected by Canada and its roughness:

> Few, very few, are the emigrants that come to the colonies, unless it is with the view of realizing an independence for themselves or their children. Those that could afford to live in ease at home, believe me, would never expose themselves to the privations and disagreeable consequences of a settler's life in Canada; therefore, this is the natural inference we draw, that the emigrant that has come hither under the desire and the natural hope of bettering his condition, and benefiting a family that he had not the means of settling in life in the home country. It is foolish, then, to launch out in a style of life that every one knows cannot be maintained [...] without being the less regarded for the practice of prudence, economy and industry. (218)

In Canada, Traill suggested, the new gentry was empowered: "we bushsettlers are more independent; we do what we like [...] we are totally without the fear of any Mr and Mrs Grundy [...] (218)". Nonetheless, having secured the position of "colonial gentry", for lack of society leaders above them, middle-class emigrants maintain and uphold the virtues and values of their upbringing and rank, in spite of their struggles to settle in the woods.

> Our society is mostly military or naval; so that we meet on equal grounds, and are, of course, well acquainted with the rules of good breeding and polite life; too much so to allow any deviation from those laws that good taste, good sense and good feeling have established among persons of our class (219).

White colonies of the Empire could become an alternative to social and financial demise at home for the middle classes but it could also serve on the other hand as a springboard for their social and political aspirations. Could this new model of English society abroad have inspired the middle classes at home who had just been admitted to a share in political power in 1832, and for whom the
door to political power and upward social progress had been slightly opened? Wakefield seemed to think so, suggesting to them that their aspirations would be fulfilled in a better and quicker way, by joining the new English communities that were developing abroad:

These are the emigrants whose presence in a colony most beneficially affects its standard of morals and manners and would supply the most beneficial element of colonial government. If you can induce many of this class to settle in a colony, the other classes, whether capitalists or labourers, are sure to settle there in abundance: for a combination of honour, virtue, intelligence, and property, is respected even by those who do not possess it, their example has an immense influence in leading others to emigrate, who either do not possess it, or possess it in an inferior degree. This, therefore, is the class, the impediments to whose emigration the thoughtful statesman would be most anxious to remove, whilst he further endeavoured to attract them to the colony by all the means in his power. I shall often call them the higher order, and the most valuable class of emigrants.²³⁶

**Women and Empire building: the impact of The Backwoods on Wakefield’s theory**

In 1849, in his finalized version of his systematic colonization plan for the white British Empire, *The Art of Colonization*, Edward Gibbon Wakefield appointed women to a central role in community building in the white dominions. Middle-class women, thanks to their upbringing and their "make do", would become essential to the formation of domestic units which included the recreation of organized communities. They would be paragons of English virtues in the bush, with whom lower-class women would naturally identify. By establishing homes and firesides, as well as Christian communities outside the home, they would contribute to developing and expanding successful colonial units. Wakefield saw middle-class domesticity as playing a central role in the organization of society along gender, class and race lines. In the Wakefield system, white colonists who left their homeland to create new settlements, in Australasia for instance, would have to begin by recreating some social and

political cohesion first, by implementing the bases of the English social order. In order to do so, they had to create homes in which religious values and virtues, "Englishness" – "the best institutions from the old world" - would be reproduced and passed on to their children, if they wanted to preserve their community from the "others" and take control of the colonial world. Women became the true colonizers of the "imperial project" developed by Wakefield:

In colonization, women have a part so important, that all depend on their participation in the work, if only men emigrate there is no colonization; if only a few women emigrate in proportion on the men the colonization is slow and most unsatisfactory in other respects: an equal emigration of the sexes is one essential condition of the best colonization.237

Wakefield clearly believed that gentlewomen would maintain a strong attachment to the mother country, as they were more sentimental than their husbands. If the full English constitution were granted to the colonists, that is to say responsible government, then English manners and morals would follow suit. Wakefield, Buller and probably Durham had read Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada* in 1838 before setting sail to Lower Canada. Buller mentions indeed in his private papers that his party had read all the books that had been published in England about Canada. It is impossible to know what Wakefield thought of the Traill's narrative, as there is no specific comment about it in his correspondence. However in 1848, when Wakefield was completing his *Art of Colonization*, a sixth edition of *The Backwoods* had just been released in England at the same time as Catharine Parr Traill had published her *Female Emigrant's Guide* with Hall and Virtue. Traill's narrative clearly emphasized that middle-class women held a central role in "hauling the house in order" in Canada. Wakefield recommended to the Colonial Office to pay particular attention to female settlers when selecting middle-class settlers or when preparing brochures to attract them: "A colony that is not agreeable to women is an unattractive

colony; in order to make it attractive to both sexes, you do enough if you take care

to make it attractive to women. 238

Similarly, Wakefield explicitly acknowledged the part played by women in
the Victorian couple as Traill clearly illustrated it in her personal narrative:

I think a Backwoodswoman might be written [...] setting forth a few pages
in the history of bush-ladies, as examples for our sex. Indeed, we need some
wholesome admonitions on our duties and the follies of repining at
following and sharing the fortunes of our spouses, whom we have vowed in
happier hours to "love in riches and in poverty, in sickness and in health." Too
many pronounce these words without heeding their importance, and
without calculating the chances that my put their faithfulness to the severe
test of quitting home, kindred and country, to share the hard lot of a settler's
life [...] but the truly attached wife will do this, and more also, if required
by the husband of her choice.(229)

Women, Traill mentioned, preserved the connection with the mother
country the longest. She remarked how women had made a sacrifice by leaving
their home, friends and country out of duty, though reluctantly so. However, they
should not "repine" once they were in Canada. She described those women who
did as weak; they should look into themselves and consider the great strength and
great virtues which so far had been unknown to them and put them to work in the
woods where they could play an invaluable part as "active and cheerful partner",
as she greatly reminded her readers in her preface (10-11).

Women were called "matrons" in Wakefield's theory, a word that
Wakefield used to refer to mothers residing in the bush who represented the head
of each settler family. In his Art of Colonization, women in the colonies were not
only a support for their husband, but the central decision-maker in the couple.
Wakefield drew numerous lessons from the practical roles that women were
naturally led to play in the backwoods and by their natural empowerment in these
circumstances. His practical recommendations to colony builders seem to echo
Traill's own recommendations to her female emigrant readers.

In colonizing, the woman’s participation must begin with the man’s first thought about emigrating, and must extend to nearly all the arrangements he has to make, and the things he has to do, from the moment of contemplating a departure from the family home till the domestic party shall be comfortably housed in the new country. The influence of women in this matter is even greater, one may say, than that of men.\(^2^3^9\)

Wakefield also naturally placed the responsibility of morals and manners of the new colony on the shoulders of the middle-class female settlers. Traill had emphasized the part played by the female emigrants, "the wives and daughters of emigrants of the higher class", these "gentle and well-educated females who soften and improve all around them by mental refinement". Her preface had made clear their natural sympathy and good work towards the spreading of civilization in these remote parts. From this, Wakefield must have inferred one of his central recommendations towards the development of virtuous communities in the colonial world:

As respects morals and manners, it is of little importance what colonial fathers are, in comparison with what the mothers are. You might persuade religious men to emigrate, and yet in time have a colony of which the morals and manners would be detestable; but if you persuade religious women to emigrate, the whole colony will be comparatively virtuous and polite.\(^2^4^0\)

A close reading of Catharine Parr Traill's spiritual journey through the Bush clearly underlines the virtue and faith of genteel emigrants, which seemed to grow in Canada, where, by looking "abroad into the beauties of nature", women were able to adore "the Creator through his glorious works." Traill describes how she spread these religious virtues to her neighbours, as well as to the natives, taking on the work of a missionary in the bush (139). Traill adds after the first service she attended in a small church near Peterborough: "never did our Liturgy seem so touching and impressive as it did that day, - offered up in our lowly log-built church in the wilderness [...] The turf here is of an emerald green; in short, it

\(^{2^3^9}\) Ibid., p. 450
\(^{2^4^0}\) Wakefield, Ibid., p. 457.
is a sweet spot, retired from the noise and bustle of the town, a fitting place in which to worship God in spirit and in truth. (81)" In *The Backwoods of Canada*, Wakefield found, above all, empirical confirmation that women were taking to heart their colonizing mission abroad. In the same way, in *Lectures on Colonization*, Herman Merivale, one of Wakefield’s supporters, evoked the role of women in connecting the new settlers to their spot of land in the backwoods. In Lecture XII, delivered in 1839, Merivale notes how the tendency among many single settlers to desert their farms in Canada, as soon as its cultivation begins to require more labour, is counteracted when families are established, as is borne out by Traill’s narrative: “There is a counteracting tendency, the love of home, the love of adorning and preserving that which has been won from the wilderness.241”

**Englishness versus "going native"**

When Traill's *Backwoods of Canada* was published in 1836, the middle-class public had been informed for six years about the debate over the new "imperial project" by the periodical press in which Wakefield and his friends regularly promoted their new ideas on "systematic colonization". Her testimony was very timely for the promoters of middle-class emigration to the white colonies. Her narrative was a first-hand account on how British officers had raised to the status of gentlemen, farmers on land grants in Canada, and how gradually they were forming communities along the lines of the English social model, having naturally found their place as the leaders of civilization in the backwoods. Taken at face value, Catharine Parr Traill seemed to provide elements which showed to the metropolitan public and to attentive readers like Charles Buller and Edward Gibbon Wakefield, that "Englishness", which one could describe as the "social apparatus of English subjects, with their values and virtues"242 would fare

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242 An expression used by Arnold Toynbee.
well in the colonial world. The communities that were starting to be built in the backwoods were "peaceful villages" in the manner of English hamlets.

Ian Baucom describes "Englishness" as one of the elements of the "imperial project" - developed in the 1830s. Wakefield had imagined liberal colonial communities for the Empire; this was the political facet of the imperial project. Durham and he, as well as Macaulay for instance, also reflected on a more cultural tie that would complement the structural/political tie between the margins and the centre. For instance in his Minutes on Indian Education (1835), Thomas Babington Macaulay defined "Englishness", which he hoped would be imposed on the "native" clerks in India, as "English in taste, in opinions, in morals and intellect. The English "imperial project" as it developed in periodicals and newspapers in the 1830s and 1840s, Baucom adds, held a "synchronic imperative", as it dictated that English women and men distant from another in space would be "similarly alike." This perspective on Empire building in which "Englishness" was one of the two cornerstones of the whole imperial edifice, had been initiated by Edward Gibbon Wakefield as early as 1829, before being taken up and advocated by prominent politicians and thinkers, including Lord Durham, from 1831 onwards.

In her preface, Traill had made clear that middle-class families were participating in the imperial project when she pictured the "pleasant homesteads" which were in the making in Upper Canada (11). But in the course of her personal reflections on her new role as colonist-cum-colonizer, she questioned her "Englishness". For instance, the female emigrant enthusiastically presented an alternative model of society, that of the bush, to her English readers. In doing so she emphasized the new manners, folklore and sense of community that now ruled her new life in the backwoods (218). In the case of the Traills, who experienced

poverty and moral dejection as soon as they arrived in Canada, communal support, solidarity between the English middle-class families and more particularly the more socially-diversified families that already lived in the backwoods (the Yankee families and some native tribes) transformed her English Conservative views on the colonial world, as shall be seen.

George Gusdorf's description of the “mirror-effect” as the first element pertaining to autobiographies was quoted earlier. This "mirror effect" also applied to these female emigrants' reflections on their "national" identity that was torn between their former English self and their new Canadian self. This would have been perceptible to readers who were attentive to the emigrant's train of thoughts and who saw beyond the entertaining anecdotes on life in the backwoods. Mrs Jameson was one of these perceptive readers, as she aspired to enjoy the same freedom and liberty in Toronto, that Catharine Parr Traill enjoyed in the woods.

Traill, as she expressed in her letters, now enjoyed what she described as the freedom and liberties of the New World in which people were free to act without complying to conduct books, social prescriptions and codes, clear from the despising remarks or stare of disapproval of the Mr and Mrs Grundys of Britain (218). Catharine Parr Traill's emigrant narrative can also be described as an "identity narrative", the recounting of a journey taking her from her former English self to her new "native" self. It might not be as elaborate as Susanna Moodie's personal narrative in 1852, as Traill was writing after only three years spent in the backwoods. However both authoresses presented to their readers the idea that emigration to the white colonial world was not as simple a sociological and political process as colonial theorists had imagined. English middle-class settlers, the least likely people to lose their identity and values, were still liable to transformation and miscegenation. Englishness, with its apparently secure and established hierarchic and cultural identity could not be transported intact to the colonies. In Catharine Parr Traill's narrative as well as in Susanna Moodie's, deep feelings were put on the page when the gentlewomen expressed their identity struggle in the backwoods as embodied in the sentiment of "in-betweeness". For
instance, what I described as Catharine Parr Traill's tale of personal domestic triumph in Canada (such as the maple sugar making episode or the housing bee) also reflects an erosion of her English habits and manners.

Drawing wild or native scenes, collecting native flowers and representing them to the English readers, partook of a domestication, or taming, of Traill's native surroundings. Traill states: "I suppose our scientific botanists in Britain would consider me very impertinent in bestowing names on the flowers and plants I meet with in these wild woods: I can only say, I am glad to discover the Canadian or even the Indian names if I can, and where they fail I consider myself free to become their floral godmother, and give them the name of my own choosing." Obviously, by adopting heartily her new wild woods as her home, she provided a very tamed view of Canada to her English female readers though preferring to depict the native reality of it. The wilderness was not to be feared anymore as it provided interesting and challenging activities for educated women. Tensions between the imperial self who would dissect and classify the colonial world for the imperial centre, and the colonial self, who felt at ease and at home in these un-English surroundings, were progressively solved in The Backwoods, revealing that Traill's feeling of "in-between" was slowly disappearing as she accepted her fate in Canada. Gillian Whitlock suggests that this biography-writing process creates some "discursive spacing" which reveals in the narrator an awareness of "discontinuities in identity." I also contend that these autobiographical texts written by colonists, reflected the conflicting position in which they found themselves as they were "going native" and turning into "colonial subjects/objects."

Traill, instead of limiting the emigrant women's sphere of action to the log house, empowered them by relating missions outside, within the community, but also by collecting and registering the new environment that she described as "the natural history of the country" (240). Mapping their new world would be

245 Whitlock, Gillian, The Intimate Empire, op.cit., p. 45.
constitutive of their new identity as Traill seems to suggest here, when she strives to invent a lore on the Canadian "blank page":

For myself, though I can easily enter into the feelings of the poet and the enthusiastic lover of the wild and wonderful of historic lore, I can yet make myself very happy and contented in this country. If its volume of history is yet blank, that of Nature is open, and eloquently marked by the finger of God; and from its pages I can extract a thousand sources of amusement and interest whenever I take my walks in the forest or by the borders of the lakes. (129)

Going native in Canada, Traill's identity narrative

For the first time, Traill analysed for her metropolitan readers the transformation of the English self. As she gradually inscribed herself in the backwoods community where they settled, she accounted for the wearing and tearing of her English prejudiced manners.

In the first letters composing The Backwoods, social distance and hierarchy were necessarily maintained and insisted upon by the gentlewoman emigrant. Catharine and her husband travelled on a "luxury" boat where they did not interact with any labouring-class emigrants. Upon landing, Traill noted from her imperial stance how poorly organized the French-Canadian authorities were in terms of emigrant management, particularly in times when cholera epidemics wrought havoc among the ranks of the "poor exile" with whom she did not identify (24-25). She then amused her readers (her mother and sisters) in making little sketches of these groups of emigrants from the upper deck of her boat (26).

She was already aware however that the New World has some positive, contagious effects on those unwanted downcasts as they rejoiced in "their newly-acquired liberty". She noticed some change in the habits of their children who ran in "glee" on Quebec ground as if Canada symbolized some hope for these English and Irish labourers. In these first letters that she recomposed for her readers, Traill tried to maintain the appearances of class and wealth, not admitting yet to their limited income and to the "social" reasons that had prompted her and her husband to leave England. She also described an inn where they stayed in Montreal as up
to her upper standards, though patronized by groups of emigrants of all sorts from whom the family tried to stay away. But one of the editor's footnotes indicates that "this hotel is not of the highest class, in which the charge is a dollar and a half per day" (42), which immediately derided Traill's social ambition to the readers.

Similarly, in the first letters home, when Traill found herself in a crowd of other settlers, she reminded her metropolitan acquaintances that she was the wife of a British officer and as such she and her family stood out among these numerous emigrants working their way to Upper Canada. Quite naturally, when she spent the night in a hotel or in a town on her way to Peterborough, their final destination, she remarked that they were immediately acquainted to some "highly respectable merchants" and their "very elegant and accomplished" wives. In another inn, near Prescott, she indicated how she received "good treatment" from servants, as she was an English lady (71).

In Cobourg, still adopting the detached tone of the imperialist visitor, she described the great potential of the town which so far displayed all the comforts of an English village, "a neatly built and flourishing village", with a "pretty church" and a "select society" as "many families of respectability" had "fixed their residences in or near the town." Traill presented the communities in the backwoods as typically English and provincial, suggesting that at first "the outline of the country reminded me of the hilly part of Gloucestershire. (55)"

At the beginning of Letter V, the emigrant was still looking backward and thinking of her "native country" whose romantic villages and picturesque scenes she missed, as she stated to her mother, describing the "zig-zag fences of split timber" as very offensive to the eye and adding: "I look in vain for the rich hedge-rows of my native country (55)". However, she already noted that the English settlers living in Canada could not uphold English fences and English decors as they had to adopt "whatever plan saves time, labour and money", as they were ruled by "the great law of expediency", guided by matters "born out of necessity" rather than by "matters of taste. (55)"

In short, the ruggedness of the Canadian landscape forced the settlers to loosen their English tastes and aesthetic references. Soon, the
English landscape would not rival with Canadian vistas anymore to the eyes of the female English settler.

The wearing and tearing of her prejudiced conservative English views began in Letter VI. Gradually Traill becomes acquainted with a more liberal form of social organization, which she first saw as offensively American, i.e. republican in principles. However, for her curious English readers, Traill regularly launches in reflections on the organization of society in the woods, noting about Peterborough's "genteel society" that it was composed of British officers and their families, but also of "professional men and storekeepers" that had been there for a decade or more (73). However, to her great surprise, the English social hierarchy based on property and affluence that would normally have established the military families at the top of the small community, did not apply in Canada. Indeed she wrote home that for instance, storekeepers held "a very different rank from the shopkeepers at home", as they had property and wealth and as a consequence held prominent positions in the community, some being "magistrates" or even MPs. The English hierarchy and social prejudices that would prevent such storekeepers to rise at home were overruled in the woods by circumstances and meritocracy.

As they [the storekeepers] maintain a rank in society which entitles them to equality with the aristocracy of the country, you must not be surprised when I tell you that it is not uncommon circumstances to see the sons of naval and military officers and clergyman standing behind a counter, or wielding an axe in the woods [...] nor do they lose their grade in society by such employment. (73)

The logging-bee, during which her husband and some neighbours erected the walls of Traill's new house, a central moment in Moodie and Traill's narratives, seemed to further transform Traill's English views and manners on social hierarchy. With this initiation into Canadian traditions, she was introduced to the reality of her new community, to its liberal communal values from which she and her husband, homeless at the time, greatly benefited.

In no situation, and under no other circumstance, does the equalizing system of America appear to such advantage as in meetings of this sort. All
distinctions of rank, education, and wealth are for the time voluntarily laid aside. You will see the son of the educated gentleman and that of the poor artisan, the officer and the private soldier, the independent settler and the labourer who works out for hire, cheerfully uniting in one common cause. Each individual is actuated by the benevolent desire of affording help to the helpless, and exerting himself to raise a home for the homeless. (103)

These native "bees" partook of typical Canadian customs and traditions. They were great social and cultural shocks for the two English settlers. Traill particularly stressed her apprehension when she realized that bees, in the woods, were synonymous with the mixing of all sorts of men from different classes and nationalities. "Reluctantly", she and her husband accepted that in order to erect a log house, they had to go through the ritual of the bee, as no settler could ever build his/her house in the backwoods, on his own. To her mother/readers she wrote:

We are, however, to call the "bee" and provide every thing necessary for the entertainment of our worthy hive. Now, you know that a "bee", in American language, or rather phraseology, signifies those friendly meetings of neighbours who assemble at your summons to raise the walls of your house, shanty, barn or any other building, this is termed a "raising bee". Then they are logging-bees, husking-bees, chopping-bees, and quilting-bees. (102-103)

Traill described this vital habit - in order for the community to survive in the bush -, as having its own rules such as the obligation of returning the hand that your neighbours had given you, any time they asked for it, as "a debt of honour". In fact, Traill underlined the great solidarity that was thus created among neighbours within the "native" community in this hostile world where no one could survive on his own. Traill was literally transformed by this major event that occurred during her first months in Canada, when she had felt homeless. It appears that her English ways were almost left behind after such an experience of communal solidarity, which corresponded for the Traill family to integration into their new Canadian environment. The Traills had stayed with relatives in the past few months, feeling somehow like "aliens" and "wanderers". With the ceremony of the raising-bee, they had now erected the foundations of a home on the native
ground, thus taking possession of their own territory: "We begin to get reconciled to our Robinson Crusoe sort of life, and the consideration that the present evils are but temporary, goes a great way towards reconciling us to them." (105)

What had been most shocking at first for Traill, the mixing of various social ranks working alongside, had become a great momentum of benevolence and charity. The lower-class participants in the bee had provided a home for her and her family, the destitute middle-class settlers whom they did not know. This type of class solidarity would have been impossible at home, particularly in 1832, when Moodie and Traill had left England. At that time, the benevolent Christian values that had presided over the relief of poverty were being questioned by Utilitarians and reformers. In 1832, the recently elected Grey Whig government had launched an enquiry in order to examine the possibility of reforming the poor law, to drastically limit all expenses towards poverty relief. According to the new utilitarian dogma, poverty-stricken families were now considered as undeserving if they were begging for poverty benefit. More workhouses were erected in England and Wales to limit the interaction between the needy and the wealthy, who could now turn a blind eye to the paupers who were simply removed to these new "bastilles". The communal values of Old England were giving way to the new materialistic, middle-class values in modern industrial England. The Traills, as well as the Moodies, had also felt the pinch of poverty at home and the reproving attitudes of society, generally depicted in cartoons and satires at Mr and Mrs Grundy. They had also felt abandoned by some of their former genteel friends. Such a traumatic experience had prompted the two couples to leave England for Canada for they could not stand the "sarcasms" of their former middle-class fellows. (217)

Against all odds, in the Canadian woods, the middle-class settlers also experienced the bite of poverty. With the small military pensions the Moodies and Traills lived on, they could not afford to build a house by paying lower-class

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loggers and house-builders. Without the help of their friendly neighbours and the benevolent mentality of some Yankee settlers, they would have starved in their "prison in the woods". Luckily for them Canada was not England; Catharine told her readers:

Imagine the situation of an emigrant with a wife and a young family, the latter possibly too young and helpless to render him the least assistance […] How deplorable would their situation be, unless they could receive quick and ready help from those around them. (100)

Clearly, Traill's representation of the "raising-bee" to her readers sounded greatly enthusiastic, and even full of emotion. She noted, for instance, that bees reflected the Republican ways which influenced the manners and customs of native North Americans, - which she had criticized at length previously when she had mocked the liberty that lower-class English emigrants expressed when they first landed in North America. After living the experience of the "raising-bee", after going through this community ritual in the woods, Traill was less critical and even quite impressed by the great results that such a classless enterprise could achieve (103). This was however a temporary classlessness; Traill reminds her mother in Letter XV that "our servants are as respectful, or nearly so, as those at home; nor are they admitted to our tables, or placed on an equality with us, excepting at "bees", and such kinds of public meetings.(219)" In such cases, Traill suggests that in Canada, the gentlemen lower themselves to the level of the servants in order to join in the collective works.

The Traills' house was thus partially put up in one day thanks to the help of sixteen neighbours whom the Traills had the obligation to feed according to the custom of the country. Catharine Parr Traill described the "bee" day as a festive day, whose key moment for her was a big communal meal she and her maid had prepared the Canadian way according to local rituals. For instance, we can note that she provided alcohol, respecting the custom of the country, though she clearly rejected it as the source of all evils among irresponsible settlers.

The work went merrily on with the help of plenty of Canadian nectar (whiskey), the honey that our bees are solaced with. Some huge joints of salt
pork, a peck of potatoes [...] formed the feast that was to regale them during the raising. This was spread out in the shanty, *in a very rural style*. In short, we laughed, and called it a *pic-nic in the backwoods*; and rude as was the fare, I can assure you, great was the satisfaction expressed by all the guests of every degree, our "bee" being considered as very well conducted. (114)

Traill underlined here how she had to comply with the native ways in exchange for the raising of a home. But the "feast" she had prepared also served the purpose of a communal meal which could be described as part of the Christian rites of incorporation based on "the sharing of bread and salt"\(^{247}\), in her Evangelical imagery.

After having established themselves as upper-middle-class settler-colonizers in Upper Canada, Traill became aware of the role of the community in the woods and began to grow fond of what she describes as "native" manners. By comparing the warmth, solidarity and friendship which communities in Canada developed, she seems to oppose English ways with "native" ways noting how stiff-upper-lip, individualistic, prejudiced, English values gradually wore out in the woods when people had to share hardship and obstacles. In one of the articles in the collection *Mapping the Nation*, Benedict Anderson offers a definition of "communality" which according to him is the first step towards the production of national character or traits:

Communality, cutting across class lines link specific groups by what we call "community of destiny", read not quasi-metaphysically as ancient doom, but as shared will towards the future. This will, subject to constant change in the real struggle for life, is precipitated through shared language and habits of everyday life, shared culture and eventually, shared political institutions, into what Bauer called national character\(^{248}\).

In fact, Traill's Canadian experience led her to reflect on her former life in England and to compare the manners and the morals of her fellow Englishmen: individualistic, prejudiced, unchristian, with her newly found community in


Canada, "having shaken off the trammels of Grundyism (218)". In spite of her loyalty to her mother country suggesting that she must "always give preference to Britain (216)" , the English, female, middle-class settler now considers the traits of her national character with the benefit of hindsight and assesses the advantages she sees in living in Canada over Britain.

For instance, in one of her little anecdotes-cum-moral tales, Traill stages an encounter between an old settler, a British officer whom she respects, and an English "lady" freshly landed in the woods, who shares Traill's upbringing and social circumstances. The dialogues that ensue reflect the pros of Canadian manners and the cons of English prejudices and enable the narrator to mock the English lady's class-consciousness and narrow-mindedness. The latter represents typical English Grundyism and individualism – she embodies Traill's persona before the "logging-bee". On the other hand, the old settler embodies Canadian solidarity, open-mindedness and the communal value system. Here again, Traill concludes that Canada is wearing and tearing emigrants' English ways for the better. She uses this dialogue as a means to promote the "right" desirable emigrants for Canada, an argument she personally endorses in Letter XI. Traill, as Moodie in 1852, uses her book to serve the cause of her new land and to promote a useful emigration to further the colonial project that seems to develop in the villages she crosses. She suggests operating a selection of the better emigrants for the new Canadian communities. Traill's purpose was to deter English ladies, like the one she pictured, of the "idle sort", probably of the upper middle class, from coming to Canada, as the country was not fit for them.

For persons of this description [the wives and families of those who have once been opulent tradesmen] (and there are such to be met with in the colonies), Canada is the worst country in the world. And I would urge any one, so unfitted by habit and inclination, under no consideration to cross the Atlantic; for miserable, and poor, and wretched they will become. [...] I am sorry to observe, that in many cases the women that come hither give way to melancholy regrets, and destroy the harmony of their fire-side, and deaden the energies of their husbands and brothers by constant and useless repining. (147)
Indeed, Traill did not discard "honest artisans" or "poor hard working, sober labourers" from coming to Canada, far from it, emigrants were welcome as long as they possessed the necessary industrious habits required to succeed in the woods.(145). However she seems less inclined to promote this aspect of emigration than to vehemently discard the coming of unwanted middle-class female settlers who were not ready to conform to and adopt what she described as new values dictated by the harsh circumstances of life in the back settlements (146). She wishes to deter middle-class women whose English ways and manners would not cede or break before Canadian ways, from making the Atlantic trip. "In short", Traill had the English captain say, "the country is a good country for those to whom it is adapted, but if people will not conform to the doctrine of necessity and expediency, they have no business in it." The "English lady", who refused to let herself or her sons stoop to work with their hands in the woods, was mocked for her English narrow-mindedness; her "silly pride" and her domestic inferiority were compared to true "female heroines", "we Bush-ladies", as Traill now described her women's community in the Bush, possessing "perseverance, patience, industry, ingenuity, moderation, self-denial" while being "cheerful." (147-49)

Expressing feelings of "in-between"

Reading Traill's narrative and her experience of "in-betweenness" in 1836 might not have been as disturbing for imperial theorists as one might think. Indeed, by avoiding the too personal self-reflective moments that could be identified as the "pining" feelings of the female author, male readers could actually surface-read Traill's work. A more global reading would have led them to praise the example she provided of a successful settlement of English middle-class colonists in Canada. In Traill's work, Wakefield must have seen the practical

249 Traill, The Female Settler's Guide, p. 16, "The greatest heroine in life is she who knowing her duty, resolves not only to do it, but to do it to the best of her abilities, with heart and mind bent upon the work."
results of his theory in the middle-class settlers' ability to build successful English colonies. However, Catharine Parr Traill also provided the very first instance of "going nativeness" to Victorian readers. In her narrative, she engaged with her ambivalent feelings towards Canada in the first pages, then towards the Old World in her conclusion. Finally, and quite perceptibly, she exposed her growing attachment to the new land and stressed the progressive distance that settlers placed between themselves and the mother country.

In so doing, she identified what she believed formed gradual cultural differences between the Old and the New World. For instance she describes the process of losing contact with the mother country as becoming "aliens and wanderers"(12). The painful and intimate separation from the homeland where lay "the scenes of earliest and happiest days", was described as accomplished with "natural reluctance" (216). Her mother, who represents the metropolitan reader, was naturally quite curious and wary towards the unknown colonial world, which Traill echoes: "You wish to know if I am happy and contented in my situation, or if my heart pines after my native land.(216)" Her mother seems to express some "regret for [Traill's]exile", as she terms her daughter's "residence in the country". Traill's mother imagines, along with other metropolitan readers, that her daughter was painfully unhappy. In fact, Catharine contradicts her by saying: "Let the assurance that I am not less happy than when I left my native land, console you for my absence. If my situation be changed, my heart is not. My spirits are as light as ever, and at times I feel a gaiety that bids defiance to all care." Besides, she adds that in Canada there is "a degree of spirit and vigour infused into one's blood by the purity of the air that is quite exhilarating.(166)" This short exchange of sentiments placed in Letter XIII, two-thirds into the narrative and written almost two years after Traill's departure from England, was the occasion for the female emigrant to grope with her new feelings towards the "adopted land". It is the first instance (in English literature) of intimate introspection into the sentiments felt by English emigrants abroad. In this letter, Traill describes her Indian moccasins in which she walks and her sister's creation of a folk song "Sleigh Bells", which
celebrates the beauties of the Canadian winter, when "the earth, the trees, every stick, dried leaf are glittering with mimic diamonds." In fact, confusedly, the female writer expresses her attachment to Canada in incessantly referring to "our" woods, "our" native flowers, "our" ferns…

Traill shared the intimate feelings of being an "exile", then an "emigrant" and eventually a "settler" with her readers. No narrative before hers had exposed such an ambiguous process of detachment from England and attachment to the New World. Once again, "a woman's pen alone" could write such intimate details that implied softness and sentimentality, a form of mental weakness indeed that could not be expressed by men. Truly, Traill provided the first instance in Victorian literature of the pangs of emigration, and more particularly the ideas that one could progressively consider the mother country as peripheral, on the margins of one's life. Traill slowly expresses her ambivalent feelings towards her homeland and shares with her readers her growing affection for the new country that slowly vies with her "national" character and attachment, one that she declares openly in Letter XV, as we shall see.

Traill also made sure that her readers had a true representation of flourishing communities in Canada, which were growing very quickly in pleasant villages and towns. Canada was not lagging behind in terms of economic or industrial development, contrary to what many travellers had stated. It was not "the poor man's country" anymore. To dispel such false representations, she described the economic prospects of Peterborough as she would any provincial town in England in the 1830s. Traill clearly took pride in its booming activity and remains enchanted by the surrounding wilderness of which she was never "weary", as if Canada could combine industrial development and preserved nature: a challenge which early environmentalists in industrial England already considered impossible.

Very great is the change that a few years have effected in our situation. A number of highly respectable settlers have purchased land along the shores of these lakes, so that we no longer want society. The roads are now cut.
several miles above us, and though far from good can be travelled by wagons and sleighs, and are, at all events, better than none. A village has started up where formerly a thick pinewood covered the ground; we have now within a short distance of us an excellent saw-mill, a grist-mill and store, with a large tavern and many good dwellings. A fine timber bridge, on stone piers, was erected last year to connect the opposite townships and lessen the distance to and from Peterborough. (209)

In her promotion of the new country, of the country of her children as she often referred to it, she tried to cancel all the false and negative representations or rumours that had been circulated at home prior to her departure; she suggested to "let the pro and con be fairly stated, and the reader use his best judgment.(228)"

She tackled this counter-discourse by using a familiar metaphor, that of nature. She answered the detractors of Canada, like Basil Hall or Tyron Powell, who in their travel narratives had condemned Canadian flowers as scentless and Canadian birds as voiceless: "I am half inclined to be angry when I admire the beauty of the Canadian flowers, to be constantly reminded that they are scentless, and therefore scarcely worthy of attention."(80) Her task from then on, either through her numerous sections on the wonders of native plants and fauna in Canada or in praising its rapid industrial progress, consisted in making Canada worthy of attention for English readers, "to redeem this country from the censure cast on it by a very clever gentleman I once met in London, who said 'the flowers were without perfume, the birds without song.'" According to her, Canada as a set of colonies did not seem to be the concern of middle-class readers at home, implying that Canada and its settlers had been neglected in periodicals or in newspapers. Traill's self-assigned task was to promote the worth of the New World and of its settlers in the English public sphere, this little "nature" anecdote serving once again the purpose of providing a moral lesson from the bush to the metropolis:

For my part, I see no reason or wisdom in carping at the good we do possess, because it lacks something of that which we formerly enjoyed. I am aware it is the fashion for travellers to assert that our feathered tribes are either mute or give utterance to discordant cries that pierce the ear, and disgust rather than please. It would be untrue were I to assert that our singing birds were as numerous or as melodious on the whole as those of
Europe; but I must not suffer prejudice to rob my adopted country of her rights without one word being spoken in behalf of her feathered vocalists. (141)

**Canadian prospects versus English prospects**

Before tackling the middle classes' prospects in Canada, since new colonial theorists were promoting the colonies and their promise to the bourgeoisie of England, she first presents Upper Canada as an interesting alternative for deserving, hard-working lower-class emigrants. Away from England plagued by Utilitarian social reforms, lower-class emigrants had a chance "to better their opportunities" and to taste "the real and solid advantages" of their emigration, feeling "the blessings of a country where there are no taxes, tithes, nor poor-rates" and no "workhouse or parish overseers" (145). She notes that for those English emigrants, Canadian meritocracy provided a taste of financial independence that class-ridden England could not offer them. Asking a successful Canadian farmer who had worked hard to move from a shanty to his own farm about his past in England, he stated - a common answer according to Traill - that he would never return to "his own country"(89). Traill then promoted Canada as a new world of opportunity for some hard-working settlers, promising them "independence". In this she questioned the Conservative hierarchical model of society that her family and friends were supposed to promote and to implement in the colonial world.

Among the advantages of Canada she considered during her moments of dejection and nostalgia when she looked back to England, she noted the importance of the community and the absence of prejudice between neighbours, as everyone seemed to be on the same footing: "If [their houses] lacked that elegance and convenience to which we had been accustomed in England, they were not devoid of rustic comfort, at all events, they were much as many settlers of the first respectability have been glad to content themselves with." (101)

The land in which her family had "fixed [their] abodes" represented for them "the land of hope", as she wrote home that "everything is new, everything is
going forward; it is scarcely possible, for arts, sciences, agriculture, manufactures to retrograde; they must keep advancing.(210)” Letter XV, three letters away from the end of the narrative, represents a long development on the cultural differences which separate the two countries, the Old world which belongs to the past, her past, and Canada representing the land of the future.

Letter XV is another of the key moments in the autobiographical narrative of the emigrant. There, Traill, in one of her rhetorical dialogues with her correspondent, is taking stock of her life journey after almost three years spent apart from her family and away from the mother country. She states that she "must ever give the preference to Britain", where "early associations and holy ties of kindred, and all affections that make 'home' in all countries are". There is no specific demonstration of national pride, just sentimentality or nostalgia. Similarly, her happiness in Canada seemed at first to be inspired by motherly and sentimental feelings, "there are new and delightful ties that bind me to Canada; I have enjoyed much domestic happiness since I came hither; - and is it not the birthplace of my dear child? Have I not here first tasted the rapturous delight arising from maternal feelings?" (216). Canada now is "his country", her baby boy's motherland and in the solitude of the backwoods, she stated, "there is no interference with your nursling"(218). Here again, Traill shares intimate feelings with her mother and the readers. This was an unusual piece in a woman's autobiography as maternal feelings had to remain quite private. Traill represents the Canadian Bush as a secluded nurturing environment in which mothers could fulfill their true destiny and experience true sensations of intimacy with their child and their husband, in a Crusoe-like fashion. Julia Watson analyses this woman's "I" and women's maternal desire for a sense of family and community building, as a form of "connective tissue" which was contradicted in England by individuality and separation250.

Besides, Traill adds that Canada being her boy's country, in "looking forward to his future welfare you naturally become doubly interested in the place that is one day to be his." Ernst Gellner in *Nation and Nationalism*, stresses the importance of inscribing the children in the collective community narratives that eventually become the narrative of the nation, in which future generations uphold the work and patriotic aspirations of their parents:

> When a family, kin unit, village, tribal segment takes the individual infants born into it, and by allowing and obliging them to share in the communal life, and a few more specific methods, such as training, exercises, precepts, rites of passage […] eventually turns these infants into adults reasonably similar to those of those of the preceding generation; in this manner the society and its culture perpetuates themselves.\(^{251}\)

Nearing the end of her narrative, Traill used Letter XV to write back to England, to its "silly" "uppish" "Grundy" middle-class society to whose sarcasms she felt she and her husband had been exposed when they were struggling financially before leaving for North America. Canada, in contrast, appeared as superior to England, which had rejected them. The main advantage she saw in Canada was that English social etiquette had not taken ground in their communities yet:

> We pride ourselves on conforming to circumstances; and as a British officer must needs be a gentleman and his wife a lady; perhaps we repose quietly on that incontestable proof of our gentility, and can afford to be useful without injuring it.
> Our husbands adopt a similar line of conduct: the officer turns his sword into a ploughshare, and his lance into a sickle; and if he be seen ploughing among the stumps in his own field, or chopping trees on his own land, no one thinks less of his dignity […] Surely this is as it should be in a country where independence is inseparable from industry; and for this I prize it. (219)

Her representation of Canadian society as free from social stigma seems exaggerated and subjective, but she makes her point clear. To her mother/English

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readers, she openly admits at last that her family had left England for financial reasons:

I must freely confess to you that I do prize and enjoy my present liberty in this country exceedingly: in this we possess an advantage over you, and over those that inhabit the towns and villages in this country, where I see a ridiculous attempt to keep up an appearance that is quite foreign to the situation of those that practice it. [...] Those that could afford to live in ease at home, believe me, would never expose themselves to the privations and disagreeable consequences of a settler's life in Canada. [...] Now we bush-settlers are more independent: we do what we like; we dress as we find most suitable and most convenient; we are totally without the fear of any Mr and Mrs Grundy [...] (218)

In her last letters home, Traill notes how Canadian manners and customs tend to change her own English habits and prejudice, as it had already changed the ways of the first settlers' generation, including her relatives who had already spent a decade in the colony. Canadian manners seem to be greatly influenced by American habits brought by Loyalists who settled in Upper Canada. From total rejection of the Yankees' off-hand manners in the first contacts she established with older settlers, she gradually comes to appreciate them and eventually adopts them in a natural miscegenation of manners:

Here I must observe, that of all people the Yankees, as they are termed, are the most industrious and ingenious; they are never at a loss for an expedient: if one thing fails then they adopt another, with a quickness of thought that surprises me, while to them it seems only a matter of course. They seem to possess a sort of innate presence of mind, and instead of wasting their energies in words, they act. The old settlers that have been long among them seem to acquire the same sort of habits, insomuch that it is difficult to distinguish them. (236)

She also reflects on the new hybrid English language that grew out of the living together of Americans and lower-class English settlers: "Persons who come to this country are very apt to confound the old settlers from Britain with the Native Americans"(74). She rejected those language mannerisms to begin with, making fun of some native expressions like "to fix", which gradually became "a standard word even among the later emigrants from our country"(74). However,
in the last section of her narrative she happily uses and displays these native expressions in her prose, along with some new local vernacular that she translates for her English readers. Here she combines American words, "as Yankees term it", and Indian words. Traill imperceptibly grew native, even in her own style and vocabulary.

As for national sentiments towards the mother country, Letter XV represents an interesting reflection on how the narrator now conceives her attachment to friends and families, her "natio". She calls Canada her "adopted country", putting forward her fondness and love for it as it has welcomed her family when they were considered as outcasts at home, "I daily feel my attachment to it strengthening." Referring to her children, she calls them my "young Canadians", my little "bushmen" (250) and declares: "I must say, for all its roughness, I love Canada, and am as happy in my humble log-house as if it were courtly hall or bower; habit reconciles us to many things that at first were distasteful"(250). Traill clearly expresses a sense of belonging to the margins of Canada without any further backward glance to England, which is criticized at length for being plagued by social conventions. In a complex way, she seems to formulate here some personal cultural identification with her new nation. Her last letters are dotted or punctuated by a series of italics as if the author wished to drive home to her readers a few essential characteristics of her new country. The first instance of it is to be found in letter XV in which she compares England and its individualistic manners with Canada, in which British settlers enjoy their "present liberty". Traill underlines "we bush-settlers", identifying herself to this new group and putting forward a form of new status and identity. Then come the words "hard" and to "act" (236) and "NECESSITY" in bold letters (240), all referring to the rough conditions of life in the bush. These words seem to sum up Traill's didactic message to those considering emigration from England and to define, in her own mind, the manners which any new comer to the country must adopt.
In the didactical mode she adopts to narrate her life on the periphery of the Empire for the British public, Catharine Parr Traill seems to produce some cultural knowledge about her Empire which she attempts to convey to the readers of the metropolis. As such she acts as a go-between. It already seems clear when reading *The Backwoods* that Canada has produced a culture of its own, within its communities ruled by different modes, codes, habits and different manners and values. Traill is taking up the pen to convey this "new culture of Empire" to the imperial centre. But in providing keys to understanding the "secrets" of Canada she also seems to posit the inefficacy of the so-called imperial culture, or Englishness. Reflections on her woman's identity in the Canadian bush, on her "national" identity, gradually emerge out of these personal narratives. She concludes her personal account of life in the backwoods with an optimistic view of the future of Canadian communities: "Some century hence, how different will this spot appear? I can picture it to my imagination with fertile fields and groves of trees planted by the hand of taste.(251)" Canada would be the result of numerous "bees", i.e. of communal efforts. Her final words, the *explicit* of the volume, are dedicated to the growth and progress of her new land illumined by an *aurora borealis*, symbolizing the promising dawn of the new world. Her pride in the country reflects her own inscription into it.

**Herman Merivale on the social characteristics of settlers' communities in North America**

In his famous twenty-two lectures on "Colonization and Colonies" delivered at Oxford between 1839 and 1841, then published for the general public in 1842, political economist Herman Merivale was taking stock of the state of the British Empire by analysing the various progress of its white colonies: "My objects were first to convey information in a condensed shape […] to call the attention of my readers to the principles of the art of colonization and the growth
By colony, Herman Merivale meant "a territory of which the soil is entirely or principally owned by settlers from the mother country."²⁵²

Herman Merivale's first remark stated the impressive absence of a regular pattern of administration and development among the colonies which seemed to be furthered, as a few colonies, in particular Canada, were about to enter their "second stage or adult stage"²⁵³ with the granting of responsible government. In fact, two-thirds of Merivale's lectures in 1842 were dedicated to the observation of the Canadian colonies that were more advanced in their state of development, which did not mean necessarily in a more advanced state of progress, than the rest of the white colonies. A man of his times, Merivale was attracted to Edward Gibbon Wakefield's system of colonization, which at least offered a plan and some finality to the scheme where there was none in the Colonial Office. Merivale's main purpose in lecturing on colonies was to convey to his students the utilitarian idea that as future prominent society leaders or future officers in the India Civil Service, they should be aware that: "it is necessary that we should establish in our minds a few clear and definite notions respecting the objects of colonization; the mode in which it may be rendered most useful to the settler and to the mother-country."²⁵⁴

To observe the state of development and progress of British America, Merivale relied heavily on travel accounts, emigration pamphlets and narratives, as well as on the first precise report on Canada established by the Durham team (Wakefield and Charles Buller), and published in 1839. With the figures he found in numerous appendices produced by travellers and parliamentary committees on colonies, the political economist also added tables and charts to his published lectures to provide an economic map of British colonies. Comparison between Australia and Canada being limited in 1842, Merivale tended to compare America with Canada, suggesting that the "salutary neglect" in which the American

²⁵² Merivale, Herman, Lectures on Colonization and Colonies, op.cit., introduction to the first edition, p.xi-xii.
colonies had developed in the 17th and 18th centuries, had been an ideal liberal mode of colonial growth and success.

Merivale's main target was to convey his liberal views on the manner in which economic progress could be achieved in Canada and how new colonies like South Australia could be established in a successful way from their foundation onwards, by learning from the deficiencies or assets of the Canadian provinces. Like Wakefield, Merivale tried to convince the general public that the British Empire had to be built along an organized plan which would first have to be under the control of the mother country, before gradually trusting the colonists with their own system of self-government. He distinguished two categories of colonies, the former were sources of valuable goods for the mother country, while the latter were sources of comfort for settlers who were struggling at home. Australian colonies fell in the first category while the latter category was formed by the Canadian colonies:

British America is a country of very various degrees of fertility and natural advantages, possessing neither a climate nor soil peculiarly adapted to the produce of any commodities of great value, and requiring much capital to raise them, but able to supply in abundance the necessaries and many of the comforts of life.\(^{255}\)

Merivale however, also debates on the social characteristics of these colonial societies thus formed over the years in the Canadian provinces. Though underlining his lack of competence when faring away from the field of political economy, Merivale, like Wakefield, states the importance of looking at the way these new societies are formed in the New World. He does not confirm the source of his observations on the domestic aspects of Upper Canada and on the status and conditions of the settlers of the backwoods, contrary to his well-indexed economic references. We gather that travel texts formed a large part of his general description of Canada and some reading of more personal narratives on the domestic state of emigration, of which only one was published in 1839 and 1840

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when Merivale wrote his lectures on the topic: Catharine Parr Traill's *Backwoods*. It cannot be ascertained that he read Catharine Parr Traill's text but Merivale's remarks on the state of mind of middle-class emigrants as well as his notes on their inner feelings, are very close to the mood of the authoress' final letters. However, we know through Traill's own statement that *The Backwoods* had been popular from the moment of its publication, and Merivale's remarks simply go to show that her colonial sentiment and feelings were already part of the larger discourse and of the general debate on the social characteristics of colonial communities at home.

Merivale insists on the fact that great fortunes are not to be made in Canada and that therefore any capitalist or absentee landlord should not consider investing in Canada. He does not believe either that emigrants of the labouring class should look at Canada as "a paradise", blaming here "fallacious descriptions" provided by emigration pamphlets. Merivale read that clearing land in Canada costs between £3 and £4 per acre, a sum also quoted by Traill and also found in one of the appendices to *The Backwoods*. Such a sum, and the length of time it took for this process of clearing, ran against the hopes of immediate betterment of any low income emigrant, unless he chose to offer his services as a servant for a few years. Then Merivale sums up what appears to him as forming the ideal settlers for Canada: those who represent "the most useful and most healthy part, of the great mass of settlers whom this country annually sends across the Atlantic". His insistence on hard work and moral worth echoes Traill's didactic and firm passage on the sort of settlers that colonists required for the new country:

"But the class of settlers to whom these regions appear to afford the greatest temptation is that of small farmers and others, possessed of some means, however slight and at the same time able and willing to maintain themselves by the labour of their hands."

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257 Merivale notes about small independent landowners from the middle-classes like the Traills whose story he seems to sum up here, that "The little capital at their command is barely enough, for the most part, to carry them through the preliminary expenses of clearing their ground, and through the long and difficult period of abstinence which must precede the reaping of a single crop.", *Ibid*, p. 384.
To them, it is not too much to say, that with good conduct from their own parts, and exemption from extraordinary casualties, North America offers, after 4 or 5 years of probation, a certainty of a happy competence, a probability of acquiring moderate wealth.\textsuperscript{258}

Similarly, Traill's personal impressions on harsh colonial life, in spite of her will to sound perfectly happy in her letters home, also seem to have inspired Merivale's reflections on the conditions of the emigrant in the North American provinces. Merivale seems to attest to having read emigrants' testimonies to establish his portrait:

Emigrants have very rarely professed themselves disappointed. The climate is a more questionable attribute though. The fierceness of its extreme tries some constitutions, the severity of its winter is felt as a drawback by all except the thoroughly acclimatised: its monotony is wearisome, and has the disadvantage of encouraging the favourite vice of the region: intemperance and forced idleness [...] There are its drawbacks, its advantages are its great salubrity, its serenity, its steadiness and the comparative certainty with which the farmer can calculate on its periodical vicissitudes\textsuperscript{259}.

In Lecture IV, Merivale concludes on the question of the new sentiment shared by these colonists in the communities thus formed. Here again Merivale needed to have read a source in which inner feelings towards the new land and the old mother country were questioned by the emigrant and put to the page. Traill had made clear the state of her new sentiment of attachment to her readers in 1836, specifying that as a young mother, her heart was now necessarily and indefectibly attached to the \textit{natio} in which her children were born. According to Merivale, women settlers tended to develop this attachment to Canada earlier than their husbands thanks to their domestic duty. Attachment to Canada is thus described by the lecturer as "the love of home, the love of adorning and preserving that which has won from the wilderness."\textsuperscript{260}

\textsuperscript{258} Merivale, \textit{Ibid}, p. 113.
\textsuperscript{259} Merivale, \textit{Ibid}, p. 114.
\textsuperscript{260} Merivale, \textit{Ibid}, p. 265.
No settler had opened up on such a topic before Traill - or even after her as a matter of fact, to the exception of her sister in 1852. About this delicate topic of attachment to the mother country, which seems to be one of his leading questions on the strength and durability of the colonial connection, Merivale gathers from his readings on Canada: "A love for British principles and institutions may prevail among them; we have had the strongest proofs that it does prevail; but with them it must of necessity be rather a sentiment than a principle." According to him therefore, testimonies or "strong proofs" revealed that British settlers were naturally brought to support the progress of their new land, after a certain acclimatization period. The British Empire should not be built entirely on the assumption that it will last forever on its human factor and a natural love for the mother country. Instead Merivale recommends, economic ties as well as federal ties should be fostered as colonies enter their "adult stage", in order to maintain them within the imperial "family" circle.

Last but not least, Traill had advocated the attachment of the new colonists to the egalitarian principles that seemed to govern the relationship between classes. She still believed in the British hierarchy system of upper and lower orders, but she also easily adhered to the new Republican principles of community self-support, as well as the absence of etiquette and "Grundyism" which ruled social interaction in Britain. On this point, Merivale states in a most definite manner:

The state of society in provinces thus circumstanced is and must be essentially republican, whatever may be the character of their institutions. It must be that which necessarily results from the general diffusion of well-being and among a people of whom the great bulk are small landed proprietors with very few wealthy individuals, without an established aristocracy and without the elements for construction either.

261 Merivale, Lectures on Colonization, op.cit., p. 115.
262 Here again, Merivale seems to have read Traill's truthful account of her husband's and her hardship in the bush: "Neither courage, nor intelligence, nor ample means, nor unwearied enterprise, seem to serve as substitutes for that appreciation of circumstances, that practical adaptation of his means to the proposed end, which experience only gives to the emigrant.", p. 254.
Merivale clearly agrees with Wakefield that gentlemen and their families, those "small landed proprietors", form the backbone of successful colonization. However, echoing here again one of Traill's self-taught lessons from the Bush, exposed in her preface, Merivale suggests that genteel emigrants should be directed in their migration and settlement in order to serve the Empire, in fact the mother country for the lecturer, in the most efficient way:

The mere spirit of independence may occasionally induce a man to take a wrong view of his own interest, and to move into the wilderness, when for his own sake, he would better have remained in the clearings. It is the energy and enterprise of the individual which leads him to commit the oversight. You cannot save him from the commission of the oversight, but by controlling that energy and enterprise, you can help him perform the part for which he is evidently fitted – that of pioneer of civilization.264

By putting forward the destiny of Canada at the end of her personal narrative, Traill established herself as the intellectual or bard of this new country which, she had stated, had been described as a "blank page" with no history or world of letters. Her work seemed partly to be destined to fill up this void, as she explained: "If its volume of history is yet a blank, that of nature is open, and eloquently marked by the finger of God, and from its pages, I can extract a thousand sources of amusement"(128-29). Collecting plants, passing on their Canadian names to inform British readers first, then to inform Canadian settlers at a later stage of her life, was a task she continued into her old age as a mission she had assigned to her "woman's pen…"

This woman's colonial task was well-described by her sister Agnes Strickland in the preface she wrote for her sister's next Canadian volume, published in Britain in 1852, by Hall and Virtue under the title *Canadian Crusoes, A Tale of the Rice Lake Plains*. The manuscript, revised and edited by Agnes Strickland, was a tale of lost children in the backwoods of Canada. It was designed for young readers. The narrative also provided important historical elements about the Canadian colonies as the story begins in 1759. The meticulous

author, acting as a local antiquarian, also added numerous footnotes and appendices that provided essential information on the state of the colonies at the time of writing. According to Agnes Strickland, her sister was resuming her self-appointed didactic mission ("to impress on the memory the natural resources of this country, by the aid of interesting the imagination"), which consisted in leading future emigrants as well as young British readers to discover Canada:

She has now devoted her further years of experience as a settler to the information of the younger class of colonists to open their minds and interest then in the productions of that rising country, which will one day prove the mightiest adjunct of the island empire […]²⁶⁵

In the previous chapter, we noted how women writing from the margins of Canada or about the margins of Canada, took great care to shape their manuscripts in order to meet the demands and requirements of the British public. I believe that the reasons why a large number of women's texts about Canada were circulated in England, while there were none on Australasia for instance, had to do with the expertise of the women of letters, whether emigrants or travellers, who wrote these narratives on British North America. These women writers, Catharine Parr Traill and Anna Jameson in the late 1830s as well as Susanna Moodie and Isabella Bird in the 1850s, designed their “Canadian” manuscript as a product from the margins that they formatted and sold to the metropolitan audience by reconciling the demands of the British public for information and entertainment. Thanks to their early experience in publishing in home-circle journals in England, Catharine Parr Traill and Susanna Moodie knew how to interweave the right amount of each element, mixing moralistic messages and entertainment in their personal narratives or short fictions about the backwoods. All the more so, as their remote position in the colonies led them to depend on the marketable values of their textual productions for a distant audience. In fact, both “colonial” authors managed to publish a handful of texts – their personal narratives, children’s tales or short stories - in Britain, America and Canada over four decades. Some texts were original pieces, while their personal narratives and their children’s tales seemed to be transformed indefinitely by the adding of illustrations, the changing of titles, the removing of the author’s preface over the years, to match their readers’ “national” tastes. Most of the time, their manuscripts were sold to publishers, and their fates – the author’s and the book’s - were dependent on the
In the late 1830s, there was a great demand for entertaining books on the new colonies in the metropolis. Colonial theorist Herman Merivale noted in one of his early lectures on "Colonization and Colonies", delivered in 1839, how reading about the colonial world had become very popular among the British public. According to him, colonial narratives represented a form of "safety valve" for Victorian readers when home problems plagued their everyday life. Escaping to the colonies, "pleasing objects of contemplation" saved the mother country from pessimism and fed the natural curiosity of “Englishmen” for adventure, exploration and “romance” by asking them "to look abroad":

The mere effort of directing the mind to travel abroad to those new regions of romance and expectations, where all is life, and hope and active energy, afford a relief to the spirits, which again feel wearied and fettered when it is called back to fix its attention at home. This yearning after the distant and unseen is a common propensity of our nature, and how much is the force of that "secret impulse" cherished and strengthened in the minds of us Englishmen, by all the associations in the midst of which we are educated.  

In this chapter we will examine the professional or economic motivations behind the composition of Traill and Jameson’s manuscripts. As it appears, Canada seemed to have been marketable for both female authors for whom a profitable and quick sale was necessary. We will also consider how these texts about the colonial world or from the colonies, specifically written by female authors, were received in the metropolis, where, according to Merivale, reading about the colonies had become a popular activity among the educated public. However, the first readers of these marginal manuscripts were publishers who selected, revised or discarded the original texts. What texts on the colonies were of interest to the publishing houses of the metropolis, in the second quarter of the nineteenth century when Britain went through a "Canada mania"? Did texts produced in the margins by emigrants fare as well as those published about the

266 Merivale, Herman, Lectures on Colonization and Colonies, op.cit., Lecture V, p. 135.
colonial world by confirmed women authors? How much editing was involved in the process of publication? Did publishers interact with the authors or did they intervene directly in the formatting of the texts in order to confirm their personal views on the Empire or that of the general public? More generally speaking, how were these published texts received by the periodicals and literary magazines? Were these female authors, in our case Catharine Parr Traill and Anna Jameson, considered to hold significant views on Empire building or were the texts confined to mere women's reading?

Selling a manuscript on the colonial world first meant finding a publisher. This was a fairly easy task for Catharine Parr Traill and Susanna Moodie as their siblings, Agnes and Eliza, had a good knowledge of the publishing world in London. Agnes Strickland, Catharine and Susanna's elder sister, gained a name for herself as a woman historian when she published *Lives of the Queens of England* in twelve volumes between 1840 and 1848. From 1832 onwards Agnes was already a regular contributor to *The Atheneaum*. As for Eliza, she contributed to *Chamber’s Edinburgh Journal* and to *Home Circle*. Agnes Strickland used her connections in the small literary world of London to find a publisher for *The Backwoods of Canada*. As for Susanna Moodie, she also boasted about her family connection to the “famous female historian” in her preface to *Roughing It in the Bush*, against Agnes’s wishes. Indeed Agnes had not helped Susanna Moodie in her search for a publisher. Instead, Susanna and her husband used a friend of John Moodie’s as acting literary agent. In the first part of this chapter, we will follow the journey of Catharine Parr Traill’s manuscript from the early phase of composition, in the backwoods, to the final phase of publication, in the metropolis, by examining the various stages of transformation of the original text

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267 In the 1820s, Eliza Strickland moved to London to work in the small world of magazines and gift books, see Ballstadt, Peterman and Hopkins, *I Bless You in My Heart*, op.cit., p.4.
268 Agnes Strickland was not always successful in placing Traill's work as Ballstadt et al. have found she failed to find a publisher for the sequel to *The Backwoods* which had apparently ready for 1838, *I Bless You in My Heart*, Ibid, p. 16.
269 James Traill, a friend of her husband, see Ballstadt et al., *Letters of Love and Duty*, Letter 14, John Moodie to James Traill, Douro, March 8, 1836.
in the hands of its publisher. We will examine the position of the female author, twice removed from the process of publication, because of her colonial status on the one hand – away from the metropolis, living in its colonial margins – and because of her female status on the other hand submitting her personal narrative to the authority of an all male editing committee.

Publishing in the metropolis also meant having one’s work reviewed by prominent literary magazines or periodicals, at least in the case of Anna Jameson. C.P. Traill’s publishers, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge did not submit their published volumes to the popular reviews, preferring to review most of their prominent manuscripts in their own *Edinburgh Review*. Negotiating good sales meant publishing at the right time, when Canada was attracting the readers’ curiosity as for instance during the new debate over emigration in the 1830s, or during the Canadian crisis in 1838, or again in the wake of the Great Exhibition in 1851 where displayed artefacts from Canada had greatly appealed to visitors. This “Canada mania” which lasted over 25 years at least, generated great interest and curiosity so that narratives about Canada and about Canadian manners and politics would be sure to attract attention among readers and reviewers. Such was the talent and professionalism of Anna Jameson and her publisher. Her book was published shortly after the outbreak of the Canadian rebellions in 1837-1838 and she took advantage of this fact to include new chapters on the political atmosphere of Upper Canada. We shall see in the second part of this chapter, that Anna Jameson expertly fashioned the preface to *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* in order to prepare her readers and reviewers to receive her work and her “unfeminine” colonial discourse on the state of the Canadian colonies.

In the late 1830s, when Traill and Jameson published their volumes on Canada, the publishing world in Britain, more particularly in London where the business was mostly run by a handful of prominent publishers, had been radically transformed over the past decade. From the more respectable position of publishers of the writings of some exceptional philosopher or author, as was the
case in the 18th century - for whom a few wealthy publishers were more patrons than booksellers -, the Victorian publishers were now booksellers270. The issuing of books had become less of a vocation and more of a business. According to book historian Royal Gettman, the new commercial turn was taken by the business-oriented firms when the great literary minds stopped offering great productions in the 1830s. With no great authors to sell or to make money from, firms such as those of John Murray or Henry Colburn, turned to the publication of travel books, history books and biographies of prominent figures271. In other cases, to preserve a publishing contract with a famous author, a publishing house had to sell many "commodity" books, a term used to refer to easy reading books like travelogues for instance272. In 1830, Charles Knight, C.P. Traill’s publisher, considered the number of potential readers in Britain to be around one million, ranging from the "learned to the uninformed"273. For most publishing houses, with the exception of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, the great bulk of readers was obviously found in the growing middle classes who could afford to purchase books and whose tastes had to be accounted for274.

Such were the constraints weighing on the production of texts about Canada by women, in the 1830s when Canada mania was reflected in the 49 books recorded on the publishers' lists in England. Publishing in Britain meant finding a prominent publishing house looking for "commodity" books to meet the immediate, whimsical, fluctuating taste of middle-class readers. Such was the context for female writers from the margins of Canada and this particular situation elicits a number of questions that will be dealt with in this chapter. How did women authors negotiate their entry into the tight world of publishing which formed an influential section of the public sphere? Did the supervision of the

272 Gettman, A Victorian Publisher, op.cit., p. 12
publishers and the constraints of the market regulations influence the final representation or the original message that women authors intended to convey? Was there an intervention of the publisher in the formatting and marketing of the book and if so, did his presence or incursion mediate or transform the overall representation that the female author had first wished to convey about Canada? How was their female contribution to travel writing or colonial discourse received by their publishers, and eventually by reviewers in prominent periodicals?

Negotiating the pitfalls of the publishing world in England

In this study of 19th-century texts written in the margins by gentlewomen authors, it seems difficult to leave aside the financial opportunity that books on Canada represented for professional writers, men and women, writing at home or abroad. Jameson and Traill broke ground for women with the publication of their narratives. Financial contingencies: a marital separation for Anna Jameson, and lifelong bouts of poverty on her Canadian farm for Catharine Parr Traill, led both women to look for opportunities to publish and to make some profit out of their Canadian experience. The novelty of their lives or journeys in Upper Canada - where Jameson stayed for a year in 1837 and observed the society of colonial Toronto and where Traill still resided in 1837 - was easily perceived by their respective publishers. In the mass of emigration pamphlets and male travel narratives, a different gaze on the colonial margins was an interesting opportunity for publishers to attract new readers - men and women. These manuscripts were also used to converge with the publishers' political and economic agenda in promoting their personal views on emigration or colonization for instance.

When the curiosity of the public was aroused, then one book seemed to open the market for others of the same kind. In fact, less than two years after the publication of the first edition of The Backwoods of Canada, Anna Jameson who
had read Traill’s narrative prior to her departure\textsuperscript{275}, published her travelogue, *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* with Otley and Saunders, in the form of letters sent home to friends and family. Her three-volume manuscript was a very complete travelogue providing reflections on the political state of the colonies, the living conditions of the natives, as well as on the domestic life and manners of the Upper Canadians with whom she had stayed for a year both in Toronto and in backwoods communities. Similarly, George Routledge, who was starting his business in 1845, published Frances Beavan's narrative about her settler’s life in New Brunswick under the copycat title of *The Backwoods of New Brunswick* which was not its original title and where the author’s name was omitted from the front cover\textsuperscript{276}, thereby hoping to benefit from the popularity of Traill's text. Eventually, Traill’s own sister Susanna also began to compose sketches for a personal narrative, after her sister’s manuscript was bought by the SDUK in 1836.

Traill and Jameson's works on Canada would have been the first of the kind if the publication of their books had not been overshadowed by the release of similar texts written by an even more prominent Victorian woman of letters, Harriet Martineau. Between 1836 and 1838, Martineau published successively three books on her travels in America. First she released her theoretical *How to Observe Morals and Manners*, with Charles Knight and the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. Indeed, Charles Knight edited *The Backwoods* as well as Martineau's *How to Observe Morals and Manners* in his SDUK series. However, Traill's text featured in the light reading category of "Library for Entertaining Knowledge" while Martineau’s sociological text belonged to the more didactic "Library for Useful Knowledge". Then Martineau's *Society in...

\textsuperscript{275} Jameson to Ottilie Von Goethe, October 1, 1836, Needler, G.H., *Letters of Anna Jameson to Ottilie von Goethe*, London, Oxford University Press, 1939, p. 59-60

\textsuperscript{276} Frances Beavan's name was mentioned on the first inside page of the volume only. The original title was "Sketches and Tales Illustrative of Life in the Backwoods of New Brunswick, North America, gleaned from actual observation and experience during a residence of seven years in that interesting colony". On the binding, one can read *The Backwoods of New Brunswick* and the book was thus advertised in the catalogue for George Routledge, 1845.
America as well as *Retrospect of Western Travel* were published by Otley and Saunders, Jameson’s publishers, in 1838. Jameson and Martineau's texts were featured in the same catalogue. *Society in America* broke ground in the small world of travel writing as for the first time a woman provided a thorough analysis of a "foreign" society, applying to it her own observation grid developed in *How to Observe*. Jameson’s travel narrative about Canada did not fare as well as Martineau’s in the reviewing world. While Martineau received all the attention of the press, both the quality press and periodicals, Jameson was reviewed in three periodicals only in Britain, but the American edition, under the supervision of Otley and Saunders, unexpectedly earned her a little fame in America. Once Jameson had satisfied the needs of her public for immediate information about the riotous Canadian colonies, the interest of many readers turned to Martineau’s America relegating Canada to the margins.

Even though by 1837 Catharine Parr Traill and Anna Jameson had shared the living experience of one and a half years in Canada, the published results of the respective sojourns of these professional gentlewomen writers differed in form and content. One writer was a colonist while the other was a “mere” visitor. The presentation of their work by their publishers reflected the difference in their status - colonial or metropolitan - as well as their different perspectives on the colonial world.

Traill's account was published under the generic expression "by a lady" and her name was not even mentioned. No further reference was included concerning her previous books published in London though her *Young Emigrants*, a piece of juvenilia had been well received when it was published in 1828. As for Anna Jameson, her credentials were mentioned by her publishers in the opening pages. There, references to two of her previous books, *The Diary of an*

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278 Anna Jameson visited Harriet Martineau quite regularly after Martineau’s return from America and afterwards during her illness. The latter agreed to write Anna Jameson’s obituary for the *Daily News*.
279 Ballstadt et al., *I Bless You in My Heart*, op.cit., p. 4.
Ennuyée (1826) and Memoirs of the Beauties of the Court of Charles II (1831), presented the author as a literary scholar and essay-writer\textsuperscript{280} who was clearly better known in the 1837 publishing world than Traill.

Through Traill and Jameson, British readers became acquainted with women's narration of the exotic, “romantic” colonial world that took them beyond British and European shores. Since Lady Wortley Montagu's Letters from Turkey written at the beginning of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century but published in 1760, non-European travelogues written by women had been quite rare. Wollstonecraft's published account of Northern Europe was the most "exotic" destination among the twenty travelogues published by women in the last decades of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century listed by Katherine Turner\textsuperscript{281}. The first travel narrative on India written by a woman, Fanny Parkes, was published in London in 1854. In other words, for the British public the first representations of the colonial world provided by women, the first personal narratives of the Empire through women's eyes, were written in Canada by Catharine Parr Traill and Anna Jameson.

Canada formed a central "chronotope" in these two interesting texts. From the Backwoods to the Bush, from Winter to Summer in Jameson's Rambles, their descriptions of and inscription in the Canadian landscape, the epitome of the colonial landscape for British readers, formed a chronotope, that is something which "determined their choice as subject-matter, controlled the mode of study, produced the story they tell and structured the mode of its telling."\textsuperscript{282} A chronotope could play a passive part in the narrative as a mere backdrop. This was typical of British women's travel accounts on America or Canada in which the landscape and place were used as mere white pages on which each author could project her representation of the Empire and her imperial presence. But a chronotope could also play an active part, in the constitution of the narrative and

\textsuperscript{280} Anna Brownell Jameson, Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada, London, Otley and Saunders, 1838, "about the author".
\textsuperscript{281} Turner, Katherine, British Travel Writers in Europe, 1750-1800, Authorship, Gender and National Identity, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2001, p.129
\textsuperscript{282} Cosgrove, Denis and Mona Domosh, "Author and Authority, Writing the New Cultural Geography", in Place/Representation/Culture, p. 25-38
of the self as was the case in the female settlers' narratives like Traill’s or Moodie’s. These women's texts produced a feminine knowledge of the Empire: creating familiar scenes, producing familiar views of the wilderness thus domesticating the backwoods and the colonial environment. On the other hand, “Canada”, thanks to the readers' curiosity about it, provided them with the key to enter the publishing world with their political and personal agendas, allowing them subsequently to make their way into the public sphere.

Both writers shared a personal and a political agenda. If part of their personal agenda was to sell a manuscript on Canada, nonetheless, in their political agenda they set about to remove the colonies from the margins in which they had been confined by the Colonial Office: margins treated as mere dumping grounds for an unwanted surplus population. Traill attacked the false representations of emigration pamphlets and publicized the fact that new classes were now pioneering in Canada. Jameson assigned herself the mission of representing Upper Canada to the British public in order to palliate the "degree of ignorance relative to the country itself, not credible except to those who may have visited it." Displaying their sympathy for Canada, both female writers felt invested with a certain mission or duty towards the new country. They contributed to popularising Canada among middle-class readers, women and men, as these texts were circulated both in the public and private spheres. Both authors tried to influence the debate on the British imperial project for Canada held in the metropolis by colonial pundits – like Wakefield and Durham – in the late 1830s.

The publishing fate of the first "colonial" book written by a female colonist

According to Carl Ballstadt, Catharine Parr Traill's The Backwoods seems to have inspired contemporary critics less than Susanna Moodie's Roughing it in the Bush, a situation which he has deplored many times in his editions of Traill's

works: "In the critical literature of the past several decades, the prevailing tendency has been to diminish Catharine Parr Traill, to make her seem a matter of lesser, indeed at best of minor, concern to those seriously interested in Canadian literature. In agreement with Ballstadt, I will begin this analysis of texts produced by British women writers on Canada with Catharine Parr Traill who, as Ballstadt reminds us, had been labelled by literary periodicals, towards the end of her life in the 1890s, "the oldest living author in the British Empire."

From manuscript to book, there are two levels of production. The first belongs to the woman author, while the second stage falls under the control of the publisher. The first stage of the textual production is usually presented in the preface, which can be read as a didactic or reading contract between the author and her public – when the preface is not removed from the published text. In the preface, the readers usually find the gist of the message that the female author wishes to convey. The second stage of production corresponds to the intervention of the publisher in the formatting and marketing of the book: it ranges from the note on the author to the addenda in the form of footnotes or appendices, to the transformation of the original title into a more appealing one or to the deletion of didactic passages and the addition of illustrations. This patriarchal presence or incursion of the publisher, particularly felt in women's non-fictional productions in the 19th century, often transformed the overall original representation to the point of running counter to the author’s initial message.

In her preface, Catharine Parr Traill reflected on the constraints of the reception, which had to be taken into account when composing the manuscript. She admitted that from the beginning, the book was intended for publication in England. The sale of the manuscript would have brought her family temporary financial relief. The "personal narrative" genre introduced two contradictory demands that the narrator had to deal with. The "personal" dimension of the

284 Ballstadt, Carl and Michael Peterman eds, Forest and other Gleanings, the Fugitive Writings of Catharine Parr Traill, Ottawa, University of Ottawa Press, 1994, p.1.
285 Ballstadt and Peterman eds, Forest and other Gleanings, op.cit., p. 11.
narration would be necessarily centred on her self, as the colonist was revealing her intimate thoughts and revealing an autobiographical experience while the "narrative" aspect of the genre directly referred to the "narration" of the personal journey in Canada. Tension between fiction and reality thus weighed on the composition of her manuscript from the outset. In the last part of the preface, Traill suggested that she had apparently settled for reality over fiction, as she decided to put forward "truth" and "facts over fiction" (13). However, she admitted that her text contained some "amusing" and "entertaining" pieces (13). She also admitted having made the conscious choice of leaving aside literary pursuits, preferring apparently to put forward Canada rather than her own literary talent (13).

In later years, she confided to a Scottish visitor that she could have chosen to write a "Belles Lettres" piece, which she said had been the choice of Susanna Moodie in 1852. Traill suggested in an aside to the visitor that "she and her husband […] could have published another melancholy story than Mrs Moodie who they seemed to say had rather drawn upon her imagination for some of her facts." These reflections go to show that the "colonial" author pondered on the composition of the original manuscript to meet the expectations and tastes of her British readers whom she saw as potentially quite varied. She explains at the end of the introduction that her book was designed for armchair travellers as well as middle-class emigrants:

The simple truth, founded entirely on personal knowledge of the facts related, is the basis of the work; to have had recourse to fiction might have rendered it more acceptable to many readers, but would have made it less useful to that class for whom it is especially intended. For those who, without intending to share in the privations and dangers of an emigrant's life, have a rational curiosity […] it is hoped that this little work will afford some amusement.(13)

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286 Carl Ballstadt et al., I Bless You in My Heart, op.cit., George B. Leith to his wife, summer 1853, p. 24.
Catharine Parr Traill's book was accepted and published by Charles Knight who edited the two series: "Library of Useful Knowledge" and "Library of Entertaining Knowledge". These were respectively launched in 1826 and 1828 for the Utilitarian Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, which was chaired by Lord Brougham. Lord Brougham was a friend of the "Canadian Party" in England. During the 1830s and early 1840s, he supported the campaign of the rebels in favour of responsible government.

Nonetheless, it will become obvious that however carefully Traill composed her work for her middle-class readers, she was "dispossessed" of the supervision of the manuscript when she sold it to Charles Knight. Then began the second stage of the production of the manuscript that Knight intended for educated mechanics, not for middle-class emigrants or armchair travellers in order to meet the political agenda of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (SDUK).

The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge

Charles Knight received Catharine Parr Traill's manuscript in the first months of 1835\textsuperscript{287}. Knight regularly placed advertisements in the press seeking manuscripts for his two collections for the SDUK. The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge had been founded in 1826 by a group of Utilitarians whose goal was to diffuse useful knowledge, i.e. "whatever sort of information necessary to multiply and spread the blessings of machinery". At the head of this movement was Dr Birbeck who initiated the movement in favour of education and literacy for mechanics at the beginning of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century in Glasgow. Lord Brougham joined the small group of social reformers in 1824 when Dr Birbeck having moved from Scotland to London was considering opening a Mechanics’ Institute there. Reformers believed that by bringing knowledge and reason to the workers,

\textsuperscript{287} Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, Papers of the Reading Committee for the Library of Entertaining Knowledge, June 2, 1835, London University College, special manuscript archives GB 0103 SDUK.
they would naturally support laissez-faire and abandon dangerous doctrines promoted by radicals. Catharine Parr and her sisters were acquainted with Dr Birbeck before she left for Canada and this might explain why Agnes Strickland sent her sister’s manuscript to Charles Knight.

The object of the new society had been "the imparting of useful information to all classes of the community, particularly to such as are unable to avail themselves of experienced teachers, or may prefer learning by themselves." The General Committee of the Society had sought to achieve this object by acting as the intermediary between authors and publishers in several different and even ambitious series of publications. Early works were designed to explain the mysteries of calico printing or iron smelting to operatives and mechanics, before moving on to treatises on economics, mathematics or geography. The books were "calculated to teach or rather to give any one the means of teaching himself", the society's prospectus explained. A small number of men of this class had begun to attend the Mechanics' Institutes after working hours where public lectures, usually delivered by Utilitarians, aimed at opening the mind of the workers. Jeremy Bentham had convinced his followers that the mob should receive some education based on principles of "usefulness", limiting the input given to the working class to hard facts and practical thoughts. Volumes were didactically edited so that no imaginative literature, romantic ideas or sources of distraction might generate in the working classes.

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289 "From my valued and lamented friend Dr Birbeck, in whose mouth the name of Lord Brougham was a household word, I had heard of such frequent instances of your Lordship's kindness of heart...", Traill to Lord Brougham, March 12, 1842, in Ballstadt et al., *I Bless You in My Heart, op.cit.*, p. 45.
290 Society's Prospectus for 1829, box 9. Members of the Committee included Lord Brougham, James Mill, Lord John Russell, Lord Althorp, Zachary Macaulay, Joseph Hume...
291 Other publishing firms, like John Murray's also began publishing treatises on the subject of literacy and education of the young, including the children of workers at the beginning of the 1830s. Murray started to issue books of "cheap knowledge" to satisfy this new social category of readers. His house for instance launched the "Family Library" collection in April 1829, in which there was no famous authors or distinctive titles but a series of "bread and butter" books as he called them, which was much criticized by Lord Brougham in the *Edinburgh Review.*
Charles Knight was hired by the General Committee of the SDUK to supervise the series of publications and to select manuscripts, which would be useful contributions to educate the minds of the lower-class readers. In 1827, Charles Knight first launched the "Library of Useful Knowledge" collection and in 1828, a second series, the "Library of Entertaining Knowledge", when he convinced the SDUK Committee that they should come around to considering poetry and some literature as valuable in terms of didactic power and moral usefulness. Catharine Parr Traill’s volume was selected for this series. Dry treatises were not selling well among the limited number of educated artisans and mechanics due to their "forbidding aspect" and so the SDUK sought to publish books offering some lighter reading while preserving the didactic purpose calculated to improve the mind of the humble readers. In this presentation of the new collection by Charles Knight, one recognizes the tension between amusing and instructing that Traill mentioned at the end of her introduction:

To remedy these defects, to render the systematic treatises on all branches accessible to every reader who desires to instruct himself, and at the same time to entice readers who have only and chiefly the wish to amuse themselves and make them learn something worth knowing, while they are chiefly bent on passing their time with a book.\textsuperscript{292}

The number of books issued in this collection reached a peak in the 1830s thanks to the circulating libraries. Indeed in the years following 1832, in the aftermath of the Great Reform Act and after several popular uprisings and the first Chartist petition in favour of universal suffrage, a movement began "towards improving the minds and skills of the artisans and factory workers."\textsuperscript{293} Charles Knight was a strong believer in instructing the labouring classes. In his memoirs, \textit{Passages of a Working Life}, he explained his ideas on the issue. Publishers needed to print abridged treatises or popular, instructive volumes for the labouring classes who had to "think, either to rise out of their own rank, or to be respectable amongst the class in which they were born." Knight seemed to be convinced,

\textsuperscript{292} SDUK's Report, May 1828.
\textsuperscript{293} Gettman, \textit{A Victorian Publisher}, \textit{op.cit.}, p.11
along with some members of the "Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge", of the possibility of social mobility, and even of some form of meritocracy in Britain for "deserving" workers, but with limited or restricted leeway as they could only rise in their own class. However, publishing for educated workers and the lower middle classes provided a substantial readership in the 1820s and 1830s, a time when Knight sought readers outside the traditional circles of "men of leisure and research" and reached out to the sons of the new professional families and those of the artisans.\textsuperscript{294} Charles Knight took stock of this new public whom publishers had to attract by any means possible, with one purpose in mind: to control its reading practices, to forge its "tastes", to promote literacy, in short to control the distribution of cultural power.

However this philanthropic venture foundered, as even the educated mechanics did not necessarily find any attraction or interest in this collection of works designed for "self-advancement". Knight merged the two series into one collection at the end of the 1830s under the title, "Library of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge" for obvious commercial purposes. However the collection, supported by the Society, still promoted "utilitarian" principles on political and economic issues as well as on colonization issues. However, the Society and Charles Knight misjudged the interest of this public, as well as the rate of literacy in the Kingdom. According to the financial records of the Society, they counted 515 annual subscribers in 1829 but the number fell to 49 in 1842\textsuperscript{295}. Over the same time period, sales kept falling. Complaints seemed to have been directed against the erratic publication of the treatises that were also too diverse in form and content\textsuperscript{296}.

The utilitarian principles of the second collection stated that the volumes should present useful information while entertaining the readers. The artificiality

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{294} Knight, Charles, \textit{Passages of a Working Life, during half a century with a prelude of early reminiscences}, London, Bradbury and Evans, vol.2, p. 68
\textsuperscript{295} Society's Treasurer's Book, (1827-1843), box. 86.
\textsuperscript{296} Society's Publication Committee, box. 9-12, Report for 1833-34 mentioning 12,000 copies sold altogether: "If more popular treatises were published with regularity the sale might be greatly increased, possibly by 5,000 copies a year." 
\end{footnotesize}
of the two irreconcilable principles was also found in Catharine Parr Traill's *Backwoods of Canada*. Apart from this aspect, her manuscript seems to have been misplaced in this collection. In her preface, Traill clearly stated that her manuscript had been composed for "the ladies who belong to the higher class of settlers." Placed in the utilitarian collection, the message designed by the author for a specific class of readers, seemed to be lost on a different readership. Besides, Charles Knight completed Traill's manuscript with appendices (statistical tables and land company instructions) which fitted his readership's needs and suited the utilitarian aim of his collection. In fact, Knight transformed Traill's original text into a platform for a "mere" emigration pamphlet designed for the working classes and supporting the SDUK political agenda on emigration.

If one pays attention to Charles Knight's political and social convictions, as well as those of the SDUK Utilitarian members, one can find the reasons behind the selection of Catharine Parr Traill's work for the Library of Entertaining Knowledge. Indeed, the work was said to be descriptive of "an emigrant's settlement in Canada". The Society's Publication Committee Report for 1835 mentions the circumstances in which *The Backwoods* was accepted by the Committee, whose members clearly followed Knight's recommendation:

Mr Knight stated that he had perused a work which had been transmitted to him by Mrs Traill containing a journal of her residence in the Back Settlements of Canada. He said that the work was very well executed and would in his opinion form a valuable addition to the Library of Entertaining Knowledge.

Resolved that it is expedient to have in the library of Entertaining Knowledge, a work descriptive of an Emigrant's Settlement and residence in Canada. That the scheme of this work be referred to Mr Ker and Mr Falconer.

As an adamant Utilitarian, Knight's admiration for Bentham and Chadwick was reflected in his position on emigration. Both men had denounced the expediency of "pauper shovelling" to Canada as practiced by the Secretary to the

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297 Catharine Parr Traill, *The Backwoods of Canada*, op. cit., p.9
298 SDUK, Publication Committee, entry for June 2, 1835, box. 9.
Colonies in the 1820s and 1830s. Instead they supported principles put forward by prominent colonial reformers, like Wakefield, in order to solve rampant poverty in Britain caused by unemployment in the countryside and the domestic system. Utilitarians adopted the principle of promoting assisted emigration of hard-working labourers to the colonies. This did not mean that the state had to cover their transportation and settlement in Canada but that hard-working English labourers could see their journey and first four years in the Bush paid for them, in the form of a grant or a loan, which they would defray by instalment. As a result, Britain and Canada would see their societies improve morally and economically as radical threats would recede with promises of improved life and employment for the industrious lower classes. In earlier drafts of the New Poor Law, a typical utilitarian piece of legislature voted in 1834, Edwin Chadwick, - Jeremy Bentham's former *amanuensis* and chairman of the New Poor Law Commission since its creation in 1832 -, had suggested Britain should promote emigration to the British colonies through parish schemes. The poor rate collected by overseers in each parish could be used for this purpose and organised emigration of industrious labourers and their families to Canada would be supervised by the parish authorities. Labourers in turn would reimburse the parish once they were established on cleared land after 4 or 5 years\(^{299}\). The overall cost had been estimated at £60 per family.

In 1835 when Traill's manuscript came to Charles Knight's attention, it appealed to the SDUK reading committee as the representation of Canada it conveyed, particularly the passages about Canada being suited to hard-working emigrants, corresponded to the utilitarian and reformers' views promoted by the New Poor Law and the SDUK. In previous travel narratives, Canada had gained the reputation of being "the poor man's country" in the mind of the British public, educated or not. The country's prospects having been regularly denigrated by travellers; Canada's reputation deterred even poor industrious people, from

settling or from being transported to the backwoods. Travelogues like Frances Wright’s, written in the 1820s, had described the Canadian wilderness as peopled with wretched families abandoned by Britain and exploited by land speculators. Catharine Parr Traill’s narrative provided a counter-example, proving that things were changing in Canada.

Traill’s personal narrative pointed to the positive results of emigration for families. She also indicated that new colonial policies advocated by colonial reformers and voted by the Whig government in office, were gradually transforming the colonies. Lord Brougham himself had strongly campaigned in favour of colonial control over land sales. As a consequence, Colonial Land Sales had been regulated in 1831. This meant that absentee landlords, those "land jobbers" denounced by Frances Wright and Robert Gourlay, were not given access to huge tracts of land as before. Land grants were still given upon the condition that the land should be cleared within three or four years. Hard-working labourers could easily find a plot of land in Upper Canada by means of a land grant or at auction price, after having hired themselves out for a few years as farm hands. Bringing "indentured" labour to the Canadian colonies, fixing the price of land at a "reasonable price", were the recommendations that Edward Gibbon Wakefield had publicized in England and America as early as 1833. The Wakefield scheme had seduced many Utilitarians who now saw in emigration an opportunity for "indentured servants" to settle in Canada where they would progress and rise, thanks to hard work and education. For this purpose, the representations of Canada circulating in the metropolis had to be improved and even radically changed to appeal to the lower classes. In the SDUK Committee's Report in 1833, to the question: "How to render emigration desirable as an outlet for the English labourer?" one member replied by stating "a great deal will depend upon how the case is stated to them." Utilitarian publisher Charles Knight tackled this task. Catharine Parr Traill's manuscript, which represented Canada in a better light, "a

301 SDUK Committee Report, May 1833, the member was Mr Taylor.
fair picture of the state of emigration than in the previous travel accounts, seemed to serve his agenda.

It seems that Traill's representation of Canada as a land for the decent hard working educated labourer, as depicted in *The Backwoods*, attracted Charles Knight. Henry Ker, who was in charge of reading and editing Traill's text, confirmed Knight's first impression on the text in his report of November 17, 1835:

> I return the book on Canada. It appears to me lovely and interesting and would be useful, as certainly the author is apparently writing to give a fair picture of the state of emigration. I do not know for what series. It is rather below the sort of books we have had in the Entertaining Knowledge Library. I have also made one or two notes on the Canada book. There are some errors.

However, Ker and Knight's reading of the text must have been superficial as they seem to have missed the actual public targeted by the female author even though she was quite explicit on the class of readers she had in mind, the educated middle-classes. Did Knight overlook this aspect of the work or did he try to counter Traill's representation of Canada as a land for the middle classes, preferring to extend this too-exclusive public to a larger audience? The limited information carried by the SDUK archives does not allow for any definite conclusion on this point. We can only observe that Knight intervened in the production stage and stripped the text of its political and class-oriented message.

In his memoirs, Knight recalls the difficulties members of the Society of the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge encountered in their tours of new industrial centres in order to meet manufacturers and the ruling bourgeoisie. There they organized meetings to convert them to emigration schemes that combined Wakefield's principles and their own utilitarian ones. During these public debates, some SDUK members found their views on the colonies contradicted by the

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302 Henry Ker to Charles Knight, November 17, 1835, SDUK Letters and Reports, 1834-1845, vol. 31-32.
discourse of local philanthropic societies. Such was the case of James Loch, a friend of Knight's, as reported by the publisher in his memoirs: "He had a hard battle to sustain against that class of philanthropists who contended that the removal of a wretched cottier tenantry by emigration, to make room for the influence of capital, was harsh and unfeeling." Therefore, using a series of letters written by a sensitive gentlewoman that showed that the colonies were not as harsh and inhumane as they used to be depicted, would be a great help in winning over philanthropists and convincing them that they should encourage the emigration of the lower-classes. As one can see, Knight's advocacy was not concerned with philanthropy or charity, but it was definitely connected to the promotion of Bentham's "pain and pleasure principles". Removing lower-class emigrants from Britain would serve the cause of the imperial centre, at home and abroad. Catharine Parr Traill never promoted Bentham's principles, quite the contrary; she attacked the false representations that circulated in the metropolis presenting Canada as a land of opportunity for all. It seems however that her description of Canada suited a campaign that would advocate emigration of the labouring classes to the British colonies. Traill's book seems to have been used by Knight to promote political ideas that did not really reflect Traill's overall message.

Knight made no secret of the way books selected for his collections were formatted and revised to fit the didactic purpose of the publisher and the wishes of the Board Members of the Society, including Lord Brougham, a friend of Canada and of the French Canadians. The following quote is rather long but very telling as it reveals the new constraints imposed by the publisher on his authors and the manner in which he formatted the manuscripts selected to match the Society's utilitarian agenda in the mid-1830s. Readers needed to be attracted by the topic of the volumes to buy them or to borrow them from circulating libraries. However, Knight did not totally take into account the wishes of the reading public,

304 Knight, *Passages in the Working Life of...*, op.cit., p.131
305 Knight, *Passages*, op.cit, p.126-127.
suggesting that his educated mechanics' tastes must be oriented by his collection and not the reverse. This is how he describes his "superintendence".

From the time when the Society commenced a real "superintendence" of works for the people – when it assisted by diligent revision and friendly inquiry the services of its editors – […] accuracy was forced upon elementary books as the rule and not the exception. Books professedly "entertaining" were to be founded upon exact information and their authorities invariably indicated. No doubt this superintendence in some degree interfered with the free course of original composition and imparted somewhat of the utilitarian character to everything produced. But it was the only course by which a new aspect could be given to cheap literature by showing that the great principles of excellence were common to all books, whether for the learned or the uniformed.306

Catharine Parr Traill's was among the six biographies and life narratives that were selected by the members of the Society of Diffusion of Useful Knowledge and published by Knight between 1827 and 1843. Traill's work, described as a "cheap literature" book – referring to the small price as they were sold for 4s. 3d. – underwent the necessary revisions and transformations mentioned by Knight above. In short, her text was "superintended" and had to pass muster before the "gate keepers"307 of the SDUK, in this instance Henry Ker and Thomas Falconer, members of the reading committee. Knight agreed that his superintendence "in some degree interfered with the free course of original composition".

.Formatting the first "colonial" book written by a woman

The SDUK papers for 1833-1835 show that Knight was desperate for new manuscripts and he rushed Catharine Parr Traill's text into publication. There seems to be no trace left of any correspondence exchanged between Traill, her editors Ker and Falconer or with Knight himself, with the exception of a few notes regarding the purchase of the manuscript. The original draft was quite

306 Knight, Ibid, p.128 (my italics)
"rough" in a way, as we know that Traill had written her manuscript in a few months, with no "cosmetic efforts." Similarly, Knight did not take time to improve the text as he only intended to publish another volume for his collection. He was not looking for a literary masterpiece but for a useful guide for working class emigrants. At that stage, the SDUK archives did not contain any proof of interaction or even contact between the publisher and the female writer. However, the text had been corrected by the reader as a few days after having received the two readers' reports on Traill's manuscript, the Committee gave its final approval, agreeing on the corrections brought to the manuscript by Henry Ker:

A report was read from Mr Ker upon Mrs Traill's "Letters from the Backwoods"; Mr Falconer likewise reported upon it. The work was adopted subject to the corrections suggested by Mr Ker. Let the General Committee be recommended to pay Mrs Traill £100 for the volume.\(^{308}\)

Clearly, as editor in chief, Charles Knight took possession of the manuscript originally entitled "Letters from the Backwoods", modified the so-called “errors” his readers suggested should be corrected in the text, changed the title, added appendices and in fact sent a lump sum of £110 to Agnes Strickland. It was strictly a business deal. In comparison, Harriet Martineau received three payments of £75 for her sociological treatise *How to Observe Morals and Manners*.\(^{309}\) According to Gaye Tuchman, authors were paid between £50 and £100 for what was described as minor manuscripts in the 1840s. This sum would have helped the author to support a middle-class family for a year.\(^{310}\)

Knight must have accepted Traill's manuscript for the "exact information" it provided and for its "great principles of excellence" which were common to all the books Knight selected for the collection. Nonetheless, his "superintendence" of *The Backwoods* was total as there was no time to communicate with the author, who lived in the colonial margins, or with her agent in London in order to debate

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\(^{308}\) SDUK, Publication Committee Report, December 1, 1835, p. 340.
\(^{309}\) SDUK, Treasurer's Book, 1827-43.
over formatting or changing the content of the manuscript. True to his editorial supervision, Knight altered some elements of the book in order to give "a new aspect" to it. According to the editing principles laid out above, Knight began by adding to the title chosen by Traill a subtitle that indicated "the authority" of the author in the field.

In order to establish Traill's authority, Knight provided a subtitle to the anonymously published *Backwoods of Canada* that announced the female writer's credentials: *Being Letters from the Wife of an Emigrant Officer Illustrative of the Domestic Economy of British America*. The name of the author did not appear on the cover of the first 250 issues. However, the subtitle provided indications on the authoritative nature of her text on colonial matters. Her married status provided her with some moral authority derived more particularly from her husband's social and professional status. The authoress's husband was an "Officer", i.e. he embodied authority and respect which inevitably included his wife who necessarily wrote under his control, maintaining the authoress in some extended "domestic obedience". This officer must have made the wise choice of bringing his family to Canada to further his duty for the Empire. The authoress is presented as "a lady". Her middle-class status establishes her moral ascendency on the lower-class readers.

Being the wife of a British officer confirmed the idea that her text provided "exact information" as this was one of Knight's prerequisites. British officers were known for their talent of observation and accuracy. Traill's work was described as a series of letters. The letters provided immediacy and light reading, as opposed to a denser text like Martineau's treatise *How to Observe Morals and Manners*. In her "cheap literature" piece, Traill provided information about "the domestic economy" of the *Backwoods*, which to Knight meant her domestic sphere.

Knight's "superintendence" also led him to further interfere "with the free course of original composition" by adding on appendices with a list of statistics.

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and tables providing practical information on emigration. With these addenda, true to his own recommendations, Knight "imparted somewhat of the utilitarian character to everything produced." Knight's marginalia necessarily influenced and transformed the overall meaning of the manuscript. Traill never provided the statistical tables the readers found at the end of the book. Quite the contrary, she had criticized William Cattermole and other so-called emigrants' narratives for being mere propaganda designed by land speculators. Indeed Traill had challenged and tackled the imperial "production of knowledge" by male authors. She denounced the misrepresentations circulating among the landowners and land companies that used emigration pamphlets to sell Canada to naïve emigrants. Unlike authors who preferred representing Canada in high-flowing prose, as "a land flowing with milk and honey, where comfort and affluence may be obtained with little exertion", she had set herself apart by insisting on the "realistic" and true representation of the new colonies by her "woman's pen alone." The tables included by Knight were misleading for vulnerable British emigrants. The addition of these marginalia, according to Shari Benstock, "reflect on the text" and "break down the semblance of a carefully controlled textual voice." Knight, in fact, countered Traill's representation of Canada as a land of hard work, by sinking it under a mass of imperial information that suited the SPUK's agenda.

In Appendix B, Knight provided lists of statistics that concerned available Crown Lands and price per acre in Lower and Upper Canada, as well as indications on the number of emigrants who had left the British shores for Canada in the previous years. These tables were then followed by advertisements for the Canada Company and the British American Land Company, both addresses being provided for the readers who wished to contact the agents. In addition, the list of tables included specifics on: "Sales and grants of Crown Lands along with 'official information' circulated by emigration agents", then "Information for

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314 Shari Benstock, "At the margin of discourse: footnotes in the fictional text", PMLA, 98 (March 1983), 204-225. p.204.
Feminine Experience in the Margins of Empire

Le Jeune

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emigrants". The introductory note to Appendix B was clear. The publisher stated
that "in the wish to render this work of more practical value to persons desiring to
emigrate, some official information is subjoined.315" Knight intended these
addenda for the working classes who were being encouraged to emigrate to
Canada. Knight also had in mind the "parish authorities and landed proprietors"
wishing to set up an emigration scheme from "their respective districts. 316" In fact,
one of the appendices had been previously published for this purpose by Knight
himself, in 1832317, during the Poor Law Commission inquiries. However, no
guarantee was provided for the reader that these figures for 1832 were still
accurate in 1836. Traill's manuscript literally supported Knight's and the SPUK's
emigration propaganda.
Did Knight take time to read the first "letters" which constituted Traill's
manuscript? There, Traill provided no practical information for the lower classes,
quite the contrary. In the first pages of the narrative, Traill presented herself as a
member of the elite in Canada. She even wrote some asides to her mother on the
labouring classes. For instance, in Letter I, Traill boasted about travelling to
Canada on The Laurel, which "is not a regular passenger-ship, which [I] consider
an advantage, for what we lose in amusement and variety we assuredly gained in
comfort.318" A few lines down, she described her cabin and her luxury furniture
and fixtures. Traill was clearly addressing middle-class female readers. Her
remarks on the poorer classes that emigrated on other boats were condescending
and provided no helpful tips even to the educated mechanics. For instance, in
Letter II, she described the landing of groups of emigrants whom she sketched "to
amuse" herself: "We have already seen the landing of the passengers of three
emigrant ships. You may imagine yourself looking on a fair or crowded market,
clothes waving in the wind or spread out on the earth, chests, bundles, baskets,
315

Traill, The Backwoods, op.cit p. 263.
317
A footnote mentions that the information had been published in 1832, by His Majesty's
Commissioners for Emigration, (with reference to the emigration clause of the Poor Laws
Amendment Act), Charles Knight had been the publisher then.
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Ibid , p. 15
316


men, women and children, asleep or basking in the sun […] As for the rest of the volume, Traill never departs from her middle-class status when she puts forward their hardship in the woods.

This is the first instance of an editor's "manipulation" of a "colonial" manuscript, from which women writers like Traill, as well as Moodie later on, were dispossessed. Knight's meddling with the original composition promoted his own perception of Canada, which he seemed to superimpose over the woman writer's text. Further, by not indicating the name of the author on the cover of the book, Knight deprived Traill of the opportunity of speaking in her own words and voice. Philippe Lejeune, in *On Autobiography*, notes that the "proper naming of the text has particular importance in thinking about autobiographical writing", as it is part of the "autobiographical pact" signed between the authoress and her readers. It marks the "ownership of one's self as property", as well as the "coherence of textual identity". In this editorial presentation of the volume, Traill's identity was limited to that of the wife of a British officer writing under the restriction of domestic authority.

Knight's editorial supervision of the gentlewoman's text also contributed to further "break down the semblance of a carefully controlled textual voice", as noted above by Shari Benstock. Indeed, the text is dotted with footnotes that bear the editor's signature (Ed.). They serve to add information which, according to the editor, the authoress "might not have had in her possession at the time of writing", or that only became available to her after he received the manuscript. A few footnotes also refer to information that was available only to a person living in the metropolis where information was accessible in Parliamentary papers or through the Colonial Office for instance. There, the readers were clearly reminded that

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321 For instance p. 38-39 where the editor adds in several footnotes a more accurate description of Montreal than the one apparently provided by Mrs Traill, noting "some excellent wharfs have since been completed", or "the following description of Montreal is given by Mc Gregor in his
the female author's status was "colonial" while the editor held information directly from the imperial source. At times, the editor also used his male authority to correct some typical feminine remarks expressed by the authoress or when she made "errors", which might have meant simply differing in her statements from travel accounts provided by prominent men. Other instances of these intrusive marginalia corrected the authoress's lack of accuracy when quoting figures or describing Canadian places for instance.

Last but not least, Charles Knight went to a London firm to request illustrations for the Backwoods of Canada, which explains why Catharine Parr Traill complained years later about “the wretched prints many of them miserable reprints from the Penny Magazine and not one descriptive of Canadian scenery.” Those illustrations were for the most part irrelevant; they had a tenuous connection with the words of the author, and generally speaking they were misleading. Indeed three of the illustrations thus provided were mere clichés about Canada, invented by an English illustrator, which reflected tame views to which English readers were already accustomed. The first sketches included “the Falls of Montmorenci” near Quebec, which Mrs Traill never saw, as well as a typical winter scene representing a middle-class couple enjoying a “sleigh ride” while leisurely visiting the country. The Traills hardly had the time to enjoy such pleasurable winter trips. Canada’s native nature that Catharine Parr Traill was so able to draw and sketch otherwise, having attached some plates to the original manuscript (as she mentioned it in Letter XIV), were presented in these illustrations as more or less the same as English animals or English flora. While Traill’s original illustrations were not included in the final text, the publisher

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*British America […]" or "It is impossible (says Mr Talbot in his Five Years' Residence) to walk the streets of Montreal on a Sunday […]"*

322 For instance when the narrator tries to describe the phenomenon of static electricity which they experienced in cold winter nights when she undressed or combed her hair. The editor adds a blunt footnote that indicates his impatience when reading such feminine attempts at describing a scientific phenomenon: "This phenomenon is common enough everywhere when the air is very dry. – Ed.", p. 127.

323 P. 179, the editor quotes figures from the North West Company census of Indian tribes.

preferred to provide drawings vaguely inspired by Traill’s narrative. The “bull frog” looked like a regular English toad, the “blue bird”, which Traill admired as a native of the Canadian woods, is depicted as an ordinary bird... As for Traill’s description of her interaction with the natives who resided near her log house (in Letter X), two unappealing illustrations were added. The first one represented “Papooses” hanging in large baskets – in which the children look old enough to be walking on their own -, the second one was placed before the table of contents representing a native chief, “Peter the chief”. The illustrator described the native man with white even features, dressed in a mismatched accoutrement of western clothes, looking like a Chelsea pensioner, complete with headgear composed of a woollen cap and a hanging feather.

These illustrations evoked Canada seen through English eyes. Catharine Parr Traill was denied the use of her own sketches. Besides, the representation of Upper Canada that she generally conveyed in the book, that of dense woods, of hardly cleared fields dotted with black stumps, was contradicted by the illustrations provided in the published volume. Furthering the use of Traill’s text as a support for utilitarian emigration propaganda, the illustrator represented cleared fields in “newly cleared lands”, idealized sceneries where sportsmen shot deer and families enjoyed a life of leisure and sleigh rides, before going back to their neat “log cabin” in a clearing at the end of an open “road through a pine forest” where linen was hung to dry outside the home by a woman.

Charles Knight was therefore extremely and pervasively present throughout the narrative, covering the authorial voice with his editorial one. His assertive tone is backed up by his metropolitan position where the source of accurate and up-to-date knowledge, as well as the imperial culture about the colonies was supposed to be found, or was forged if necessary.
In fact, the way Knight promoted this first personal narrative about Canada written by a woman betrays the perception and expectations that the publisher and the reading public had about books on and from the white colonial world. The overall presentation of the manuscript by Knight enables us to consider the representation of Canada the publisher wished to convey to the educated mechanics whom the Society had in mind. Knight's catalogue was intended to be circulated among the libraries that had just started to operate in some main cities. The book was promoted by Knight as an emigration guide, whose readers would range from the lower classes to the lower middle classes. Knight fashioned Catharine Parr Traill's text into a "utilitarian" emigration pamphlet providing information on "the domestic economy of British America". This had not been the intention of the author herself. Traill experienced the first drawbacks of her new status, that of "colonial" female author. Because of her isolation in the margins of Empire, pursuing a career in the metropolis in the fierce world of publishers, at the heart of literary patriarchy, implied a form of dispossession from her own text. Whitlock notes that elements such as "subject, reader, negotiation and authorization" become even more central in autobiography writing when produced by women in a colonial context. Gaye Tuchman observes in Edging Women Out that when publishers had paid for a manuscript, they felt free to alter the book, "if a book had not sold well under one title, some publishers could quickly reissue it under another for instance." Besides, "the literary world assumed that women who wrote did so because they needed the money." Knight had taken possession of Traill's manuscript under those terms.

According to Carl Ballstadt, Catharine Parr Traill never saw any of the English issues of her manuscript before the first pirated version of The Backwoods started to circulate in North America in 1840. From what can be gathered from

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325 Whitlock, The Intimate Empire, op.cit., p. 9.
326 Tuchman, Edging Women Out, op.cit., p. 36.
letters Catharine Parr Traill or Susanna Moodie wrote to friends in England after the publication of *The Backwoods*, the sisters complained about the lack of emolument received by Traill in spite of the apparent public success of the book (about which they read in letters from home). The contract signed between Traill and Knight was very basic but no different from other contracts in the 1830s. It was sealed in a spirit that was not devoid of mercantile interest on the part of the publisher. In exchange for a lump sum of money, £110, Traill sold her manuscript and copyright to Knight, via Agnes Strickland. Thereby, she relinquished the manuscript to him as editor and publisher and she lost her editorial control over it. Susanna Moodie apparently sent a letter to Sir George Arthur, the new Upper Canada governor in December 1838 to intercede in her sister's favour. In this letter, she exposed the desperate situation her sister was in, insisting on the fact that she had felt cheated of her authorial authority by Charles Knight. Susanna Moodie wrote: "*[The Backwoods of Canada]*, which has brought great emolument to the publishers, has done little towards administering to the wants of the poor Author who is struggling in the Backwoods on a limited income, with four infant children and contending with difficulties which would scarce be credited by Your Excellency."

In spite of the popularity of the book, which sold for 4s. a piece, Traill received no further payments from Knight on reprints. In a letter which the English gentlewoman "exiled in Canada" (as Traill presented herself) wrote to Lord Brougham, the chairman of the Society for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge, in March 1842, she inquired after the possibility of collecting some royalties on the several editions of her volume: "I have been assured by many persons that the little book has met with much attention, and has passed through

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several editions.\textsuperscript{328} This letter sent six years after the first publication of *The Backwoods of Canada* evidenced the lack of communication between author and publisher. In this pleading letter to Brougham\textsuperscript{329}, Traill referred to the fact that Agnes Strickland, who was working for Henry Colburn at the time, had been looking after her sister's interest. The letter reflects Traill's powerlessness as she is "submitting" her case "to one whose power to assist the distressed is only surpassed by his will to benefit and uphold":

> It is now some years ago, since the gentlemen of the Committee for promoting "Useful Knowledge" honoured me by their approbation of my "Backwoods of Canada" which as you are aware, now forms one of the latter volumes of Knight's "Library of Entertaining Knowledge" – For the copyright of this work, I received the sum of £110; and Mr Knight gave my sister Miss Agnes Strickland reason to hope that the Committee would in all probability grant an additional sum for succeeding editions.

In this letter to Brougham, Traill also referred to the readers she believed her volume had appealed to. She described them as "the talented and the wealthy". We know that this did not really correspond to the reading public that Knight had intended to attract. But Traill's sisters in the metropolis had indicated that her book was circulating among the educated public. This would explain the seven editions the book had gone through between 1836 and 1854.

In response to Traill's pleading, the Society Committee forwarded her £15 through Agnes Strickland\textsuperscript{330}. However, the feeling that she had been used by the SPUK because of her "marginal" or "colonial" situation remained a bone of contention with Catharine Parr Traill. Traill eventually wrote a letter to the Queen on 26 March 1854, in which she petitioned her\textsuperscript{331}. We gather from the begging tone used by Traill in her letters of solicitation that she felt totally dispossessed of

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{328} Ballstadt et al., *I Bless you in My Hear*, Letter 8, Traill to Lord Brougham, Peterborough, March 12, 1842, p.45 (her italics)

\textsuperscript{329} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{330} Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge's *Letters 1827-1843*. Two letters are recorded: one from Agnes Strickland thanking the Committee for offering £15 to Mrs Traill paid through the Canada Land Company (November 22, 1842) as well as a letter from Mrs Traill herself acknowledging the receipt of £15 and thanking the Committee (January 11, 1842).

\textsuperscript{331} Ballstadt et. al., *I Bless You in my Heart*, op.cit., Letter 27, p. 90.}
her manuscripts which, by then, had been copied in America but also in England. Traill introduced herself to the Queen as "authoress of the Backwoods of Canada and Canadian Crusoes and other works." She insisted on the fact that she had launched into a writing career from the colonial world as a form of colonial mission upheld by "a devoted family" and "a dutiful servant":

Whereas your Majesty's petitioner having spent many years of her life labouring with her pen for the advancement of your province in Canada, the interest of which […] she has materially served; but has reaped to herself and family no reward beyond a literary reputation.

The "career" of the little book seemed to have gained some momentum on its own, considering the fact that it did not attract much notice in literary periodicals, with the exception of a short review in The Athenaeum, to which periodical Agnes and Eliza Strickland were regular contributors in the 1830s. The fact that it was first published anonymously and presented as yet another "resident's accounts" might not have solicited any interest from reviewers. I am tempted to believe that periodical reviewers had not considered the book because it was not designed for a middle-class reading public. The SPUK had acquired the reputation of being too didactical or dogmatic for the middle-class audience. Contrary to more "prestigious" collections launched by other publishing houses, Knight and the SPUK Committee had agreed that they could not spend any money on promoting each and every volume. Instead, Lord Brougham, a regular contributor to the Edinburgh Review wrote monthly accounts of the progress of the SPUK, listing and praising a few of the titles selected by the Committee, - though apparently not by anonymous female writers. The Backwoods seemed to have achieved quite a confidential career among middle-class women where the book was mostly read in home circles. They purchased it for its useful information on emigration to Canada. Female middle-class emigrants, whose number reached a peak in the 1840s, formed the bulk of her readers. This can be gathered by the

332 Traill to Lord Brougham, Peterborough, March 12, 1842, p.45 (her emphasis).
number of cross-references to Traill's *Backwoods* in private papers and diaries written in Canada, as shall be seen in chapter six.

What seems surprising is the discrepancy between the knowledge that Traill had of her public, Knight's targeted readers, and the actual reception the book received among the Victorian readers. However, by 1842, in spite of the good reception her work had received, Traill had not managed to sell a sequel to *The Backwoods*, not even to the SDUK though the pending manuscript was a piece on natural history. She mentioned it to Lord Brougham in March 1842:

> I had hoped to have added something to our scanty income by means of my pen, but in this also I have been disappointed. A MS Journal embracing many subjects connected with the natural history of the Canadian forest, had not the good fortune to meet with a publisher and still remains a dead letter in my sister's hands.\(^{334}\)

Eventually, in 1854, Charles Knight, now directing his own publishing house, asked Catharine Parr Traill to write a popular version of *The Backwoods* as a guidebook: *The Female Emigrant's Guide*\(^{335}\). The book was later published in Canada under the larger title *The Canadian Settler's Guide*\(^{336}\), designed specifically for the lower classes and handed over to them upon arrival in Canada. At that stage, Catharine Parr Traill still distinguished her early volume, *The Backwoods*, written for the educated middle-classes, from the later version for the uneducated masses. Traill considered her *Guide* as a marginal work in her literary career and clearly stated in her introduction that she had put no effort into producing it as the volume was commissioned by Knight and this time designed openly for a less educated group of readers.

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\(^{334}\) Traill to Lord Brougham, Peterborough, March 12, 1842, p.45


\(^{336}\) A title chosen by Reverend Henry Payne Hope, publisher and editor of the Old Countryman, a Toronto-based newspaper, who had first seen some commercial potential in her *Guide*, after he had published some of her short stories. The book was published by Hope in 1855. Ballstadt *et al.* believe that Catharine Parr Traill did not receive the £100 which had been settled on from Hope even though the work went through numerous editions. The book had been purchased in bulk by the Department of Agriculture in Upper Canada for intending emigrants. The book was also published in Britain in 1859 but Hope probably benefited from the transaction, not Traill. Carl Ballstadt *et.al.*, *I Bless You in my Heart*, op.cit., p.24.
It is now twenty years ago since I wrote a work with the view of preparing females of my own class more particularly… This book was entitled Letters from the Backwoods of Canada and made one of the volumes in Knight's Library of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge", and was I believe, well received by the public.\(^{337}\)

Traill then also blandly stated in her preface to the Guide that she had made no literary effort, stating that the book was intended "more particularly for the wives and daughters of the small farmers, and a part of it also addressed to the wives of the labourer and the mechanics" and as a consequence "I aimed at no beauty of style.\(^{338}\)"

Traill's desperate efforts to collect her monies reveal that publishing this "colonial" book at the heart of the metropolis was a contingency that also weighed on the composition of the book. Pressing Brougham to grant her some money, she had exposed the vulnerability and poverty that had been the lot of her family in the woods.

If your Lordship has ever honoured the Backwoods with a perusal and has felt any interest awakened in your heart for the authoress, you will perhaps learn with regret that while her little volume is read with pleasure by the talented and the wealthy, the writer and her infant family now increased by five helpless children, is struggling with poverty and oppressed by many cares.\(^{339}\)

She clearly perceived her "colonial" position in the larger Empire away from the high culture of the imperial centre. She provided a modest representation of her "colonial" self to the Committee, relegating her own work and herself to where she felt she now belonged "I'm trespassing upon your time my Lord – time too precious to be wasted upon an obscure and unknown individual.\(^{340}\)" Traill was clearly aware that the illusion of a vast cultured English Empire in which she and her sister had somehow believed they still belonged, did not exist in the minds of the Victorian public. The two worlds formed by the metropolis and the margins

\(^{337}\) Ibid, p. xi.


\(^{339}\) Traill to Lord Brougham, Peterborough, March 12, 1842, op.cit.

\(^{340}\) Traill to Lord Brougham, Peterborough, March 12, 1842, p.45, op.cit. (my italics).
were clearly separated along cultural lines. Canada could never become the seat of high English culture and the two worlds were slowly drifting apart, to the point that Catharine Parr Traill’s Canadian tale, *Lady Mary and her Nurse*, sent to her sisters for publication in England in 1856, needed much substantial revision and adaptation in their hands as, “though the work is very interesting”, her volume was “very imperfect in construction and there was an immensity to do to fit it for an English public.”

**The publishing life and fate of the first imperial narrative on Canada**

The first books in which North America was represented by a woman’s pen seemed to have been a real commercial boon for publishers in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. For instance, Harriet Martineau boasted in her *Autobiography* about having been approached by several publishers before she even left England, soliciting from her an exclusive contract for her American travel narratives. Then the day her return to England was announced in *The Morning Chronicle*, Martineau amusingly described Richard Bentley, Henry Colburn and Mr Saunders, all lining up in her drawing room to obtain her manuscript.

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341 In his editing of Traill's original manuscript of *Canadian Crusoes* for the Centre for Editing Early Canadian Texts project, Rupert Schieder underlines the numerous difficulties encountered by Catharine Parr Traill to publish her text in England. Her situation as a colonist in Canada disadvantaged her as hard bargains could only be driven with publishers by harassing them regularly. Her sister Agnes managed to do it for her up until the time she died in 1874. However Traill once interacted directly with the publisher Hall frustrated by the slowness with which her sister seemed to deal with Hall and Virtue to supervise a second edition of *Canadian Crusoes*. The result was a disastrous contract as she received half the sum her sister Agnes had originally asked. After Agnes' death, Traill was left on her own and she also struck an unadvantageous deal with publisher Nelson in Edinburgh who liberally transformed her original manuscript, suppressing pages and footnotes and changing its title without consulting the author. See Schieder, Rupert ed., *Canadian Crusoes, A Tale of Rice Lake Plains*, CEET collection, Ottawa, Carleton University Press, 1986, p. xlii.


343 “I declined the offer made before I left home to obtain an advance of £500 from a publisher, who would be glad thus to secure the book. Mr Murray also sent me a message through a mutual friend, intimating his wish to publish my travels upon my return.”, Harriet Martineau, *Autobiography*, (1877), London, Virago Press, 1983, vol. 2, p. 93.

Anna Jameson was clearly not as famous as Harriet Martineau in 1837, nonetheless, the first professional female author to devote an almost entire travelogue to Canada succeeded in taking advantage of the Canada mania and of the contemporary colonial debate to make the most of her manuscript, which went through several editions and was released under two different titles between 1838 and 1852. Anna Jameson was an astute woman when it came to negotiating her author's rights and emoluments with publishers. As opposed to Catharine Parr Traill who lived in the margins of Empire and had not therefore been able to negotiate a proper contract herself, Jameson, a shrewd professional writer, with no marital income to support her beside her own earnings, managed to sign rewarding contracts with publishing firms. Her manuscripts on literature, history, travel or art history were successively and successfully published by most of the prominent publishing houses in London over the four decades spanned by her career. This clearly shows her knowledge of the masculine publishing microcosm. The catalogues of Henry Colburn, Otley and Saunders, John Murray, Richard Bentley and finally Longmans all featured one or two of Anna Jameson's texts between 1826 and 1859. What is more, she never sold any of her manuscripts to these publishers, a wise move that enabled her to reissue some of her texts with different publishers after slight or major alterations. Her “Canada book”, as Jameson usually referred to her own book, was thus revised and shortened and reprinted under a different title, Sketches in Canada and Rambles among the Red Men, in 1851, at the request of Longman publishing firm, to match their new collection of reprints for “rail-road travel literature.”

Canada as a backcloth to Jameson’s professional writing

In her private letters, Anna Jameson made clear to her close friends that she had set her mind on writing a book during her stay in Canada. To her German

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friend Otilie, she declared her intentions of secluding herself in her Canadian home to write, in the country where “the winters are frightfully severe.” She gathered this impression from reading Catharine Parr Traill’s narrative, whose account of winters was “enough to give one cold, only to read it.” For that purpose, Jameson took most of her German books on board the boat to Canada and she set to work on a book on “some German criticism” upon her arrival in December 1837. By June 1837, Jameson wrote to Otilie to tell her she had already “written much” of her new book which at this stage hardly contained any Canadian features with the exception of the account of her horrible winter visit to Niagara. In the same letter, Anna Jameson assured her German friend that she intended to make money out of the book: “On my return to England, I must work very hard, I want money for my sisters, as well as you and I must get it somewhere. My head is full of things, but to write I must have peace and leisure.” It seems that the actual German volume was abandoned for several months afterwards as, in June 1837, Jameson set out for her Summer Rambles to the backwoods of Upper Canada en route to the Red Men’s country. Canada then caught her attention: “There is so much to see, so much knowledge to be gained and noted that I am obliged to attend to present objects and lay aside my writing for the present.” Upon her return from her journey with the natives, Jameson wrote home that she had the intention of transforming her experience into a manuscript with her public in mind:

I have had such adventures and seen such strange things as never yet were rehearsed in prose and verse, and for the good of the public, thinking it a shame to keep these wonders only to make my hair stand on end, I am just going to make a book and print it forthwith.

By October 1837 Anna Jameson, now in New York, while waiting for her separation settlement to be finalized and after having received some

347 Jameson to Otilie Von Goethe, Portsmouth, October 1, 1836.
348 Jameson to Otilie Von Goethe, Toronto, June 1, 1837.
349 Ibid., p. 93.
350 Jameson to her family, Toronto, August 17, 1837, quoted in Thomas, Love and Work Enough, op. cit., p. 118.
recommendations from her American friends, changed her mind on the content of the book she was going to compose. Her visit among the Red Men of Canada being quite unique at the time, she confirmed her wish to write about her “Indian adventures” indicating to Ottilie that her German criticism was less relevant than her personal notes on Canada: “My journal or at least the spirit of it, will be published and I hope soon.351”

She acknowledged the help she received from Captain Marryat whom she met through Catharine Sedgwick while she was visiting her in the fall of 1837. Marryat apparently advised her on what to include in her book that would be relevant for a reading public and interesting for a publishing house. Captain Marryat was working on the manuscript of his own American and Canadian tours, which was published shortly after Jameson’s manuscript. In November 1837 when she met Marryat, Jameson was not anywhere near the completion of her three volumes she was to publish the following year, under the title Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada. Nonetheless, she stayed in America a few more weeks than planned, waiting for her separation settlement, prior to her return to England. This was however a fruitful period during which, with her literati friends, Catharine Sedgwick, Dr Channing, Marryat and Fanny Butler, she discussed the outline of her “Canada book” which she already decided would not be a “brochure”. During the few weeks she stayed in New England, she worked on her “Indian notes where [she] can have authorities to refer to.”

From what we gather from the private letters, Anna Jameson hoped to transform her tour of Canada and the United States into a marketable product. Before her conversation with Frederick Marryat, she had intended to include an essay "on the state of the art in this country [America]", as she wrote to her friend Sarah Austin352. However, competition on the same market, that of American travelogues, came from a very prominent lady, Harriet Martineau and from

351 Jameson to Ottilie Von Goethe, New York, October 20, 1837.
Marryat himself. Indeed, in November 1837, extracts from *Society in America* had been published in American newspapers and Captain Marryat had already begun to react and to rebut Martineau's remarks and comments in the same papers. Writing on American topics would have been unwise for Anna Jameson who seemed to have been looking for a "commodity book" to publish in order to make some ready money. Besides, Otley and Saunders had already accepted Harriet Martineau's manuscript *Society in America*, as well as a second work which they had ordered from Martineau requiring that the volume should have "more the character of travel" and be "of a lighter quality to both writer and reader"\(^{353}\): *Retrospect of Western Travel*. So the publishers were not interested in yet another, less articulate, visit to America. Jameson wrote to a friend in November that "the refusal of Otley and Saunders to honour my draft upon such an excuse, absolves me from the necessity of returning to them as my publishers, if I can find a better offer in ready money."\(^{354}\) Considering the situation, Marryat suggested she looked for a publisher in America:

> Captain Marryat has put me up to some of the publishing tricks and shown me on paper what I ought to have […] I am not losing any time but writing away as fast as I can and I shall probably make a good bargain here for my next book by publishing it in this country\(^{355}\).

Less than a week later, Jameson boarded the boat back to England while outbreaks of rebellion began to raise havoc in Canada, first in Lower Canada in the first week of December 1837, then in Upper Canada. Opportunity had knocked on Jameson's door and she considered adding her personal views on the Canadian colonies, to avoid any competition from Martineau or Marryat. In other words, Canada represented a topical issue for a writer who wished to sell a book quickly. Upon her return, Anna Jameson began to work on her manuscript which she now intended to be "in three volumes", in order to include her chapters on Canadian politics. She then described its contents to Ottilie: "It will contain some

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\(^{354}\) Letter quoted by Clara Thomas, *op.cit.*, p. 159.
German criticism – for I have been working hard at my German. But my book will contain much about Canada and the Indians.356 The book was eventually released in the fall of 1838, by Otley and Saunders, to whom she had finally turned as they also offered opportunities to publish in America. Jameson noted that the context, the Canadian crisis, had prompted her to write too quickly which had been detrimental to the quality of the manuscript. “Of the book I have not good opinion myself. It is not what I could have written under happier circumstances.357"

The result of such a hasty patchwork of private journals, political account, reflections on German literature – on which she had begun to work prior to her trip to Canada, to which was added a visit to the Natives, could only be considered as somehow erratically put together, even though Mrs Jameson had accustomed her readers to such a combination of travel, memoirs and social and literary criticism358. Critics and reviewers did notice it, selecting in her three-decker Canadian narrative the passages or the volumes that they praised or decried the most; for lack of an overall composition in her *Rambles* the Canadian backcloth seemed to have been the only unifying theme.

Her Canadian book turned out to be a good bargaining tool for the authoress, as she knew readers and reviewers could select portions or extracts to match their interest. Jameson mastered the combination of entertainment, politics, anthropology and foreign literature from the start, anticipating the reception the book would have in England and America, as well as in Germany, when translated. She declared to her German friend having designed her book “for Englishwomen to tell them something they do not know”. But she knew German readers would be bored by her German literature piece which would “be interesting in America and England”, while her adventures with the Indians and

357 Jameson to Otilie Von Goethe, Windsor, August 19, 1838.
her Canadian journal would be well received by Europeans but “appear impertinent to Americans”, “so I shall have criticism to bear on all sides.”

In fact in the first volume of Winter Studies, critics noted that Canada remained somehow in the margins of Jameson's text, with the exception of the few chapters on the politics of Upper Canada and its society, which some reviewers decided to ignore as we shall see. The author’s materialistic approach to the published volume, i.e. including a volume on German criticism as a sequel to a previous book, struck many reviewers. Canada was used loosely as a canvas to develop or promote the interests of the woman of letters, and her career, thus deceiving readers who expected to purchase a travel narrative about Canada. One of the reviewers of Jameson's book was critical of the numerous digressions on Germany that filled up the pages written in Toronto, stating that "Jameson's Canadian book is predominantly about German art and literature." In Tait's Edinburgh Magazine, Mrs Tait described Jameson's book as "filled with reminiscences of Germany, criticism and speculation on German dramas and other matters quite foreign to Canada […] These matters we lay aside." The reviewer of the British and Foreign Review noted the absence of Canadian pictures in this first volume: "With the exception of a few local pictures, the first volume of this new book might be accepted as a supplementary volume to the "Visits and Sketches" so largely are its pages devoted to the dramas of Oehlenschläger and Müller, the actresses of Vienna, the sayings and intimacies of Goethe… In fact, digressions on German culture and life seemed to have two functions in Jameson's travelogue. Firstly, her German books enabled her to escape the entrapped domestic world she was confined to during the Canadian winter, and to take "refuge in another and higher world." By contrast, Canada represented the absence of society, of intellectual conversations, of enlightened cultural evenings and this served as an imperialist pronouncement on the absence

359 Jameson to Ottlie Von Goethe, Windsor, August 19, 1838
360 Tait's Edinburgh Magazine, February 1839, p. 70.
361 British and Foreign Review, January 1839, p. 137.
of progress of the colonial society. Germany, England, Europe in sum provided her with the necessary mental escape from this colonial world. Canada was relegated to the margins of Jameson's text. Secondly, such digressions enabled her to posit herself as an art historian and a female intellectual before her English public. Jameson was not advancing the cause of Canada but her own. The reviewer of the *British and Foreign Review* underlined the place taken by "personal and biographical sketches", stating "nothing, it is true, can be more complete than the contrast between the real position of the authoress – a lonely and dispirited prisoner at Toronto, seeing nothing [...] and the arrangement of her German dramas upon bookshelves recalling to her the story of a far-away friend." This led the reviewer to focus on her digressions on German art and to leave aside any development pertaining to the political state of the colony or to the colony itself.

In the second and third volumes, Jameson left the seclusion of her Toronto home to visit the country. The woman of letters represented herself as a traveller and then as an adventurer in Red Men country, as she stated she was the first white woman to venture near Sault Ste Marie by canoe. There, Canada became an open map, particularly in the most western districts, which Jameson visited in the summer. Her own rambles and wanderings filled up the page. The country and its inhabitants/settlers became more tangible as the British woman visitor interviewed them, reported their speech and added her own commentary on the progress of the country. Canada was mediated to the metropolitan readers by the authoress. She offered the first complete views on the "morals and manners" of the Canadian colonists in her second volume. Then, in her third volume, she pondered over the "relics of aboriginal society".

The volume on German literature did not fare as well as the Canadian journal however, as it disappeared from the revised and shortened version of 1852. Similarly the chapters on the state of politics in Upper Canada, which had been relevant and pertinent in 1838, were not included in the up-to-date version.

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362 *British and Foreign Review, op.cit.*
Indeed in 1852, shortly after Susanna Moodie had published her *Roughing it in the Bush*, Mrs Jameson issued a revised version of *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles* when British publishers were seeking interesting and entertaining texts which prolonged the interest of the larger public for anything colonial or exotic, after the great popular success of the Great Exhibition. As Mrs Jameson was part owner of her manuscript, a trick she had learnt from Marryat, she was able to sell it to a new firm, Longman, Brown, Green and Longman who published a shorter version of her first popular Canadian narrative, under the new title: *Sketches in Canada and Rambles among the Red Men*. The book was part of the new collection "Traveller's Library", recently launched by Longman to suit railway travellers. Artefacts and curios from Canadian native tribes had fascinated the visitors of the Canadian pavilion at Crystal Palace. They could now pursue their new anthropological interests with Jameson's book. In her one-paragraph preface to this second abridged edition of *Winter Studies*, she noted that:

The adventures and sketches of character and scenery among the Red-Skins, still retain that freshness which belongs only to what is genuine. All that was of a merely transient or merely personal nature, or obsolete in politics or criticism has been omitted.363

This capacity to reissue, in a short time, a volume comprising "a reprint of the most amusing and interesting chapters of the *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, first published in 1838, in three octavo volumes, favourably received at the time and now out of print364" goes to show how Canada was used and sold to the British public by publishing houses but also by authors themselves.

**Taking advantage of the Canadian crises**

Generally speaking, texts entirely devoted to Canada remained quite rare on the British book market at the end of the 1830s, with the exception of the series

364 Ibid, preface.
of so-called residents' pamphlets, promoted by private land companies and circulated to promote emigration for the working class. The travellers' accounts about North America, as we saw, remained either vague about the British provinces, sometimes hardly devoting a chapter to a visit to Upper Canada, or, on the contrary, bluntly dismissed this part of the continent as the "poor man's country". Anna Jameson seized the opportunity of a few months' visit to Upper Canada for marital reasons to write a book. She had read *The Backwoods of Canada* shortly before her departure for the New World and she had felt the interest women would find in her short colonial narrative, since she herself had enjoyed Catharine Parr Traill’s narrative. Besides, Canada was in the public eye in Britain for obvious political reasons. If the general colonial debate had been the topic of emigration before 1837, after the rebellions in Canada political representation of the colonists and their submission to colonial rule caused heated debates at home. Occurring a few weeks after the release of her Canada book, Jameson described the much criticized return of Lord Durham from Canada to England in December 1838 as a popular drama:

> At present the whole country is mad with politics and party. It is at present like a great Drama acting before the people, a Drama of absorbing interest, in which Lord Durham is the Faust and Brougham the Mephistopheles.

In short, the excitement of the Canadian crises - which had rekindled during Durham’s return home, thus pointing to the failure of his mission – obviously generated some interest for her own manuscript since she boasted about a conversation with Lord Melbourne at Windsor Castle, in the absence of the Queen however, in which Melbourne, “who had been reading my book”, “spoke as if pleased with it.” She admitted to her friend Ottilie, that the book was very successful as readers were mostly interested in her chapters on politics, “in spite of all the unpleasant truths I have told.” Through Melbourne, and her friend

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365 See following chapter.
366 Jameson to Ottilie von Goethe, 18 December 1838.
367 Jameson to Ottilie Von Goethe, 18 December 1838.
Amelia Murray, then lady-in-waiting, she also hoped the young Queen would become acquainted with her work.

Anna Jameson had not meant to feature Canada and Canadian politics so prominently in her narrative. In fact, as the early draft of her manuscript shows, *Winter Studies* had been modelled upon the other travel narratives she had produced about Germany or Italy. Lengthy debates over art or literary subjects replaced the usual tourist visits to foreign places. She had indeed taken refuge in her German books during her stay in Toronto “for the politics are so utterly repugnant to my taste and my conscience also that I believe the utmost I can do will be to remain passive.” However, upon her return to England, she had, of necessity, succumbed to publishing a volume that would appeal to readers in the actual context of political crisis in the colonies. To meet the requirements of the public and the demands of her publishers, she included her views on local politics in Upper Canada, thus breaking the reserve she had kept in Canada as the wife of the Attorney General. Her estranged husband sent her a letter in June 1839 in which he declared being “much displeased by the extracts” from Anna Jameson’s book that had appeared in the American papers.

*Negotiating her entry into non-fictional publishing and establishing her authority as a travel writer*

Anna Jameson's authorial position and expertise on colonial Canada was established in her own introduction to *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*. She used the preface to confirm she was fully capable of providing an analysis of the country she visited, as she had stayed in Upper Canada for one year. However, under the cover of a feminine travelogue she also conveyed to her "female readers" daring and radical imperial discourses on Canada while using her descriptions of the country and its inhabitants (British or natives) to digress toward radical proto-feminist statements on the cause of women in Britain. In her
work, we will see that Canada constantly shifted from the margins to the centre of the text, and vice versa.

Harriet Martineau re-established the authority of women in travel writing in 1836-37, after Mrs Trollope had discredited their qualities by publishing her witty but totally unreliable representation of the Americans in 1832. Indeed, Anna Jameson or Harriet Martineau's narratives about North America would have necessarily appeared to their readers' eyes as sequels to Mrs Trollope's anti-American prejudices. Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans* had been a prompt generalization of American manners based on a few class-prejudiced observations made in Cincinatti. *The Edinburgh Review* stated that contributions of women travel writers like Mrs Trollope should remain within the realm of "private literature":

> Instead of a pencil and Indian ink, she uses vitriol and a blacking brush. Notwithstanding the dexterity of the process in the present instance, caricature is apparently a line in which ladies are not intended to excel. Their feelings carry them too far. When they take to sparring, they generally, we believed, have dropped the glove before they are aware. A great judge in questions relating to sex has ventured to doubt whether they are, any of them, the better for foreign travel.

Partly to counteract the detrimental impressions left by Mrs Trollope's prejudiced American views, Martineau had written a treatise on travel writing in 1836, *How to Observe Morals and Manners*, hoping that women would now produce more intelligent travelogues if they applied Martineau's methodical approach to the observation of a foreign land. Indeed, Martineau warned women about the danger of printing their narratives when they did not offer all the guarantees of professional, methodological observations. The peace of the English nation was at stake. According to Martineau, Mrs Trollope's text and its reception

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368 See the shattering to pieces of women travelogues by *The Edinburgh Review*, in July 1832, in a review of "Mrs Trollope, Domestic Manners of the Americans". Mrs Trollope was accused of rekindling tensions between the two nations: "She is safe of the pistols under the impunity of the petticoat."

369 *The Edinburgh Review*, in July 1832, in a review of "Mrs Trollope, Domestic Manners of the Americans"
on both sides of the Atlantic had created many diplomatic tensions and frictions and had left many false impressions in the minds of English readers:

If a traveller gives any quality which he may have observed in a few individuals as a characteristic of a nation, the evil is not speedily or easily remediable. Abject thinkers, passive readers adopt his words, parents repeat them to their children, and townspeople spread the judgement and establish the strongholds of prejudice.\(^{370}\)

In non-fictional literature, prefaces or advertisements had become an essential fixture, as Katherine Turner notes about late 18\(^{th}\) century travel literature\(^{371}\). In the course of the 19\(^{th}\) century, particularly after 1836, women’s travelogues all presented prefaces that served as credentials to the ensuing text as well as a self-analysis of the female author’s own text. Following Martineau's recommendations, hoping to see their work as well received as Martineau's reports on America had been, women travel writers used the preface to establish their authority, to describe the sources they were reporting from, to offer guarantees of veracity, to justify the printing of their text to the public, but also to the publisher whose input in guaranteeing the quality of the book might have been secondary. Martineau recalls having received an offer from Mr Harper - the head of the American publishing firm specialized in the illegal reprinting of British books - for her American book which he envisaged as a mere commodity book: “So far as you have gone, you must have picked up a few incidents. Well! Then you might Trollopize a bit, and so make a readable book. I would give you something handsome for it.”\(^{372}\)

On the other hand, the preface was still used as a disclaimer, as was normally expected from women travellers who should propose a criticism of their own work, thus lowering its value to obey the traditional rules of female modesty. In travel narratives, prefaces also contained guarantees that the author had truly visited the foreign land they depicted, by explaining the circumstances of the


\(^{371}\) Turner, *British Travel Writers in Europe, op.cit.*, p. 130.

journey, the duration of the journey, distances travelled, and the manner in which the women had interacted with the country and its peoples.

Anna Brownell Jameson had read some sections of *Society in America* in English newspapers circulating in New York in November and December 1837. As for *How to Observe Morals and Manners*, it had been available to readers in 1836 upon Martineau’s return from America. Besides, Jameson visited Harriet Martineau immediately after her return to London and discussed her impressions of America where Jameson was heading in the following months. Jameson's observations of morals and manners in Canada are clearly organized and quite systematic, in the style of Martineau whose genius she clearly admired. In *How to Observe*, a 200-page treatise published by Charles Knight for the utilitarian Society, Harriet Martineau offered a portable observation scale, or sociological grid, that travellers could easily apply when visiting white settlers' colonies or foreign lands. The first step for the English traveller was to consider himself or herself as "a stranger in a strange land", in the words of Martineau. From this assumed position, he/she could survey and observe the manners of the local inhabitants and the state of the "domestic" affairs by reading newspapers, visiting prisons or asylums and entering into conversation with prominent men. Martineau offered English visitors new discursive parameters to "seize" the foreign land and its inhabitants. Anna Jameson seems to apply this method in her manuscript, more particularly in the volumes devoted to Canada and to the observations of the Red Men.

In the 19th century, female travellers continued to comply with the tradition of the disclaimer but they revisited it by including methodological reflections in the wake of Martineau’s recommendations. What is more, gendered requirements seemed to have become all the more oppressive in the 1830s. At the beginning of the Victorian era, the gradual stronghold of the middle classes on the social and political organization and hierarchy of British society had centred on

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373 Anna Jameson to Ottilie Von Goethe, 25 August 1836, “Miss Martineau has returned from America and when I can find time I shall run and see her.”
the separation of the domestic and public spheres. The social norms which dictated that women belonged to the private sphere and men to the public one had extended to all sectors of society including the publishing world. This was obvious in the separation between non-fictional and fictional texts. Up until the end of the 1840s, women as fiction authors would dominate the production of novels while men were essayists, poets or historians374. "Non-fictional writing" based on "the assertion of truths" had been largely "a male domain", notes Sara Mills375. But Anna Jameson had acquired a reputation in this specific field that had nothing to do with "light" literature. In one of the reviews for her previous essays on Shakespeare's female characters or on German art in the *Edinburgh Review*,376, the literary journalist had condescendingly admitted Mrs Jameson could be set above the regular crowd of romance authors but that she nonetheless remained a female writer:

> Whether Mrs Jameson could have written a good romance or a popular poem, we can hardly say; but we are quite sure she has acted more wisely in choosing a different department, - one of the few in which there really existed an opening for female talent in English literature. As a novelist or a poet, she would have been surrounded by female rivals […] But in the path of eloquent and philosophic female criticism, there had certainly existed a gap in literature since the death of Mme de Staël […] (for which all our admiration for Mrs Jameson's fine talents, it would be absurd to represent her as a fit successor to that remarkable woman.)

At the beginning of Victoria's reign, novels were part of light literature when they were written by women for women readers; they were romances and sentimental novellas, essentially the products of a woman's imagination377. Novels by Mary Mitford or American author Catharine Sedgwick, belonged to the domestic sphere, and in a way these texts were domestic discourses. In contrast non-fictional texts, the rare pieces of "philosophic female criticism" or travel literature belonged to the public world, and these texts therefore became public

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discourses when edited and circulated. In order to publish such texts, women had to be "authorized", they had to "accord with a set of discursive conventions of what females could and could not do.\textsuperscript{378}

The analysis of Anna Jameson's preface reveals how the female author maneuvered to adapt her text and her "imperial" discourse to the prescriptions of travel narratives. In her preface, Jameson presents herself as a professional writer\textsuperscript{379} having established her authority in previous non-fictional works which are mentioned on the title page, and for which she declares having received some recognition from "her" public "which has hitherto regarded my attempts in literature with so much forbearance and kindness."\textsuperscript{380} Jameson knew the rules of the publishing world as she had published six non-fictional books before Winter Studies. She had learnt the rules of the writing trade, particularly when it came to obtaining good reviews\textsuperscript{381}. In one of her letters to her German friend, Ottilie von Goethe, Jameson mentioned that many literary critics did not even go beyond the "preface" of the books they reviewed, while others operated a selection of the texts they would read after only reading the introduction or the preface. For Jameson, prefaces were the keys to good reviews and to good sales. She had acquired some fame for her book on Shakespeare's female characters in 1832, with her Characteristics of Women, and Memoirs of the Beauties of the Court of Charles the Second, a series of portraits of the ladies at the court, a foray for Jameson into the historical and biographical essay-writing that previously a male preserve\textsuperscript{382}.

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[\textsuperscript{378}] Mills, Colonial Discourse, op.cit., p. 81.
\item[\textsuperscript{379}] Nineteenth-century writers used the term "professional" to refer to those "pursuing literature as a mean of living, independent of all others" and in the case of men "working for high ideals", Collins, The Professions of Letters, quoted by Tuchman, Edging Women Out, op.cit., p. 36
\item[\textsuperscript{380}] Anna Jameson became the first professional woman art historian, by writing a series of noted volumes on public and private galleries in England and Italy, upon her return from Canada, see Holcomb, Adele, "Anna Jameson (1794-1860): Sacred Art and Social Vision", in Women as Interpreters of the Visual Arts, 1820-1979, Claire Richter Sherman and Adele Holcomb eds, Westport, Greenwood, 1981.
\item[\textsuperscript{381}] Thomas, Clara, Love and Work Enough, op.cit., p. xii.
\item[\textsuperscript{382}] And her first notice in the prestigious, male literature preserve The Edinburgh Review in 1834.
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Anna Jameson, like Catharine Parr Traill, seemed to have justified her authorization to trespass on the gendered codes of non-fictional literature thanks to the fact that it was written about a "new" colony, Canada. The tensions surrounding Upper Canada in 1838 are mentioned in the first lines of the preface, thus enabling Jameson to justify her entry into the public sphere of publishing. Jameson begins by underlining in her preface the reasons for which she dares "venture to place before the public these "fragments" of a journal addressed to a friend (9)\(^{383}\). The apparently natural modesty of the female writer is overcome by the necessity of providing information about Canada, as she states that she is aware of the importance that such notes might have for the British public, "particularly at this time" "when the country to which it partly refers is the subject of so much difference of opinion, and so much animosity of feeling.(9)"

Anna Jameson's preface is a perfect model of this required piece of liminal prose in which female writers had to disclaim their own text. Sara Mills states that the disclaiming technique, a rhetorical apologia taking up the whole preface or some part of it, was used by the woman writer or sometimes her publisher, to deny "any scientific, academic, literary claim"\(^{384}\). In fact Jameson circumvents or accommodates the requirements of prefatory notes by using disclaiming techniques\(^{385}\) in which she disarms her critics in advance by adopting a "self-effacing pose"\(^{386}\) towards her own work. But on the other hand, compliance to the rules is obeyed "tongue-in-cheek" as Jameson also inserts some immodest discourses on Empire building and on the woman question. In her Canadian text in particular, the disclaiming piece is less a sign of compliance to old-fashioned patriarchal rules and more a strategy to appeal to a wide range of readers and to please male reviewers in order to obtain favourable reviews.


\(^{386}\) Mills, *Colonial Discourse*, op.cit., p.81.
Even professional female writers like Jameson needed to present their work with all the necessary marks of female subservience or obedience, at least up until the 1850s when female critics considered it *passe*. In her preface to *Winter Studies*, the great anxiety that Jameson felt about the reception of her work in the eyes of the public, but also by the main periodicals and their male reviewers who made or unmade the reputation of books and bookmakers is obvious. She knew that she had to justify her text on Canada to these male reviewers by disclaiming that her incursion in travel writing about the colonial world, did not present too serious an approach.

This meant displaying the prescriptive list of all the attributes of femininity. Accordingly, Jameson describes her three-volume travelogue, "this little book", as the result of "much thoughtful idleness and many an idle thought"(9), insisting that there is no real purpose or didactism in writing, typically swearing to her readers that "it never was intended to go before the world in its present crude and desultory form" and that the book would follow the overflowing of personal sentiment "having grown up insensibly out of an accidental promise.(9)" Stating that there was no serious effort placed in the work, in spite of the several months Jameson spent rewriting her journals, would lead reviewers to consider the work at worse as pleasant light literature for women, and at best interesting and useful in parts, at least for a woman's contribution. Jameson clearly understood the rules of good reviews when she states at the end of the preface:

> If this little book contains mistakes, they will be chastised and corrected, and I shall be glad of it. If it contains but one truth, and that no bigger than a grain of mustard-seed, it will not have been cast into the world in vain, nor will any severity of criticism make me, in such a case, repent of having published it, even in its present undigested and, I am afraid, unsatisfactory form. (12)

Jameson strategically begins and closes her preface by accusing herself of immodesty in believing she could hope to bring something new to the world of

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non-fictional literature. Jameson had to show some "modesty" towards non-fictional male writers, below whose work she necessarily placed her own "journal". Catherine Stevenson notes that in the 19th century, women's travel accounts took the epistolary or journal forms as letters home or journals were considered as "naturally" suitable forms for women, as they were "loose" enough to accommodate their unstructured narratives, or their "leisurely descriptions of diverse subjects." Hannah More's *Scriptures* on feminine virtues still haunted the literary world: "A woman sees the world, as it were, from a little elevation in her own garden, where she makes an exact survey of home scenes, but takes not in that wider range of distant prospects which he who stands on a loftier eminence commands."

**Jameson and her reviewers**

Being reviewed by male literary critics in prominent periodicals was the price to pay for the women who wanted to step out of the realm of fiction (reviewed by home-circle magazines, usually run by women). Jameson knew of the fate reserved for female writers who dared trespass on the boundaries of non-fictional writing. She anticipated the criticism she would have to face from male (and one female) reviewers in the literary periodicals like *The Westminster Review, The Edinburgh Review, The British and Foreign Review*, the most prominent reviews in which women's works were rarely considered or selected, as well as in *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine, The Literary Gazette* or *The Athenaeum*, to quote but a few. She preferred to play down the qualities of her own work, by being up front and by formulating the typical criticism she knew men would address her and her work. But she is very ironic in the "chastising" of her book and of herself, suggesting that as she steps out of the gendered norms by

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displaying too personal a view on the Canadian colonies, she will expose herself to being condemned by men. However, she overdoes it, and taking into account her position on male chauvinism and her bold comments on the freedom and superiority of women, which she clearly expresses in the course of the book, the highly rhetorical preface could only be read as tongue-in-cheek by her female readers.

In order to be reviewed, books had to be promoted individually by publishers who sent them to a periodical that reflected their own political opinion, or to the reviewer in charge of the literary section in a monthly periodical. Some publishers even directly commissioned some reviews when they believed the book might need some specific publicity. There was also the "puffer" technique developed by Henry Colburn which consisted in "making broad claims for books in the advertising columns of newspapers and periodicals", thereby creating some "fake editorial opinions" on books which were inserted in newspapers. Colburn asserted that the "publisher was the sole determinant in the success of a book".

Apparently Colburn and Richard Bentley, before the latter opened his own firm, had an interest in the *Literary Gazette*, which was an influential literary periodical. This meant that books and authors' reputations were made and fashioned by some prominent publishers whose political agenda influenced the public through advertising. In the case of the firm Otley and Saunders which published both Martineau and Jameson, Harriet Martineau explained that she was asked by her publishers, “to write the notes”, a “trick of the trade” she had never heard about. It consisted in writing “the notes for the Reviews”, as all the Otley and Saunders authors were asked to write notes to “friends and acquaintances connected to periodicals to request favourable notices of the work." Anna Jameson must have complied to the same rules though she did not confide in her friends about it. She had connections with *The Atheneaum* in which she was asked to write reviews. This might explain the warm comments she received on her

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book. However she did not mention that any of her friends were writing for the Edinburgh Review or Tait’s Magazine, in which the reviewers were actually less friendly towards the “little Canada book.”

The reviews were several pages long in the prominent quarterlies as the content of the book under review was listed and dissected for the future readers. Large extracts were provided so that readers could judge the style of the author. Other reviews published in less important periodicals tended to survey briefly the content of the book quoting extracts, thereby betraying the reviewer’s lack of knowledge on the topic of the book. In between these extracts, reviewers tended to paraphrase the author’s position on topics. Anna Jameson’s Winter Studies received long interesting reviews in the Edinburgh Review, the British and Foreign Review and in Tait’s Edinburgh Magazine. Writing to her friend Robert Noel in November, she relates how well received her Canadian book had been: "My book is out this month, I am glad to say my success is entire, and I have never been so popular as now."

However, in challenging the gendered norms of travel writing in her preface and in the course of her work, Jameson also knew she was exposing herself to criticism and chastisement, while opening new doors to women travellers. Awaiting literary reviews, Jameson writes to her friend Catharine Sedgwick about the reception of her work by the general public: "At this moment, I have fame and praise, for my name is in every newspaper." With her Summer Rambles in Canada Jameson had renewed the genre. What the liminal piece of rhetoric revealed was a strong-minded feminist playing with the codes of the travel genre to better subvert them: "I have been obliged to leave the flimsy thread of sentiment, to sustain the facts and observations loosely strung together; feeling strongly to what it may expose me, but having deliberately chosen the alternative, prepared of course, to endure what I may appear to have defied […]"(10)

392 Thomas, Clara, Love and Work Enough, op.cit., p. 128.
393 Thomas, Clara, Ibid., p. 129.
Judith Johnston, one of the few Jameson scholars, notes that the reviewers "bought her version of herself" as feminine, and they "celebrated her adventures" in Canada accordingly. The *Atheneaum* reviewer describes her as "alone and unguarded, save by her womanhood". In the *British and Foreign Review*, her writings on Canada were described as "womanly in the wholesome sense of the word". Judith Johnson underlines "her careful negotiation of the discursive constraint placed by Victorian morality on publication and reception." In June 1842, in a long article on "Lady Travellers" in the *British and Foreign Review*, the journalist paid tribute to Jameson's contribution to the art of travel writing. He first noted that travel books by women were now "a popular class of books", as travelling had become as "easy as writing." To Anna Jameson, "camping out by the great Lakes of America", lady travellers owed "a superior quickness of feeling, delicacy of taste and readiness of hand to record every impression", but also "that love of adventure and enterprise that animates every human being." As for their involvement in politics, the reviewer was more reserved. He believed that it was not conceivable that "an English woman, whose noble nature resisted the corrupting influence of a profligacy" should be "otherwise indignant to the point at which 'the heart must break' if 'the tongue is to be held'." In other words, the journalist seemed to admit that when women were not allowed to express their viewpoints normally, when travelling in some countries plagued by exceptional situations like tyranny or political tensions, women could express their disagreement in writing. Apparently in 1842, for the *British and Foreign Review* columnist, Anna Jameson's *Winter Studies* was the norm by which other texts by women travellers were measured.

If the reviewer of the *British and Foreign Review* was all praise concerning the lively interest that readers had found in the reading of Jameson's travel book on Canada, other reviewers held different views on her work. If books had a circulation of their own, particularly books written by women, which circulated in the private sphere, prominent reviewers could promote or demote an

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394 Johnston, Judith, *Anna Jameson, Victorian Feminist*, op.cit., p. 120
author (and publisher) who had ventured his/her text before the "public." Their opinion on Jameson's text and particularly on her Canadian discourse, reflected the attitude of the public towards Canada and towards women's access to imperial discourse. Reviews in important periodicals also shaped and formatted public opinion on the imperial project.

If Jameson's work had been rushed through press by Otley and Saunders, in order to provide her readers with useful information on the state of affairs in Canada in November 1838, most reviews of the book were only released in January or February 1839. By then the accurate information she had provided to her educated readers about Canada must have seemed out-dated. In 1839, most reviews also included in their February issues important comments on Durham's Report and on the state of the colonies after the rebellions. In fact, the precious information the female traveller had dared put forward about the mismanagement of the Canadas under local Tory rules and about the incompetence of the home government – which will be analysed in the following chapter - seemed to have receded into the margins of Durham's conclusions. Indeed, Anna Jameson’s claim to fame with her Canada book had lasted a few months in England, before beginning a second career in America in June 1839 where her last volume, her adventures among the Red Men, appealed to readers.

With the wealth of information provided by the heated reception of Durham/Wakefield's proposals, as well as the numerous ensuing debates in Parliament and the statements published by prominent MPs, reviewers did not need to consider Jameson's text as a source of information on the colonies. Most of her reviewers focused on topics that did not concern Canada. For instance, the literary critic writing for The British and Foreign Review who, among all reviewers, should have found some interesting information on the colonial situation in Mrs Jameson's pages clearly stated that he had "passed over" Canadian politics "without notice." He suggested therefore that readers turned to other sources, or other sections in the periodical, to find information "concerning the stern and momentous topics." For him, Mrs Jameson as a woman traveller
could not express her views about the colonial situation. She was the "Chancellor's Lady" in Toronto (where her estranged husband was Attorney General), as he reminded his readers, so she could not "without serious failure in good taste or decided breach of confidence, have discussed the administration of colonial government.\textsuperscript{395} Mrs Jameson's only comments on the state of the colony that the reviewer highlighted, was the cold desolate winter she lived through in Toronto and the coldness and aloofness of the "colonial" people.

In spite of his praise of Jameson's talent as a travel writer, the reviewer was shocked by her feminist discourse. He warned his readers about it, suggesting they simply shut their minds, men and women readers alike, to her diatribes and focus on the more descriptive parts of her travels. He suggested they skip the first two volumes and read the third one in which Jameson relived her summer with the Canadian natives. Little did he know that Jameson's concern in native life had been "the conditions of women in savage life" and that it had been "the principal reason of [her] venturing so far.\textsuperscript{396} In fact, the \textit{British and Foreign Review} critic’s feeling was shared by most reviewers who found Jameson’s feminist discourse quite "repulsive". They felt that Jameson was resorting to any moment or description of people's manners in Canada to deliberately convey her opinionated position on the woman question. Her "obnoxious" remarks were passed on quickly by the reviewer of the \textit{British and Foreign Review}. Mrs Jameson was nonetheless praised for her power to evoke a landscape and the wilderness of Canada. The overall impression critics retained from the reading of this Canadian narrative which most of them wished to recommend to the readers was that of entertainment and "exoticism". According to \textit{The British and Foreign Review}, \textit{Winter Studies} was "the most variously amusing work" written by "an eloquent and graceful authoress."

For Mrs Tait who reviewed the works of literature (fictional and non-fictional) in \textit{Tait's Edinburgh Magazine}, Mrs Jameson's work did not necessarily

\textsuperscript{395} \textit{The British and Foreign Review}, January 1839.
\textsuperscript{396} Jameson to Ottile Von Goethe, Toronto, 1 June 1837.
refer to Canada. For those of her readers who were seeking knowledge about the colonial world, she suggested they should turn to other sources as "the intelligent eye-witness" might disappoint them. No “serious development” was to be found on the "the discontents and troubles in Canada". Instead readers would "stumble upon a lively, graceful and picturesque book of random sketches, interspersed with gems of feminine wisdom, coloured by womanly sensibility." To her female readers, Mrs Tait underscored Jameson's contribution to the political debate, all the more so as the traveller seemed to support the party of the Reformers that had caused the troubles in the colonies.

As far as Canada was concerned, Mrs Tait selected Jameson's anecdotes on the Niagara Falls, the authoress' comparative analysis between Canada and America and her visit to the Natives that the reviewer found "romantic." The quote the Scottish reviewer selected for her readers describing Canada concerned Toronto in winter; she remarked about Mrs Jameson that "the stranger began to look more calmly around her to [...] a city 40 years since a swamp, and which only took form after the last American war." As for Jameson's so-called comparison between the US and Canada, Mrs Tait seemed to be under the influence of her recent review of Harriet Martineau's *Society in America*. Indeed, Mrs Tait exaggerated Jameson's position on the greatness of America, compared to Canada. However Jameson never expressed any specifically negative views on the future of Canada, quite the contrary, as she believed that better politics at home and overseas would save the colonies. But Mrs Tait seemed to pass over Jameson's remarks on the good prospects of Canada and instead extrapolated on Jameson's views of America by concluding that "the immense inferiority of the colony to the opposite frontier is enterprise, improvement and prosperity, was visible at a glance to every traveller." I believe she was referring to Martineau's refusal to visit Canada, who, after taking a rapid glance at the British colonies from the American side of the Niagara Falls, turned her back and left. However, the female reviewer criticized Mrs Jameson for not putting forward any reason for the lack of development in the British colonies in 1837, "But the cause? That must
be investigated." In fact, Anna Jameson had tried to explain the cause of the slow progress of the British colonies in North America, as we shall see in the following chapter. She had pointed to the political problems that plagued the management of land, of church reserves, or reforms (including education reforms) as well as the absence of parliamentary democracy in the two central Canadian colonies. Mrs Tait simply suggested in a very imperialist, humorous remark that the problem might simply lie in the fact that Canada "is a distant colony", thus dismissing the colonial problem, in order to turn to other more prominent aspects in Jameson's narrative.

Mrs Tait supported a very traditional view of women's role in society and she seemed rather disturbed by Mrs Jameson's diatribes on British mismanagement and political neglect of their colonies. Similarly, the authoress's insistence or obsession with the woman question also troubled Mrs Tait who suggested that there was nothing women could do to change their circumstances. She was particularly shocked by the manner in which Jameson compared the freedom of educated gentlewomen in Canada with the narrow-minded world of English society. Upon Jameson's suggestion that women in the colonies could exercise their refined minds, Mrs Tait replied that they would have "nothing else to do" otherwise. Worst of all, the comparison between what Jameson described as the sexual liberty of the Red squaws and the matrimonial game in English families led Mrs Tait to discourage female readers from buying the book: "What a dismal picture does this lady give of the condition of all women in civilized life and of their sexual relations.\textsuperscript{397}\n
At the end of the 1830s, the reviewers seemed to refuse to acknowledge Mrs Jameson's contribution to the imperial debate, indicating their reluctance towards women's involvement in the public debate and the public sphere. They tended to present themselves as "guardians" or "gate-keepers" of the English national morals. However, according to Jameson, many of her readers, some of them quite prominent, noted the input she had provided to the understanding of

\textsuperscript{397} Tait's Edinburgh Magazine, February 1839.
Canadian affairs. As for her contribution to the uneasy debate on the "woman question" which the reviewers had suggested Jameson's readers shunned, it had been clearly registered by young feminist readers, the Englishwomen whom Jameson wanted to reach, as I will show in the following chapter.

Reviewers and publishers still had a great impact on the formatting of public opinion, particularly when knowledge or information was coming from a woman's text in print. We have seen that "colonial" books or books written about the colonial world were particularly liable to this form of metropolitan mediation, through filtering and editing. However, the two books studied so far, Traill's *The Backwoods* and Jameson's *Winter Studies* acquired a life of their own among middle-class women readers as can be gleaned from the numerous editions the manuscripts went through and the several cross-references to the texts found in private letters or in other travel texts. In 1856, the Honorable Amelia Murray, former lady-in-waiting to Queen Victoria, who had introduced Mrs Jameson's *Winter Studies* to Victoria in 1839 and on which she was warmly complimented by Lord Melbourne, published her own work on Canada, paying tribute to the authoress of ""Rambles" which had inspired her visit, for the lasting qualities of her representations.

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398 Jameson to Ottilie Von Goethe, 18 December 1838.
CHAPTER 4
Anna Jameson’s Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada – Canada with a woman’s "soul and senses" (1838)

In November 1838, Anna Jameson was the first woman to devote an entire travelogue to the British colonial world. However, as we saw in the previous chapter Canada was not meant to feature so prominently in her narrative. In fact, as the early draft of her manuscript showed, Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada had been modeled upon the other travel narratives she had already produced for her British public about Germany or Italy. Lengthy debates over art or literary subjects replaced the usual tourist visits to foreign places. However, the actual context of political tension that developed in the Canadas throughout the year 1838, prompted her to add some political information about the state of affairs in Upper Canada to her first volume, in order to meet the requirements of the public and the demands of her publishers, thus turning a visit to the colonial world into a marketable opportunity. As for her second and third volumes, Jameson had planned to pursue one of her main interests in her voyages: the condition of women. Her curiosity regarding women living in Canada had been prompted, on the one hand, by her reading The Backwoods of Canada and the very interesting life she felt the anonymous female author/settler led. On the other hand, she also found the opportunity once in Canada to “see with [her] own eyes the conditions of women in savage life."

To become acquainted with Upper Canada, a colony she knew nothing about, Anna Jameson, the forty-two year old professional woman of letters and literary critic, had read The Backwoods of Canada shortly before embarking for Canada, as is shown by a reference to Traill’s narrative in a letter she wrote from

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400 The Diary of an Ennuyée (1826) and Visits and Sketches at Home and Abroad (1834), see Clara Thomas, Love and Work Enough, The Life of Anna Jameson, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, (1967), 1978, ch. 11. An invaluable source of information as Clara Thomas examined Anna Jameson’s private correspondence and edited large sections of her letters.

401 Anna Jameson to Ottilie von Goethe, Toronto, June 1, 1837, in G.H. Needle, Letters of Anna Jameson to Ottilie von Goethe, London, Oxford University Press, 1939, p. 93
Portsmouth to a friend, Ottilie von Goethe in October 1836. She recommended the reading of the book to her friends in order to form a representation of the place Jameson was going to “emigrate” to for a certain period of time:

I certainly did not send you the book about Canada to show you in dark colours the hardships of a settler's life – quite the contrary. The book interested me, and pleased me very much, and it is thought to give so favourable view of things, that they say it has made many persons emigrate. I wish much that I were going to live such a life, instead of residing in a small, vulgar, factious city, where I shall be afraid to speak, almost think, lest I should inadvertently hurt Mr Jameson's interests instead of assisting them.\[402\]

From Catharine Parr Traill's account of "fortitude and hardship", she derived a mixed impression of Canada. She imagined women pioneers in the colonial world had regained the freedom to act and to speak, which women had lost in England. What is interesting to notice is the fact that Traill's narrative of hardship seemed to enthuse and to please proto-feminist woman writer Anna Jameson. Mrs Jameson's representation of Canada as a woman's world will be considered in this chapter.

Anna Jameson's feelings towards Canada were ambivalent as she opposed life in the bush, in fact Traill's representation which she found pleasing, to the urban setting of Toronto which she described as "vulgar, factious". There, in the budding city, at the heart of the imperial power in the margins, she would have to keep quiet and silent as her husband occupied the important position of Attorney General by Colonial Office appointment. Besides, she knew he was hoping to be appointed Vice Chancellor of the colony in the months following her arrival in Toronto.

The reading of Traill's narrative seems to have brought to Mrs Jameson a more positive representation of the colonial world which otherwise would have probably been dark and "vulgar" altogether, as one can judge from her gloomy state of mind upon embarking for the New World in the fall of 1836. Before

reading Traill’s *Backwoods*, the author had clearly been ill disposed towards Canada, which had been painted to her by an English friend in dark colours.\(^{403}\) Anna Brownell Jameson’s travel narrative, which takes the form of a journal written daily over the twelve months she spent in Upper Canada, reflected this ambivalence towards Canada and the colonial margins from the perspective of someone living in the metropolis. Jameson first rejected the idea of going to Canada, which she associated with her husband from whom she had been separated for four years.\(^{404}\) In June, she had received a letter from him summoning her to come to “America.” She wrote to her friend Ottilie von Goethe about this dreaded trip to Canada:

> A gentleman arrived from Canada. He brings a letter and a message which obliged me to go to America, it must be so. It is right that I should go, not only right but inevitable. My future life can never be arranged on a firm basis, till I have been there.\(^{405}\)

Far from departing for a pleasure tour in Canada, Jameson immediately revealed she somewhat rejected the country during her stay in Toronto. Her main business in the colonial capital had been to set herself free from her husband, as she wrote to Ottilie before her departure: “I am meditating a step, which it will require great courage to execute, but which will make me at ease, and in some respect independent for the rest of my life.”\(^{406}\) “Readers do not hear a word of this unpleasant situation, though the melancholy mood of the female author reveals some personal distress. Once she had left Toronto as a free woman in the summer of 1837, the pleasure tour began by a visit to upper-middle-class settlers in the backwoods where she developed some sympathy towards the women. Then she set off on a visit among “the Red Men” and women, with all the enthusiasm of a woman anthropologist overwhelmed by the novelty of the experience, “so much

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\(^{403}\) In June 1836, she met with Edward Trelawney who had recently visited Canada. She told one of her friends about their talk of the New World: “He gave me a horrid description of Canada, - I mean the inhabited part of it, and of Toronto especially.”. Jameson to Ottilie, June 18, 1836.

\(^{404}\) Thomas, Clara, *Love and Work Enough*, op.cit., ch.10.

\(^{405}\) Jameson to Ottilie, London, June 27, 1836.

\(^{406}\) Jameson to Ottilie, London, June 18, 1836.
to see, so much knowledge to gain⁴⁰⁷. All the more so as she believed she was the first European woman to accomplish such a trip as she explained to her parents:

I cannot squeeze into one or even 20 sheets of paper all I was about to tell you: therefore for the present I will only say that I am just returned from the wildest and most extraordinary tour you can imagine, and am moreover the first Englishwoman – the first European female who ever accomplished such a journey.⁴⁰⁸

In less than a year, a gloomy narrative, which had begun as a cold imperial survey in the manner of Frances Wright, turned into sympathetic praise in support of the Canadian communities, and more particularly into a promotion of the role of women in this project.

In spite of Anna Jameson's wish to share Traill's life in the backwoods, where "women are not afraid to speak, or to think lest they might hurt their husband's interest", she did not experience a settler's life. Mr Jameson being a member of the colonial government, Mrs Jameson became part of the colonial Tory elite in Toronto against her will. All through her stay, with the exception of her visit to the bush in the late spring of 1837 and to the "Red Men" during the summer 1837, Jameson resided during the winter and early spring months in a comfortable house in Toronto. She became acquainted with what she describes as a settlers' life for a brief period of time between June and August 1837. But before she camped for a few days near Sault Saint Marie in Huronia, her trip westward had her stay in comfortable villas or inns of successful British farmers living like patrician landowners.

In the first part of this chapter, I shall examine the manner in which Jameson represented Canada to her British readers. We have already observed that her text was designed for the British audience as yet another non-fiction essay upon which Jameson's authorial reputation could be established. Canada did not feature high at first among her preoccupations. It was meant to be a mere backcloth to her narrative, but the final manuscript presents a different picture of

⁴⁰⁷ Jameson to Ottilie, Toronto, June 1, 1837.
⁴⁰⁸ Jameson to her family, Toronto, August 17, 1837, quoted in Thomas, op.cit., p. 118.
the country. From the margins of the text where she at first had placed Canada, the colonial world gradually imposed itself to become the central topic of the book. We will show how the female traveller tried to capture the colonial world in its aesthetic, political and social dimensions and to put forward proposals to bring moral and social progress to the colonies.

According to Herman Merivale, the years following the “Canadian outbreak of 1837” were crucial for the British Empire, as the rebellions led to a series of debates on the government of white colonies by the mother country and their subsequent moral and social progress. According to the colonial theorist:

The consequent mission of Lord Durham, the disclosures made and the theories propounded by the very able men who accompanied him [Wakefield and Buller], raised in political thinkers a suspicion of the insecurity and injustice of colonial government by the mother country or by local party in connection with the mother country; and directed the thoughts of the more speculative towards the renewal of the older and freer polity of our first American settlements.

However, Durham (and Wakefield) released their Report on the Affairs in North America in February 1839 and by then Anna Jameson’s Winter Studies had been circulating in Britain for four months. Her contribution to the general public debate on the Empire - which Merivale said followed Durham’s series of proposals for Canada - already included severe criticism of the mother country’s mismanagement of the colonies, as well as many cogent remarks on the needed social and political reforms.

Jameson not only brought Canada to life for the British public and the British reviewers of the work by a very personal approach to the landscape, to local politics and to the people, both colonists and natives, but also broke ground for women in the small world of travel writing. She contributed to making Canada familiar, indeed almost popular. In this brief period, Anna Jameson and Catharine Parr Traill renewed previous representations of the colony for the British public and did so with feminine sensibility. Both narratives rekindled debates over

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409 Merivale Herman, Lectures on Colonization and the Colonies, op.cit., introduction, p. vi.
colonial issues and colonial practices by considering topics such as the best sort of emigration to Canada or the health and progress of settlers' communities in the white Empire, which necessarily involved expressing their political comments on colonial rule and government.

However, it shall be seen that Jameson and Traill presented two different, although complementary views of Canada, which reflected their social and political positions in the colonial country. The gentlewomen patronized different social milieux there and their discourses were therefore affected by that. Most importantly, Jameson was and remained a British visitor throughout, even though she pretended at times she had shared the hardship of the colonists. Jameson knew her visit would be short, while Traill had settled in Canada for the rest of her life. Therefore, their emotional interaction with their surroundings necessarily varied, influencing Jameson's aesthetic and political representation of the colonial world, as will be revealed in the course of this chapter. I shall subsequently analyse Jameson's political discourse on the state of the British Empire in Canada. Though stating to her readers in her introduction that she would not dabble in politics, Jameson's text rapidly became an indictment against local colonial politics in Toronto but most strikingly against home politics regarding the Canadian colonies. These comments were dictated by political circumstances, that is to say the outbreak of the rebellions in the two Canadian colonies in December 1837, as well as by Durham's mission to Lower Canada in June 1838. Passages on Upper Canada's political and social situation were added on to the original journals in the course of 1838, upon her return to England. The focus here will centre on how her stay in Canada enabled her to contribute pointedly to the colonial debate especially when compared to the observations in the Durham report published a few months later.

Finally, I intend to analyse how Jameson used her Canadian experience as a platform to advance the cause of her favourite topic: the cause of women. Not only would her colonial views inspire and contribute to the public debate on Empire building, but her remarks on the advancement of the woman question
based on her observations of female settlers in Canada and native women among the Red Men, were well received by proto-feminist readers such as Harriet Martineau, Lady Byron or Elisabeth Gaskell as well as the new generation of women reformers who were seeking outlets for middle-class, educated, single women in Britain. For all of them, Canada would represent an ideal destination for such a category of women and they found inspiration for this in Anna Jameson's account of Upper Canada.

The first woman's travel narrative about colonial Canada

Numerous parallels can be found between the first narrative on North America written by Frances Wright in 1821, in which Canada was visited in passing (the visitor refusing any interaction with it), and Jameson's three-volume narrative centred on Upper Canada. Personal emotions, sentimentalism and subjectivity, in short what Sara Mills describes as the “discourse of femininity”, interact with the survey of the colonial world. This was particularly obvious in Frances Wright's cold aesthetic discourse on Canada, which matched and accompanied her own colonial agenda on the prospects of the British colonies. In Jameson's narrative, the aesthetic discourse on the Canadian landscape also reveals her personal agenda and political discourse. In this instance, the traveller’s gaze moves away from one that is imperial, ethnocentric and remote to become one that is supportive and empathic.

Very interestingly, Frances Wright's and Anna Jameson's purpose in coming to North America were similar. Both were seeking liberty and freedom. Wright had left Tory patriarchal England to taste freedom, both freedom as a woman and political freedom in America, where she travelled unchaperoned in spite of her young age, in order to fulfill her liberal ideal. As for Jameson, her Toronto visit also aimed at freeing herself from marriage. Anna Jameson spent a year in North America and from December 1836 to August 1837 in Canada specifically, working out her separation with her husband. Then the rest of her
stay, until December 1837, was spent in New England where she waited for her separation and "emancipation" papers to arrive from Toronto. Anna Jameson was the estranged wife of Robert Jameson whose career had been placed under colonial colours. After holding a position in the West Indies, where his young wife had already refused to follow him, he had been appointed Attorney General of Upper Canada in 1834. The purpose of Anna Jameson’s trip to Canada was to reach an agreement upon separation or emancipation, according to the legal term used at the time, as well as upon some financial settlement. In 1837, for a middle-class woman, emancipation from her husband meant taking a great risk, as she would then have to bear the stigma of having dishonoured her husband and dishonoured herself. But from Anna Jameson's point of view, separation would free her completely from the "slavery" of marriage. In a letter to her sister Charlotte in March 1837, Anna Jameson reveals the painful situation in which she finds herself in Toronto: "The hope of being emancipated sustains me." Clearly, North America, America and Canada were emotionally charged for the female travellers Wright and Jameson. Both women were transformed and came face to face with their true selves after their visits to the New World.

Canada as a backdrop to Jameson’s travel narrative

Winter Studies and Summer Rambles was published in London in November 1838 after Anna Jameson spent the whole year writing its three volumes out of the notes she had collected over the previous year. In the first volume entitled Winter Studies, Canada remains somehow in the margins of Jameson's text. At that stage, Upper Canada was used as a canvas by Jameson to develop her own persona as a woman of letters or to express her personal view on the colonial system. The volume seems to be built on a juxtaposition of pages on European and German literature and art – "The Tragedy of Corregio", "Goethe's

410 Thomas, Love and Work Enough, op.cit., ch. 11, "Voyage to Canada".
Tasso, Iphigenia and Clavigo", "Music and Musicians" - which fill up the long hours that Jameson spent confined in her house in wintry Toronto. Her German literature pages are interrupted by chapters on colonial society and politics: "Toronto", "Clergy Reserves", "Society in Toronto", "Politics and Party", "Constitution of Upper Canada", "Prorogation of the House of Assembly", "Acts of the Legislature in 1837". The purpose of the first volume is not clearly identified and the reader gets the impression he is being shunted from one topic to the next at the authoress's whim.

In the second and third volumes, together entitled Summer Rambles, Jameson had left the seclusion of her Toronto home to visit the country. The woman of letters represented herself as a traveller and then as an adventurer in Red Man’s country, as she was the first white woman to venture near Sault Ste Marie by canoe. There, Canada became an open map, particularly in the most western districts, which Jameson visited in the summer. Her own rambles and wanderings fill up the page. The country and its inhabitants become more tangible as the British woman visitor interviews many of them, reports their speech and adds her own commentary on the progress of the country in chapters entitled for instance "The Niagara District", "Canadian Stage Coaches", "The Emigrant", "Town of Hamilton", "Town of Brandford", "Forest Scenery", "A Forest Chateau", "Story of an Emigrant Boy". Empathy towards Canada is conveyed to the metropolitan readers at this stage. She offers the first complete views on the "morals and manners" of the Canadian colonists in her second volume, insisting particularly on the role played by women in Canadian communities with her chapter "Women in Canada", in which she compares the ideal situation of educated women in the Canadian colony with that of women at home. Then, in her third volume, she devotes no less than 44 chapters to the Natives of Lake Huron, observing what she describes as the "relics of aboriginal society" at a time when colonial experts and missionaries in England were debating over methods to deal with natives in colonial possessions.

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Under the cover of a feminine travelogue, Jameson conveys to her "female readers" bold and radical imperial discourses on Canada while using her descriptions of the country and its inhabitants (British or natives) to digress toward radical proto-feminist statements on the cause of women in Britain. Jameson lays claim to her authorial position and her expertise about colonial Canada in her introduction. She uses the preface to confirm her full capacity to provide discursive analyses on the country she visited for a year. It will become evident that Canada constantly shifted from the margins to the centre of the text and vice versa in her work, enabling her to digress towards less feminine topics under the cover of narrating the Canadian landscape or the domestic habits of its inhabitants.

**A feminine version of travel narration in Canada**

As a woman, Jameson had to meekly admit that her "little book", as she presented her text, did not reveal the same qualities of observation and truth as men's narratives, nor the same rational organization in its narrative form as men would expect. The authoress thus declares to her readers that her work necessarily involved a feminine discourse that she addressed above all to a female audience, so that male readers would just have to show indulgence towards the text:

I throw myself upon the merciful construction of good women wishing it to be understood that this little book, such as it is, is more particularly addressed to my own sex, I would fain have extracted, altogether, the impertinent leaven of egotism which necessarily mixed itself up with the journal form of writing: but, in making the attempt, the whole work lost its original character – lost its air of reality, lost even its essential truth, and whatever it might possess of the grace of ease and pictorial animation: it became flat, heavy, didactic (10).

Besides the travelogue being the first instance of a woman's published account on the white colonial world, Jameson had to prove that the authorial tone she adopted concerning the state of affairs in Canada was unintentional. Jameson had to display a "natural" lack of authority on the question of imperial policies, at
least for middle-class male readers: "These notes were written in Upper Canada, but it will be seen that they have little reference to the politics or statistics of that unhappy and mismanaged, but most magnificent country.(10)"

In fact, the justification of this discursive position regarding the Canadian colonies takes up half of the preface, thus contradicting her statement that the notes have little reference to politics or the state of affairs in Canada. Jameson seemed to be taking extreme precautions before placing her colonial account before the public; Jameson knew full well that she was treading on dangerous ground for women with her political comments on the "unhappy" colonies in Canada. Anna Jameson, abiding by the rhetoric of the disclaimer, reassured the male reviewers, whose criticism she anticipated, that her work was "more particularly addressed to my own sex." This statement went hand in hand with the other routine admission on her feminine lack of understanding of economics or politics: "such discussions [on politics] are foreign to my turn of mind (12)". Apart from admitting her own flaws or limitations as a female author, she chastised herself, condemning her own book by criticizing her own propensity to display some "irrelevant matters" of "personal nature" which might expose her "to misapprehension, if not even to severe criticism"(10). In spite of this long self-indictment, Jameson nonetheless used her Canadian travelogue as a platform to express her imperial discourse and her feminist views.

Indeed, in the preface, between the lines, the authoress challenged men's authority over the representation of non-European countries, positing that women provided more complete travelogues than men by offering feminine "ease", "pictorial animation" instead of "flat, heavy, didactic" observations. She might have had in mind Catharine Parr Traill’s talent in depicting Canada to her female readers.⁴¹ The winters are frightfully severe. The account of the book I sent you is enough to give one cold, only to read it. It was the part I liked least and I must say I shiver at the idea of my dressing gown freezing to my skin and cracking when I take it off.”

⁴¹ See Anna Jameson to Ottilie Von Goethe on The Backwoods of Canada, Portsmouth, October 1, 1836. Anna Jameson evokes one of the scenes depicted by Catharine Parr Traill in the cold of winter: “The winters are frightfully severe. The account of the book I sent you is enough to give one cold, only to read it. It was the part I liked least and I must say I shiver at the idea of my dressing gown freezing to my skin and cracking when I take it off.”
foray into the genre of travelogue, as her journal took the metropolitan armchair reader onto "new grounds"(9): the northern shore of Lake Huron. In addition, she posited her woman's pen necessarily renewed the genre of Canadian travel accounts. Among the assets she believed a woman of letters like herself brought to the travel literature genre, she underlined "the impertinent leaven of egotism", in other words the autobiographical and personal element in the travel narrative, the woman's perspective on landscapes as well as on the domestic colonial world. According to her, it added to the work "its air of reality", "its essential truth"(10).

In Winter Studies, she decried and criticized the dull, information-laden male narratives that circulated on Canada in the metropolis: "While in Canada, I was thrown into scenes and regions hitherto undescribed by any traveller […], and into relations with the Indian tribes, such as few European women of refined and civilized habits have ever risked, and none have recorded."(9)

The originality of the Canadian views she provided as a woman traveller is reaffirmed at several points throughout the volumes. For instance, she maintains that the inclusion of developments on Canadian history or Canadian politics which she designed for her female readers, were not copied from books as, she implies, was the case in male narratives about Canada: "I [do not] feel inclined to encumber my little note book (consecrated to far different purposes, far different themes) with information to be obtained in every book of travels and statistics […]."(89) Here she suggests that women travellers, by dint of observation and conversation with local men and women, renewed the "dry" perspective or representation of the colony commonly found in the "commodity" books on Canada.

Authorial egotism or self-implication also brought out truth and authenticity, two elements that were required from published travel texts but which had been lacking so far in many "factual" accounts written by men. Therefore, as she explained, truth and authenticity, those important requirements for the reading public, authorized her to use some of the female egotism that had been so decried by male reviewers in Mrs Trollope's text for instance. By
implicating herself in the narrative, the representation of Canada she provided her readers with was for once authentic: "It was found that to extract the tone of personal feeling, on which the whole series of action and observation depended, was like drawing the thread out of a string of beads." (10)

**Canada through women’s eyes**

In most travelogues about Canada, visitors first recorded their physical reactions when plunged in the midst of the forests. In the case of women travellers, the emotional dimension of the response to the wilderness, the "leave of egotism" or "flimsy thread of sentiment" according to Jameson, clearly influenced the representation of the foreign land. For instance, Frances Wright's refusal to spend more time in the Canadian colonies was guided by her initial aesthetic response to the "Siberian frontier." Wright had disobeyed the picturesque convention by refusing to describe Upper Canada, as the scenery, a mixture of uncleared land and poor hovels, had not suited the aesthetic criteria of the picturesque dictated by her imperial eye. She had implicitly and explicitly rejected the whole colony as unappealing and unworthy to British eyes and to the British Empire. The aesthetic discourse Jameson uses throughout her narrative also reflects a form of ambivalence towards the colony, according to the emotional state of mind the authoress was in at the time of writing. In *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, Jameson rejected the scenic conventions and chose instead to depict ugly scenes when they appeared ugly to her, thereby subverting the "rosy-tint" picturesque language to suit her own personal and imperial agenda. She states that the tradition of the "scenic tour", a series of picturesque descriptions of foreign places which was expected from women's travel texts, had not been her purpose: "my object was not haste, nor to see merely sky and water, but to see the country.(224)"

Typically, her first reactions to the country can be gauged through her aesthetic response to it in "A winter journey", where the book opens on a dreary
representation of Toronto: "at present its appearance to me, a stranger, is most strangely mean and melancholy.(15)" Particularly striking, for instance, was her great disappointment before the Niagara Falls described in "Niagara in Winter". Upon her first visit to the Falls in December 1837, she refused to engage in any sort of verbal description of the North American wonder by either resorting to the sublime or to the picturesque conventions. She explains to her reader that she was greatly disappointed by the cataract having imagined it too many times before being confronted to its reality.

I have no words for my utter disappointment; yet I have not the presumption to suppose that all that I have heard and read of Niagara is false or exaggerated – that every expression of astonishment, enthusiasm, rapture, is affectation or hyperbole. No! It must be my own fault. (57)

Her first visit to the Niagara Falls in winter was an outing that had been meant to take her away from her dreary marital life in Toronto. Her sensations, founded upon a combination of her sight and soul, was not stimulated by the Falls, thus reflecting the distance and almost rejection she felt towards Upper Canada at that stage: "What has come over my soul and senses? – I am no longer Anna – I am metamorphosed – I am translated […] for I have not seen Niagara, the wonder of wonders and felt – no words can tell what disappointment!"(57)

This scene alone unsettled Jameson' readers and reviewers\(^{414}\). For instance, in 1841, Richard Henry Bonnycastle, Lieutenant Colonel of the Royal Engineers in Canada, who achieved some fame after publishing *The Canadas in 1841*, as well as a few updates on Canada in the following decade, criticized Mrs Jameson's representation of the Falls as insensitive. Though, he was referring to the very beginning of her work, Jameson’s insensitive reaction to the Falls led him to hurriedly condemn women travellers’ incompetence in capturing the wilderness:

I consider it fortunate that I have before my eyes the little work recently published by Mrs Jameson in which that lady, gifted as she undoubtedly is,

\(^{414}\) The fact that Mrs Jameson did not respond to the beauty of the Falls had also struck Mrs Tait as unusual and strange, in Tait’s *Edinburgh Review*. She also quoted the full passage that Bonnycastle included here.
calls herself an asshead, a clod, a wooden spoon, a fat weed growing on Lethe's bank, a stock, a stone, a petrifaction because she had seen Niagara, the wonder of wonders and felt no words can tell what disappointment. But Mrs Jameson made a hurried visit to the Falls in the depths of winter, when it was dangerous to tread on the ice [...] Mrs Jameson should have visited them in summer, or in autumn; and even then she would have found it difficult to obtain some of the best views which require the more robust frame of the male sex to attain. [...] I shall now give my ideas respecting these wonderful creations. 415

However, her refusal to interact with the landscape and her ambivalent aesthetic discourse towards the Falls, lasted over the dreary winter months only. Indeed in her second volume, in the spring, which heralded her escape from Toronto and from her estranged husband, Mrs Jameson returned to the Falls, in a different state of mind. She was then on a tour of the colony on her own, away from Tory politics and constrained marital life. Upon this second visit, Jameson willingly chose to interact with the Canadian landscape and its most symbolic representation, the Falls at Niagara. Like Traill's epiphanic moment in the woods, halfway through her "identity narrative", Jameson also staged her second visit to the Canadian wonder as a key moment in her journey towards self-discovery. Whereas she had thought she was "not Anna anymore" in the dead of winter and had been "metamorphosed" into a cold-hearted woman, in the summer it seemed that her emotions had flourished again, leading her to consider Canada in a more rosy light. In "Niagara in Summer", she voluntarily entered into some interaction with the Falls, the embodiment of the Canadian wilderness, with "her soul and senses", as if they were revealed to her for the first time. Having left for the Falls in a spirit of dejection, "alone-alone - and on my way to that ultimate somewhere of which I knew nothing, with forests, and plains", her emotions were then stirred by the Falls: "[...] in spite of the deep-voiced continuous thunder of the cataract, there was such a stillness that I could hear my own heart's pulse throb – or did I mistake feeling for hearing?"(203). Finally she left Niagara transformed into a

new Anna, underlining the epiphanic moment that the epitome of the Canadian wilderness had brought to her soul: "I shall never see again, or feel again – never! I did not think there was an object in nature, animate or inanimate, that could thus overset me now! (205)" Like Catharine Parr Traill before her, Anna Jameson offered to her readers a powerful perception of the New World in which communion seemed to exist between nature and womanhood.

Anna Jameson transgressed the male convention of distance from object to subject by explicitly involving her own body into the description, having warned her reader about her feminine subjectivity in the first pages of her journal. Canada would be depicted with her soul and senses:

If I look into my own heart, I find that it is regret for what I have left and lost – the absent, not the present – which throws over all around me a chill, colder than that of the wintry day – a gloom, deeper than that of the wintry night. This is all very dismal, very weak, perhaps; but I know no better way of coming at the truth, than by observing and recording faithfully the impressions made by objects and characters on my own mind – shadowed by the clouds which pass over its horizon, taking each tincture of its varying mood – until they emerge into light, to be corrected, or at least modified, by observation and comparison. Neither do I know any better way than this of conveying to the mind of another, the truth, and nothing but the truth, if not the whole truth. So I shall write on. (16)

Elizabeth Bohls notes that this type of creative redefinition of aesthetic conventions, responding to the landscape with senses and soul, as well admitting it, is rare among women travel writers, who did not necessarily reflect on their own writing. She places Wollstonecraft as the first woman to break the codes and to use "the episodic structure of the travel narrative as a frame for exploring and describing subjective states of being, her persona builds a complex interiority through her responses to her surroundings." Jameson, by reflecting on her own

417 Jameson's descriptions of North America actually reminded the *British and Foreign View's* reviewer of Wollstonecraft's vibrant descriptions of Norwegian sceneries.
emotional progress or distress, by projecting it onto the Canadian wilderness, also inscribes herself - in the manner of Catharine Parr Traill or Susanna Moodie - in the Canadian world which provided female writers with the opportunity to be transformed or metamorphosed. For instance, true to her colonizer's mission, halfway through her stay in the colony, she suggested to her correspondent that she should unfold a map of Canada to follow the traveller’s progress, to locate the female visitor in her new field of exploration: "that you may have some understanding of my whereabouts, my outgoings, and my incomings."(217)

However, unlike Traill's settler's perspectives acquired in living in the Canadian backwoods, Jameson's self-revelation in the Canadian wilderness did not transform her colonizer's gaze radically. Throughout her visit in Canada she maintains her status of British visitor, imparting some imperial overtones to her comments. What was transformed, however, was her personal and emotional situation, as she left an unhappy marriage to experience travelling as an emancipated woman. Her soul and senses therefore impart on her representation of colonial Canada more empathy, then sympathy towards the colonists, as the authoress becomes reconciled with herself and therefore with the landscape. Near Lake Huron, in the midst of the wilderness and natives, she declares having become part of the New World that appeared to be nurturing to women:

I cannot, I dare not, attempt to describe to you, the strange sensation one has, thus thrown for a time beyond the bounds of civilised humanity, nor the wild yet solemn reveries which come over one in the midst of the wilderness of woods and waters. [...] Our little boat held on its way over the placid lake and among green tufted islands; and we its intimates, two women, differing in clime, nation, complexion, strangers to each other but a few days ago, might have fancied ourselves alone in a new-born world. (444)

As opposed to volume one, which presented the constrained world of colonial Toronto as icy and unfriendly to women, volume two and three, "Summer Rambles", therefore reflected the mellowing of the original imperial overtones adopted in the “vulgar, factious city”, into a friendly discourse on the
natives of the backwoods - Canadians and Red Men. She was at last able to “live such a life”, she meant Mrs Traill’s life\textsuperscript{418}.

**Aesthetic discourse and imperialist views on Canada**

Her imperial discourse on the colony is intimately connected with her aesthetic discourse. This is very clear from the first words of chapter one where she describes Toronto as "ugly and inefficient\textsuperscript{(15)}", thus combining the lack of picturesque surroundings with the absence of sound government in "our capital" in the colonial world. Her position in Canada remains that of a mere visitor, which enables her to assess the potential of the colony for the metropolitan reader. Like male surveyors of Empire, whom Mary Louise Pratt described as the "capitalist vanguard" group, of the "master-of-all-I-survey" sort, - an attitude Pratt studied in male explorers' texts -, Jameson also proposed to her readers imperial moments of exploration-cum-colonization. The following short paragraph represents the very first instance of a woman's imperial discourse on the white Empire in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century.

On reaching the summit of this hill, I found myself on the highest land I had yet stood upon in Canada. I stopped the horses and looked around, and on every side, far and near, east, west, north, south, it was all forest – a boundless sea of forest [...] and here and there rose wreaths of white smoke from the new clearings. I gazed and meditated till, by a process like that of the Arabian sorcerer of old, the present fell like a film from my eyes, the future was before me, with its towns and cities, fields of waving grain, green lawns and villas, and churches [...] – for all this will be! Will be? It is already in the sight of Him who has ordained it, for whom there is not past, nor future: though I cannot hold it with my bodily vision, even now it is. (267)

However, from this elevated stand point, where she could "master all she surveyed", her typical imperial attitude, usually found in male travelogues on the colonial world, is softened by her empathy and even sympathy for the

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{418} Anna Jameson to Ottilie Von Goethe, Portsmouth, October 1, 1836, about The Backwoods of Canada, p. 59.}
contribution of the colonists to the future of this new country. In a typical instance of "feminine" imperial discourse, what begins as an apparently objective survey of the British Empire for the sake of the mother country, gradually becomes praise of the young nation that the colonists were building for themselves.

Jameson goes in her travel writings, from imperial surveyor of the "capitalist vanguard" type, to adopting the discourse of the "exploratrice sociale", which, according to Mary Louise Pratt, characterized women's imperial travel narratives in the 1840s. From the position of imperialist of the "capitalist" sort which Jameson adopted at the beginning of the book, when she stated "the upper province appeared to me superior to the lower province, and well-calculated to become the inexhaustible, timber-yard and granary of the mother country (11)", Anna Jameson suggests that women travellers, by interacting with the colonial landscape and the observation of settlers' life and manners, could foresee the future of English nations in the Empire, with "eyes and soul" (11). She believed that these colonies would become "the fairest provinces" of the young Queen's Empire (11). According to her, the "natural" attributes of middle-class Victorian women, which the narrator possessed, were put to great use when travelling in the white colonies as they could display "the desire to know, the impatience to learn, the quick social sympathies, the readiness to please and to be pleased (16)" by a landscape for instance, or by encounters with "natives" or local settlers.

Besides, contrary to typical travel accounts of the "capitalist vanguard" type, such as Canada as It Was, Is and May Be by Richard Bonnycastle, published shortly after Winter Studies, Anna Jameson clearly provided a literary analysis of her own discourse of femininity in travel writing. She explains she has purposefully applied the discourse of femininity to imperial observations of the colonial world, thus breaking away from the former conventions of travel writing. Women, she suggested, had to "engage" with what they described and to refuse the traditional male requirement of aloofness and distance with the object

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419 Mary Louise Pratt, Imperial Eyes, Travel Writing and Transculturation. London and New York, Routledge, 1992, see her paragraphs on Flora Tristan.
depicted. In the British colonies, Jameson suggested there was no reason to
remain aloof as the people residing in the backwoods were "no foreigners" (218).
In Canada, in white British colonies, empathy and even sympathy were
immediate, distance between subject and object was small. Clearly with this first
important travel narrative about Canada written at the beginning of Victoria's
reign, Jameson was opening up new vistas and new windows of opportunity for
women who wished to travel to the colonies. They too could venture on colonial
grounds and still renew the perspectives and the observations that male visitors
had missed or refused to describe out of lack of empathy or interaction. One of
Anna Jameson's reviewers writing in *The British and Foreign Review*, received
her Canadian travelogue as a ground breaking narrative standing out in its
originality and individuality among other volumes written by male visitors:

> There are not many choicer pleasures than such as arise from their [readers']
> encounter with the few books where something of individual manifests itself
> – where, instead of common place dogmatising, the philosophical critic
discerns traces of original speculation, - instead of mechanical and
colourless scene-copying, the student of the picturesque recognises the
graphic touch of a genuine artist – instead of feelings and emotions
described by rote and at second-hand, the anatomist of the human heart is
presented with some new secrets of that inner world, or the analyst of
society with some breathings of the outer and ever-changing airs of opinion.
Not one, but all of these pleasures have been afforded to the critic by former
writings of Mrs Jameson, and reveal themselves on his examination of this
her last work.420

Given Jameson's self-analysis of her strategies of perception, we can only
agree with one of her contemporary reviewers that she renewed the representation
of Canada by bringing to it her personal agenda, her "discourse of femininity".
Sara Mills puts forward the idea that men's travel texts with their formal,
scientific, objective, information-laden discourse were received as "general"
representations by the readers and the reviewers. In contrast, women's texts like
Jameson's, were taken as "personal" representations of a country, reflecting the
strong character or personality of the female writer more than the truthful interest

it might bring to the overall representation\textsuperscript{421}. Clearly, the numerous cross-references to Jameson's text, as well as its lasting success – it went through several successful editions over the following decade – indicate that such "personal" representations of Canada had a large impact on readers' minds. Under these women's signatures, striking images, personal impressions, personal sympathy or antipathy and personal comments all contributed to bringing to life British North American communities.

At the same time, these women travellers also brought novelty to their readers. They entertained them with representations of the domestic world by pushing doors, by sharing homes, by questioning and sharing the confidence of those whose responsibility it was to "haud the [colonial] house in order", according to Mrs Traill. Women travellers had more access to the domestic sphere than men. Patrick Shireff, in his \textit{Tour of North America} published in 1835, seemed to think so when he stated that "of the state of domestic society I am not qualified to speak from personal observation, farther than that the manners and customs of the people differ from those of Britain."\textsuperscript{422} Shireff criticized the fact that travelling women were considered as tourists, as amateurs in sum, while men were necessarily experts in some economic field. In his praise of Frances Wright's pages on American communities, he recognized women's expertise in, and qualifications for the "domestic" report on the colonial world and their subsequent input in the overall task of travel writing. While recognizing the validity of women's travel texts however, Shireff assigned them to a specific sphere of observation. Men would survey the country, map it out and eventually pass comments on its worth or opportunities. Women would describe the domestic manners of the North Americans that could only be described by a woman's pen


\textsuperscript{422} Patrick Shireff, \textit{A Tour through North America: together with a comprehensive view of the Canada, the US}, Edinburgh, Oliver and Boyd, 1835, p. 346.
as man did not possess much domestic expertise by which to "judge every thing he sees by the standard of his own country." 423

Anna Jameson's criticism of British imperial policies

Anna Jameson did not see it as her first prerogative as a woman to renew the representations of domestic Canada for British readers, as Catharine Parr Traill had apparently largely contributed to the description of the everyday life of gentlewomen settlers in the backwoods. Jameson had sent the Canadian settler's narrative, along with a map, to her German friend immediately after reading it, so that her friend could picture Anna in the backwoods. In fact, Jameson’s first plan to fill in the time in Canada, was to bring with her German books and to busy herself with writing on German literature, as she was under the impression, from her reading of Catharine Parr Traill's narrative and her description of the cold winters, that there was nothing else to do in winter than to read and write: "I shall probably write a great deal, for the Politics are so utterly repugnant to my taste (and my conscience also) that I believe the utmost I can do will be to remain passive." 424

However, when writing home to her family and German friend Ottalie von Goethe, she had to provide a description of morals, customs and manners of Toronto, the main Upper Canadian city in which she had to reside. Moreover, her first-hand knowledge of the affairs of the British Empire in Canada, as the "Chancellor’s wife", a title which featured on the cover of her British edition, entitled her to provide information on the growing restlessness of the province prior to the rebellion of January 1838. So gradually, from her central position as the wife of the British Attorney-General she was dragged into discussing colonial politics that also governed social relations in Toronto. She could not "remain passive" as she had hoped at first, all the more so as, during her return home, the

423 Shireff, op.cit., p. 12.
rebellions did take place. Upon her arrival in London, in a letter to Sarah Austin, Anna Jameson commented on the "late events" whose recent developments she had read about in the British newspapers. Her immediate analysis of the crisis reveals her clear and radical opinion on the failure of British colonial rule, as well as her support for the rebels’cause, thus contradicting the general opinion circulating in Britain according to which the rebels were to be arrested and condemned. In February 1838, Jameson supported the cause of the “liberal” rebels against the colonial Tory rule she had known so well:

I left Toronto before the breaking out of the disturbances, luckily; for though I think the lamentable folly of the people in being led by a few men into premature resistance could end no otherwise, yet I have sympathies with them. There has been much error and misrule on the part of our Government, and the magnificent capabilities of Canada, seem, as yet, little understood.425

In this brief personal comment on the rebellions lay the gist of Anna Jameson’s testimony on the state of Upper Canada prior to the rebellions. The "added" chapters on colonial politics would consist in showing to her British readers, particularly to Englishwomen, the reality of British imperial rule in Toronto under the undemocratic Tory oligarchy of the "Family Compact" which had caused the tensions eventually leading to the rebellions. Away from Mr Jameson, a member of the Tory clique through his colonial affiliation and appointment, and now officially separated from him, Anna Jameson was "not afraid to speak" anymore and to express "a few unpleasant thoughts."427

Jameson added a blatant feminist statement to her chapter on Upper Canadian politics that blew away her "feminine" disguise in the preface, and uncovered the irreverential author's position on public and private discourses. She

425 Anna Jameson to Sarah Austin, London, February 1838, quoted in Thomas, Clara, op.cit., p. 121.
426 Anna Jameson to Ottilie von Goethe, October 1, 1836, about her position in Toronto “where I shall be afraid to speak, almost to think, lest I should inadvertently hurt Mr Jameson’s interests instead of assisting them.”
427 Anna Jameson to Ottilie von Goethe, December 18, 1838, referring to Lord Melbourne’s interest in her book, “In spite of all the unpleasant truths I have told….”
Feminine Experience in the Margins of Empire

Le Jeune

sees no boundary between these spheres: "I get beyond my depth. I am not one who opine sagely that women have nothing to do with politics. On the contrary; but I do seriously think that no one, be it man or woman, ought to talk, much less write, on what they do not understand"(68). With this statement, she criticized past travelogues in which their male authors had debated with great "didactism" on Upper Canadian politics which, according to her, would be a real conundrum to any English visitor who had only passed through Upper Canada. She on the contrary, had been confined in Toronto for the whole winter and spring, and she had been able to develop better observations and to derive knowledge about the colonial system from within, as the wife of the second-in-command in the colonial hierarchy in Toronto, the Attorney General.

Anna Jameson set out to explain what "appears" to her to be the reasons that made of Canada such an "unhappy and mismanaged country" from the prison/prism of her Toronto house. Her imperial discourse includes observations and remarks on economic and political topics. She puts forward explanations for the outbreaks of violence in Lower and Upper Canada by providing an analysis of the tensions mounting while she was in the province and which she witnessed first-hand. Here she points first to the Colonial Office and its mismanagement of the colonies in Canada. She denounces the "whole tendency" of "our Colonial government" with "the perpetual change of officials, and change of measures; the fluctuation of principles destroying all public confidence […] how can we be surprised at the strangely anomalous condition of the governed?"(11)

Jameson seemed to attribute the new imperial concern of the British public to the coming to the throne of their young Queen. With the image of a weeping young Victoria, Jameson justified her authority as a female writer to represent the colonial world and to express her personal concern, one which all women now shared with their young sovereign.

Let us hope that the reign of our young Queen will not begin, like that of Maria Theresa, with the loss of one of her fairest provinces; and that hereafter she may look upon the map of her dominions without the indignant blushes and tears, with which Maria Theresa, to the last moment
of her life, contemplated the map of her dismembered empire and regretted her lost Silesia\textsuperscript{428}.

Empire visiting and Empire building were no longer a matter of military conquest and chauvinistic politics. Jameson justified her travel account of colonial Canada and her bold comments on British imperial practices in the British American colonies as relying on a sense of feminine duty, loyalty and sympathy towards her young Queen, as well as out of sisterly concern.

**Toronto, the Canadian capital considered as the epitome of colonial mismanagement**

Imperialism, subjectivity, and gradual interaction with her object all combine to provide her readers with a representation of the colonial *metropolis* in British North America. For Anna Jameson, Toronto represented the epitome of Canada, as it was meant to become the apex from which civilisation would flow onwards to the rest of the colonies. It is in Toronto that she forged her opinion on the state of the colonies that she later propounded in Britain. In the very first pages of her "journal", Jameson adopted a critical imperialist stand to describe it, one from which she never departed:

> Toronto – such is now the sonorous name of this our sublime capital – was thirty years ago, a wilderness, the haunt of the bear and deer, with a little, ugly, inefficient fort, which however, could not be more ugly or inefficient than the present one. (15)

In the short historical background she provides for her readers, she criticizes the choice of Toronto as the capital city for Upper Canada after having collected information on its history and lay-out "in the course of her [my] cold drive", after which she returned home "without being much comforted or edified" by what she had seen. For the freshly-landed British visitor, the location of the "metropolis", as she insists on calling Toronto, chosen by General Simcoe, had

\textsuperscript{428} Jameson, *Winter Studies*, p.12 (She was referring here to Maria Theresa of Austria)
been picked for its safe position after the American Revolution, but recent history, the war of 1812-1814, had proved him wrong. Besides Toronto being built near a swamp, the city was quite unhealthy she objected. Finally, she could not help comparing the lay-out of the streets to those of New York and noting the narrowness of the streets, an error which would "now not be easy to amend.(23)"

Nonetheless, Toronto had been chosen and ratified "as capital of the province and the seat of the legislature" thanks to "the safety and beauty of the spacious harbour, and its central position about half way between Lake Huron and the frontier line of Lower Canada. (22)"

In a derogatory tone she described this so-called civilized capital city ruled by the "Family Compact", the colonial elite formed by the so-called First Families of York/Toronto, former loyalists of strong Tory obedience. In a historical aside to her German correspondent, Anna Jameson recalled the coming to the British territory of "the first settlers who were obliged to fly from the United States during the revolutionary war.(66)" The description she provides of those who form the Tory elite in Toronto sounds more than ironical as she points to their responsibility in the actual mismanagement of the colony, partly because of their anti-liberal position and their fear of progress:

Thus the very first elements out of which our social system was framed, were repugnance and contempt for the new institutions of the United States, and a dislike to the people of that country, - a very natural result of foregone causes; and thus it has happened that the slightest tinge of democratic, even liberal principles in politics was for a long time a sufficient impeachment of the loyalty, a stain upon the personal character, of those who held them. The Tories have therefore been the influential party; in their hands we find the government patronage, the principal offices, the sales and grant of land, for a long series of years.(66)

She resorts to sarcastic and ethnocentric remarks to describe the environment in which she was going to spend the next six months, against her will, in a house she had to share with her estranged husband who also embodied the imperial Tory order in Upper Canada, though he had been appointed by a Whig government at home. Gradually, describing the domestic manners of this
colonial society becomes a means for her to fill the cold wintry hours. She intersperses her reflections on German literature and German high culture with comments on Upper Canada's colonial society - two societies poles apart. Jameson immediately complains about "snow without and monotonous solitude within"(33). In order not to become "ennuyée to death", she states, in reference to her well-known book in which she created the persona of a "dying ennuyée (34)"; she settles down to write some factual notes on society and on local politics. Jameson tells her readers:

The cold is at this time so intense, that the ink freezes while I write, and my fingers stiffen round the pen [...] I lose all heart to write home, or to register a reflection or a feeling – thought stagnates in my head as the ink in my pen – and this will never do! – I must rouse myself to occupation; and I cannot find it without, I must create it from within. There are yet four months of winter and leisure to be disposed of. How? – I know not; but they must be employed, not wholly lost.(29)

Both Jameson and Traill conveyed to their readers, the feeling of entrapment women felt in winter in Canada. During the long winter months, women were confined to the domestic world even more than in England, prompting them to use their minds to escape the "prison in the woods", as Moodie would also corroborate in Roughing it in the Bush in 1852.

Canada is represented as shutting out clever and educated women from action while providing them with some valuable time that they could use for mental reflection. Obviously, the Canadian winter bore heavily on the writing of both Traill and Jameson and the first representations of this colonial world were quite ambivalent, as the country was presented as rather hostile to women while at the same time offering a nurturing environment for gentlewomen writers. The mind could escape from the woods or the dreariness of colonial Toronto during the long hours of forced solitude.

The confinement to the house prevented Jameson from visiting the country in the first months of her stay. She mentions to her friend/reader that her heart was "dying within [her], gasping and panting for change of some kind – any kind!(33)" The early comments Jameson passes on colonial Canada are inspired by the rather narrow experience of the Canada she sees from her desk by the window of her house in Toronto: "I see nothing but snow heaped up against my windows, not only without but within(21)." However, staying at home does not mean that Mrs Jameson did not have access to the local press (32) or could not converse with some interesting informed "native" Canadians since she received many visitors to her house, such as young MPs for instance. She selected a handful of them for their distinction and intelligence to debate with her about local politics. Most of them were reformers, "there were one or two among the number, whom even in five minutes’ conversation, I distinguished at once as superior to the rest, and original minded, thinking men.(24)" Jameson began a "salon" in the Attorney-General’s house, in the fashion of London and Paris’ salons, enjoying the visits and attentions of some prominent young professionals, since she explained to her German friend: "there being in this new country far less of conventional manner, it was so much the easier to tell at once the brick from the granite and the marble.(24)"

Thanks to her private conversations with these enlightened male visitors, most of them having recently emigrated, as well as to her reading of the local press, she gradually became acquainted with the working of the colonial public sphere - all this within the confines of her own home. This enabled her to conveniently add to her first volume several important chapters on Toronto, first on its history and then on the state of politics in Upper Canada. This last point was the main concern of the British public in November 1838 when the results of Durham's mission were awaited at a time when rebels did not seem to be completely under control. Such was her first prerogative. Her preface closes with a long comment on the mismanagement of the colony that she blames on the local
Tory "Family Compact", but also on the home government that appeared to protect the vested interests of these first families.

Upper Canada appeared to me loyal in spirit, but resentful and repining under the sense of injury, and suffering from the total absence of all sympathy on the part of the English government with the condition, the wants, the feelings, the capabilities of the people and country. I do not mean to say that this want of sympathy now exists to the same extent as formerly; it has been abruptly and painfully awakened, but it has too long existed. […] Add a system of mistakes and mal-administration, not chargeable to any individual, or any one measure, but to the whole tendency of our Colonial government […] Add these three things together, the want of knowledge, the want of judgement, the want of sympathy, on the part of the government, how can we be surprised at the strangely anomalous condition of the governed? (11)

She first underlined the inefficiency of colonial policies in Upper Canada, referring particularly to the huge sums invested in military protection of the Empire in North America. Old colonial policies, which belonged to the 18th-century mercantile approach to Empire building, were not appropriate to Canada anymore, she suggested. Like Frances Wright in 1821, Jameson criticized the waste of English money in the military protection of an "interminable forest" while money could have been used to clear the land and to welcome emigrants. The use of the plural pronoun "we"/"our" to refer to the colonial possessions, which recur in this part of the text, showed the new personal imperial concern that Jameson shared with British readers towards the English colonies. In 1838, Jameson knew that the Canadian uprisings had awakened the interest and the concern of the British public which realized that the mismanagement of the Empire or the overbearing Republican influence of the Americans might cost them their second Empire in North America.

*Toronto in a state of political strife between the “Family Compact”, Reformers and Radicals in 1836*

Catharine Parr Traill had described the life of settlers’ communities in the backwoods as if this were the social status of all colonists. However, there was
also a small urban society living in the British provinces about which the metropolitan readers knew little. None of the male travellers before Jameson's *Winter Studies* had provided a chapter on life in the most advanced and civilized parts of the colonial world with the exception of the city of Quebec. There, in the centres of politics, economics, - and, hopefully, culture and knowledge -, which should most closely resemble upper-middle-class city life in Britain, observations of what Canadian society was going to become was essential for a foreign observer. In March 1834, York was incorporated as the first city of the province under the name Toronto. In 1837, it was still an "infant metropolis" according to Jameson.

Anna Jameson arrived in Canada in the midst of a great political and ideological strife. 1836 and 1837 were years disrupted by public meetings and various rallies in the districts to gather Patriots and Reformers under the leadership of William Lyon Mackenzie, in order to oppose the Tory oligarchy that ruled the colony. Tensions reached a peak in August 1837 while Anna Jameson was away visiting the natives. Armed skirmishes provoked by Orangemen occurred wherever Mackenzie and his group of supporters gave public speeches. Death threats towards Mackenzie circulated in the Tory press. Uprisings also took place in Lower Canada in the first days of December 1837, when the British army attacked patriot strongholds. Anna Jameson said nothing about the situation in Lower Canada, though she visited a man who was about to play an essential part in the crushing of the rebellions, John Colborne. She visited him in Lower Canada "before the breaking out of the late revolt" declaring she had found him "preparing against the exigency which he afterwards met effectively.(10)" This visit occurred in the fall of 1837, when patriot agitation had begun to spread in and out of Montreal. John Colborne had just been appointed to second Lord Goderich to prepare the British troops to respond to assaults. Though Anna Jameson "saw of course something of the state of feeling on both side", she decided not "to venture a word on the subject," believing the situation of Lower Canada different from Upper Canada, because of the French elements.
In Upper Canada, on December 7, 1837, shortly before Anna Jameson’s departure from New York, Mackenzie issued a Declaration of Independence, in fact a call to arms. Anna Jameson had returned home when the news of the December and January insurrections in Lower and Upper Canada reached her and the metropolis.

What representation of Canada and the "Canadians" did Mrs Jameson provide for her readers from her direct observation of the Toronto microcosm that was truly going through a political turmoil during her stay? What answers did she provide to the colonists’ demands in 1838, when the British House of Commons was busy examining solutions to end the rebellions? Anna Jameson based her analysis on information she had collected during the months she spent in Toronto when she avidly read local newspapers to survive the boredom of winter. From the footnotes, we gather her readings included Tory as well as opposition newspapers such as Francis Collins' *The Canadian Freeman* and William Lyon Mackenzie’s *The Colonial Advocate*, then *The Constitution*, as well as the pro-British *Quebec Mercury*. Her opinion was formed on the one hand through conversations with young reformers who visited her, but on the other hand through being the wife of the Attorney General since she also became acquainted with members of the old Loyalist Tory families.

In her historical asides, Anna Jameson explained to her correspondent, and to her English readers, how these First families had received huge land grants before 1791 and had become the natural landed elite of Upper Canada after the American Revolution. Since 1791, when Lower and Upper Canada had been created, members of the First families naturally collaborated with the successive colonial Governors with whom they shared power, and from father to son, they naturally dominated the lower house and the non-elected executive cabinet where their knowledge of local and colonial politics enabled them to overpower any new Lieutenant Governor's knowledge or will to rule. Over the years, through nepotism, all the official positions in the small colony, ranging from political appointments to legal ones, were entrusted to members of this powerful compact.
Their personal assets were their first priority as they secured huge expanses of
good colonial land, or disposed of public land to land companies and emigration
companies at will (66). Jameson criticized the imperial centre for having agreed
on the division of Canada in 1791 in two provinces, which enabled the Family
Compact to take the reins of Upper Canada: "at that time a chartered constitution
and a separate executive and legislative government were conferred on each
province; a measure well intended doubtless, but of which the wisdom was more
than doubtful, when we consider the results.(89)"

William Lyon Mackenzie, one of the leaders of the liberal opposition, used
his newspaper *The Colonial Advocate* to publicly denounce the malpractices of
these powerful men in office and the inappropriate application of the British
constitution as, in the Canadian colonies, men could still be arrested, tried and
dispossessed of their liberties or goods without any fair trial. Robert Gourlay had
suffered from such unfair treatment and Mackenzie would suffer the same fate at
the hands of the oligarchy. In 1833, Mackenzie published a thorough list of names
of individuals and families: "They own the means of production, the factories,
resources, transportation system, as well as, the political machinery of the state,
the police, media, education system…"^430^

Toronto represented to Jameson the sole embryo of urban society on which
Canada could rely, amidst "the interminable forest within half a mile [...] the
haunt of the red man, the wolf, the bear", if the British Empire in North America
wanted to develop into a harmonious middle-class liberal society. At the time
when she observed Toronto from her parlour window, she was not terribly
hopeful. She presented the "heterogeneous elements" which composed this so-
called "colonial society" as "a petty colonial oligarchy", a "self-constituted
aristocracy", as looking back to a *passé* eighteenth-century Britain, and as aping
the manners of Tory squires of yore without any original refinement.(65)

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^430^ Greg Keilty ed., *1837, Revolution in the Canadas, as told by William Lyon Mackenzie*, Toronto,
She found the Family Compact ridiculous and laughable. She suggested they would be unable to pass for upper-class or middle-class "urban" families if they lived at home. But because the "new capital of the new country" was in the middle of the wilderness, Toronto and its social leaders could only "pretend" or try to ape the manners of a "capital city" that they believed was "the capital city" of the Empire in British Canada (65). In fact, Jameson saw them as representing "the worst evils of our old and artificial social system at home, with none of its agréments, and none of its advantages (65)". For her imperial reader-cum-accomplice, she surveyed this artificial colonial society from her British haughtiness and declared as a typical English visitor: "We must necessarily hear, see and passively endure much that annoys and disgusts any one accustomed to the independence of a large and liberal society, or the ease of continental life.(66)"

In the 1830s, following the election of the Whigs in England, it seemed that the power of the Family Compact would be more openly challenged by the recent settlement of middle-class families and new professionals, as well as the second generation of British emigrants, the sons of artisans who had climbed in colonial society by dint of hard work and who could now hold seats in the Lower House with the Reformers (Jameson called them Whigs) or with the Radicals. William Lyon Mackenzie, a recently emigrated Scots, referred to the British middle-class emigrants as the "national bourgeoisie" as opposed to the first families described as "comprador bourgeoisie" (which referred to those merchants and financiers that had accompanied the conquistadors in their conquest of South America). Reformers had begun to form a proper opposition movement in the 1820s. Appeal to the Whig Cabinet in London began in the 1830s. The main complaint of the Reformers concerned the colonial constitution, which denied "responsible government" or "ministerial responsibility" to the appointed executive, mostly composed of Family Compact members.

Anna Jameson in her attempt to sketch the working of "our constitution of Upper Canada" to her reader, which she oversimplified by describing it as "that
of the mother country in miniature, and identical with it", underlined the necessary government patronage involved in this "state machinery" (89):

We have at the head of our executive, a governor [...] dependent only on the government at home, assisted by an executive council appointed by himself, and we have a legislature composed of a legislative council, nominated by the government, and a house of assembly delegated by the people.(89)

Such a democratic deficit – the absence of answerability of the non-elected Executive Council – as well as the obvious collusion between the imperial power and the appointed influential bodies, were denounced by two groups of liberal "Canadian" MPs, the "Whigs" and the "Radicals" (66). Petitions had been sent to London to ask for more responsible government. William Lyon Mackenzie relayed their petitions within Upper and Lower Canada with his newspaper until his printing office was destroyed in June 1826 by a group of "venerable men" from the Family Compact. William Lyon Mackenzie took up the campaign and ran for a seat in the following elections, in 1828. The opposition party now had a prominent leader and an outspoken man who brought victory to the party of discontent. However, the state of affairs of Upper Canada seemed to have been little heard of among the British public as Anna Jameson stated in her preface. Frances Wright had publicized Robert Gourlay's pamphlets. His remarks and conclusions on the ills of colonial management had been echoed by Wakefield. Over the years, the nepotism and oligarchic colonial governments seemed to have increased their power, but this was only an instance of petty colonial politics for British readers.

In the 1830s, the new Whig government in office in London, and the simultaneous campaign to reform Parliament in favour of an extended franchise for the middle-classes, as well as the end of rotten boroughs, had renewed the spirit of reform in the colonies. In the two Canadas there was hope that the new metropolitan government would right the wrongs the colonists had suffered from, as soon as the reformed Parliament in London would be made aware of the undemocratic situation in the colonies. Mackenzie was expelled from the
Assembly for libel in December 1831. He then launched a campaign in the press and received great support, thanks to which the following by-election was won by the “rebel”. Mackenzie used his newspaper to rally the population, mainly the freshly landed emigrants. He believed that the Whig government at home, - where "faithful and trusty men" were "at the helm of affairs in the parent state" -, would stop this despotic oppressing of the "free men and women of Canada." He believed "the eyes of the world [were] directed towards the Colonial possessions of Great Britain", and the actions and conduct of the Family Compact was "carefully watched and scrupulously weighed." The lack of circulation of information across the Atlantic and the lack of concern of the British public for the British American colonies at that stage, proved him wrong. Anna Brownell Jameson revealed in her preface the total ignorance in which the public was or had been kept regarding the state of affairs in the colonies. Mackenzie, after being once again re-elected and expelled by the Family Compact, decided to go to London with a petition. The message Mackenzie brought back from the centre to the margins was clear: the Colonial Office and the home Parliament did not wish to see things change as no constitutional improvement had resulted from Mackenzie's or the Lower Canadian Patriots' petitioning.

Mackenzie ran for the position of mayor of Toronto in 1834. Such was his position when Anna Jameson arrived there in 1836. He was also the editor of The Constitution, which he founded in 1836 and in which his demand for reforms had taken a radical turn. Comparisons with the American system filled the pages to the detriment of the British system. His opponents called him "disloyal" and an "American agent." In fact he was part of a patriotic organization founded in December 1834, the Canadian Alliance Society, whose basic aims were to educate the population by diffusing political information. The tracts they circulated, which were also designed for people in Lower Canada, demanded responsible government as well as the termination of the meddling of the Colonial Office in the affairs of the colonies. Talks of independence and revolution began to be

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431 Colonial Advocate, 19 January 1832.
printed in the *Colonial Advocate* in 1834. The first declaration of the kind had come from Joseph Hume, the radical Scottish MP in the British House of Commons. Upon a visit to Canada, Hume had clearly seen the political and constitutional dead end in which the English parliament kept its colonies, preferring to rule with an oligarchy rather than with and for the people. In May 1834, Hume's letter to Mackenzie was printed in the *Colonial Advocate*: "[...] that crisis is fast approaching in the affairs of Canada which will terminate in independence and freedom from the baneful domination of the Mother Country and the tyrannical conduct of a small and despicable fashion in the colonies." However, Hume’s voice was in minority at home.

In January 1836, a few months before Mrs Jameson's arrival, Francis Bond Head had been appointed Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, after another *Report of Grievances* had been sent to London. Anna Jameson met with Lady Head twice prior to her departure, and she developed some affection for the couple. Lord Head received Anna Jameson on several occasions during her stay and they developed a friendship. In spite of Head’s messy and dubious administration and Jameson’s actual support of reforms, she remained faithful to Lord Head, the man, even in times of political strife. Indeed against all odds, shortly after his arrival in Toronto, Bond Head began to rule quite despotically without the Executive council and without the Assembly. In April 1836, public meetings organized by disgruntled MPs and even a handful of Tory Cabinet members wrote a declaration, addressed to the Lieutenant Governor, complaining about his unconstitutional practices. Lord Head, under the influence of his Tory executive, dissolved the Assembly and promoted, with the help of the Family Compact, a campaign in favour of the Tory party. Evidence of bribery was to be found. Besides, pamphlets were issued describing the reformers as "American agents" plotting against the people of Canada by planning an American invasion of the colony.

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432 *Colonial Advocate*, 22 May 1834.
On July 4th 1836, William Mackenzie began to publish his revolutionary paper *The Constitution*, advising Upper Canadians to boycott English goods, to exchange their paper money for real money in order to bankrupt the colony and business:

Canadians! It has been said that we are on the verge of a revolution. We are in the midst of one; a bloodless one […] Calm as society may seem to a superficial spectator, I know that it is moved to its very foundations, and is in universal agitation.[…] The question today is not between one reigning family and another, between one people and another, but a question between privilege and equal rights, between law sanctioned […] and a hitherto unheard-of power, a new power just started from the darkness in which it has slumbered since creation day, *The Power of Honest Industry*.

Mackenzie represented the party of the people, the farmers, millers, and other industrious men and women who had settled in Canada to make a decent living. He opposed the working districts of Upper Canada to the corrupted city of Toronto, where privilege and money only represented a small portion of the population. The rest of the province, where "labour was the true source of wealth" according to Mackenzie, echoed Catharine Parr Traill's narrative. Traill had not directly engaged herself in any political debate or referred to any political strife in the colonies. However her own support for "honest industry", for the reward living in Canada brought to hard-working families like hers and those living in the backwoods communities, captured the state of feelings of the recently emigrated settlers in these remote districts.

**Anna Jameson's views on colonial politics**

It took Anna Jameson over a month to take stock of the political issues that were at stake in Toronto in 1837. She acquainted herself with the system of

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433 *The Constitution*, 26 July 1837 (italics in Mackenzie's address)

434 Mackenzie's thoughts or diatribes never reached the metropolitan centre but his words and ideas would nevertheless be heard in women's texts. In her *Winter Studies*, Anna Brownell Jameson set about to describe and denounce the "despotic" form of colonial government, developed with the apparent complicity of the Colonial Office. She also underlined in her *Summer Rambles* the great progress of industry in the districts away from Toronto. Susanna Moodie also conveyed William Lyon Mackenzie's political vision for Canada in 1852 in *Roughing it in the Bush*. 
colonial government in Upper and Lower Canada through "travel books and statistics" (89) and as a consequence she was able to inform her German friend on the local political system, as Ottilie or her female readers "may know" little about it. In January 1837, freshly landed from the metropolitan imperial centre, Jameson was a supporter of the British Colonial Office and its rightful representatives in Upper Canada, Lieutenant Governor Francis Bond Head and Attorney General Jameson who both supported the leading members of the Tory community in Toronto. By February already, Anna’s political and imperial perspective had shifted to support the Reformers. Political debates, newspaper articles and conversations seemed to have enlightened Anna Jameson on colonial politics. She had become aware that Upper Canada could not really be governed from the metropolitan centre and that the constitution granted to the colonists was not adjusted to the working of the colonies.

During her stay in Toronto, Jameson was confronted with a number of controversial political issues by turning to the current debates in the colonial Assembly and in the local press. Topics included the sale of clergy reserves, the progress of the colony in terms of education, the uniting of the two Canadian provinces and demands for more responsible government, which all revealed a growing distrust of the mother country’s legitimacy over Canadian affairs.

**Clergy reserves: Anna Jameson’s gradual introduction to colonial issues**

At the beginning of the year 1837, the representatives of the population, composed of some Tory MPs and some Reformers (some "Whigs" and a few "radicals", she said) in minority in 1836, campaigned in favour of the sale of clergy reserves which were huge tracts of land set aside by the colonial government for the Church of England for its own maintenance in 1791. According to Mrs Jameson, the question was "momentous to the future welfare of the colony, and interesting to every thinking mind.(29)" "Bitterness" among political factions characterized the atmosphere in the House of Assembly. In
1832, Reformers, representing the inhabitants against the Crown and the local Tory oligarchy, had put forward that the sale of these large land reserves would create a fund for the purpose of establishing schools in the colony and they had suggested that it would also benefit other denominations. For that purpose, they had petitioned the imperial government "that the whole of the clergy reserves should be appropriated to the purposes of education, for which the funds already provided" were wholly "inadequate."(30)

Jameson described the situation as rather tense as the Assembly, which a few years earlier had been rocked by the presence of the "radicals of 1832", was now controlled by a Tory majority with the complicity of governor Francis Bond Head favouring the Church of England. This meant that the Assembly was in total contradiction and illegality regarding imperial laws. Indeed in 1831, an order had been given by the Colonial Office, concerning the sale of Crown lands in the white colonies (following Wakefield's lobbying). This cession of the crown lands had been “sent over to the legislature with a recommendation to settle the whole question.(30)” Upper Canada legislature refused to comply with this law and seemed to totally disregard the imperial decision, at least when it applied to church reserves. Church reserves were defended and protected by the local Loyalist Tory families. Jameson insisted on this point in her account of the tensions between London and her Canadian colonies. She gradually realized how impotent the metropolitan government appeared to be when confronted with an oligarchic local government. She suggested that the imperial government had somehow lost control over Upper Canada and this heralded a total loss of control over the rest of the white colonies in Canada. Anna Jameson was shocked by this lack of respect on the part of the local "petty oligarchy" towards decisions taken by the metropolis.

At first, colonial politics was viewed by Jameson as a spectacle of Empire and her tone was very mocking and condescending towards those she saw as "colonists" and "settlers". Like most metropolitan readers, she could not relinquish from the idea that Canadians, for lack of proper education, and owing
to their "colonial" status, were unable to rule themselves. Her observations on their practice of politics led her to question the real use of Houses of assembly in the colonies. In the first month of her residence in Canada, she explained that she disapproved of the demands for responsible government supported by the Reformers in the local assembly (90). At this stage, she naturally sided with Francis Bond Head, who represented the imperial power. One must bear in mind at this point that Anna Jameson was still the wife of the Attorney General of the colony, who had been appointed by the Colonial Office. Gradually, her strict English imperialist views would be challenged, as she became acquainted with the Reformers’ platform through private conversations. This would be even more obvious in the following spring when Anna Jameson was able to eventually leave Toronto, its “petty oligarchy” and her estranged husband, for the freedom of the backwoods of Canada.

To justify her first impressions that the Family Compact was not capable of taking the destiny of the province in hand, she mocked the illiteracy of some Tory MPs. This became particularly obvious in the debate over clergy reserves and education funds in Upper Canada: "With regard to the petition forwarded to the home government, it has been an ample source of ridicule that a house of Parliament, of which many members could not read, and many more could not spell, should be thus zealous on the subject of education."(31) However, those whose handwriting and spelling she found the most ridiculous, belonged to those who paraded "as honourable members, men of influence and property too, at which it was impossible not to laugh.(31) " According to her, because they were born in North America, they had "not received the advantage of good education" that more freshly landed emigrants possessed, and their narrow-minded view on politics necessarily led them to oppose the open-minded, educated Liberal MPs. In the debate over the selling of church reserves to raise funds for the progress of education in the colony, those who opposed it were among the least literate MPs who in fact "should be anxious to insure it to their children."
Political debates were quite limited in the local Assembly. According to Anna Jameson, these Tory MPs would have been incapable of dealing with more important issues than those concerning "domestic" affairs. The Assembly and its debates were open to the public in the colonies. The new British Parliament had its visitors' gallery in London, where women were not admitted. But Canadian assemblies had their audience. In Canada, the public and the private spheres seemed to mix, as local politics was limited to colonial business as if it were an extended "family" affair. For instance, the prorogation of the House of Assembly was the occasion for a family reunion in Toronto, followed by a social party. Women, wives, mothers and children were invited and showed up at the Assembly in their coaches and best attires. Speeches were listened to and the speakers' talents were debated by all afterwards.

My proper place was on the right, among the wives of the officials, the aristocracy of Toronto. The toilettes around me were gay and pretty, in the fashion of two or three years ago, and all the ladies showed a disposition to be polite and amiable; but I was too much a stranger to join in the conversation, and there were none near me to give me any necessary explanation or to point out any remarkable or distinguished person, if there were such.[…] The governor, as he alighted, was enthusiastically cheered by the populace – a circumstance rather unusual of late, and which caused a great deal of excitement and exultation around me.(91)

The condescending tone Jameson uses in her descriptions of political life in Upper Canada particularly struck the reviewers of Winter Studies and Summer Rambles, as they each noted how amusing they found these local anecdotes. The anecdote of the social gathering at the Assembly was quoted by two reviewers who relished “this spectacle” of colonial politics.

After a month in the colony, Jameson gradually abandoned her early sarcastic and condescending tone towards the Upper Canadians, having mistaken their leaders for the whole of the population. Anna Jameson mentioned receiving visitors every day, mostly men with whom she held conversations on the state of affairs of Upper Canada. Proper knowledge of the colonial world had been

435 Taits' Edinburgh Magazine and the British and Foreign Review (see previous chapter)
lacking in her early comments on Canada when she had used "quotes per book" she said, to provide immediate factual descriptions on the colony. Her knowledge of the colonial world was acquired gradually in the country, thanks to her interaction with the people first in her parlour and then in her encounters with colonists in the backwoods.

**Jameson's support for reforms against oligarchic rule in Upper Canada**

Her February journal entries reflected her better apprehension of the local tensions between the Family Compact and their liberal opponents. She seemed to grasp the extent of the colonial problem. Her Conservative imperialist views on colonial self-government were transformed, as she understood the necessity of setting up local assemblies and of introducing responsible government to challenge colonial oligarchies. The reasons why Upper Canada, from what she could see in Toronto, was in a state of economic and political stagnation were at last clear to her. Two reasons stood out: "a hateful factious spirit" and "the ignorance of the colonial officials at home"(66-67).

According to her, three parties were vying with each other in Toronto: Tories, Reformers and Radicals. First she identified the "petty colonial oligarchy" formed by the Tories as the source of political tensions in Toronto. She described them as "the first settlers of Upper Canada", having left the American colonies "in consequence of their attachment to the British government". For that they had been "recompensed" by huge grants of land in Canada. According to Jameson, their hatred of everything American led them to reject "the slightest tinge of democratic, or even liberal principles in politics" which they considered a "stain upon the personal character of those who held them." The Family Compact, which she had seen at first as the natural supporter of British loyalty in the colony, now appeared to her as backward looking and as not particularly liable to foster progress. Besides, collusion with corrupted civil servants acting without a tight control from London, contributed to the lack of efficiency of imperial policies in
Toronto. After having explained to her readers the intricacies of what she described as the colonial "state-machinery (89)", i.e. "our political constitution and form of proceedings (89)", she came to understand that the "democratic" powers of the representative of the people in the colonial assemblies were quite limited.

Reporting the limited leeway given to Governor Francis Bond Head in 1836, she blamed it on the British Constitution more than on its powerless representative. Indeed, upon his arrival, Head had tried to include three Reformers on his executive council, otherwise composed of five Tories. However, the Reformers immediately petitioned him in a document "in which they assumed as their right precisely the same powers and responsibilities as those of the cabinet ministers at home, alleging that although nominated by the governor, they held themselves responsible to the will of the people"(90). "Sir Francis" replied that he was himself appointed by the British Cabinet and that he was responsible for his council to them. He then refused to allow debates over the possibility of reforms to the colonial constitution, leading to the resignation of the three Reformers from the executive council.

In fact she stated that the Colonial Office and the British government should intervene by supporting local bills, or by nominating Lieutenant Governors who could emancipate themselves from the local oligarchy by proposing reforms to the constitution in the local Assembly. However, for this purpose, London would have to change the constitution. By now Francis Bond Head supported Conservative policies by protecting the oligarchy's vested interests against the interests of the elected Assembly whose MPs demanded reforms Bond Head could not grant:

I wish that the government would do something to remove the almost universal impression that this province is regarded by the powers at home with distrust and indifference – something to produce more confidence in public men and public measures without which there can be no enterprise, no prosperity, no railroads. (230)
In short, she realized the criticism that she had first addressed to the "petty" and uneducated colonists, whom she had seen as unable to govern themselves and to obey the imperial centre's policies, was untenable. Those who were to blame were the Colonial Office and the London Cabinet whose politics in the colonies supported a Conservative platform while they should have been defending more liberal views by granting responsible government to the colonists, responsible men and women, not secondary subjects, as their colonial status might indicate.

Anna Jameson gradually made clear her support for political reforms when she identified the true opposition to the Tories. The "power and prejudices of the Tory families" were indeed denounced by the "Whigs of Upper Canada". They were the reformers who represented the future of the colony. They supported a connection with the mother country with “boundless loyalty”, and rejected the American institutions and their principles. According to her, these "young men of talent" and "professional men" possessing "superior education and character" found themselves "shut out" from power and influence by the Family Compact because they insisted "on the necessity of many reforms in the colonial government (67)". The Compact held control over land management such as the Crown Reserves or colluded with a few powerful landowners. Jameson stated in her preface in typical Wakefieldian fashion that "the general mismanagement of the government lands […] seemed to be the most prominent causes of the physical depression of this splendid country." The Tory families, who occupied the main political seats in the local government, in order to protect their vested interests, were accused by Jameson of displaying "a plentiful lack of public spirit", as if they were not really "of the people" of Canada. Even though she refused to state where her political interest lay (as she believed it was inappropriate for a female author), Jameson still asked for urgent reforms of the colonial system of government, as well as reforms of the "imperial project", which implied a revision of imperial rule by the Colonial Office.
In her panorama of Toronto politics, Jameson also acknowledged a third party that was distinctly in the minority in February 1836. Those were the "Radicals" which she clearly distinguished from the Liberal group. These agitators, under the leadership of Mackenzie, who were "neither influential nor formidable" according to Anna Jameson, were described to her readers by epithets she simply quoted from Tory newspapers, without necessarily sharing these views on the Radicals. They were said to be "rascals" and "scoundrels" because they supported the Republican ideal that they apparently wished to see established in Upper Canada (67). Jameson’s interest in the ideas of this group came through when she concluded that it also counted "men of talent and education."

The mission she had assigned to herself in writing this volume was to denounce "the degree of ignorance relative to the country itself, not credible except to those who may have visited it."(11) She did not wish to expose her own party views, fearing she should "get beyond [her] depths", though she humorously described herself as "not one of those who opine sagely that women have nothing to do with politics.(68)"

Not but that I have my own ideas on these matters, though we were never able to make out, either to my own satisfaction or to yours, whether I am Whig or Tory or Radical. In politics I acknowledge but two parties – those who hope and those who fear. In morals, but two parties those who lie and those who speak truth. (68)

With this declaration of independence from the party line, Jameson identified the origins of the troubles of 1838 as being not the so-called "scoundrels" and "rascals", contrary to what British newspapers were claiming in January 1838, but the results of political tensions between the Tory families and young "men of talent of education" whose resolution was neglected by London (67):

There is among all parties a general tone of complaint and discontent – a mutual distrust […] the causes of which I cannot as yet understand. Even those who are enthusiastically British in heart and feeling, who sincerely believe that it is the true interest of the colony to remain under the control of the mother country, are as discontented as the rest; they bitterly denounce
the ignorance of the colonial officials at home, with regard to the true interests of the country: they ascribe the want of capital for improvement on a large scale to no mistrust in the resources of the country, but to a want of confidence in the measures of the government, and the security of property. (67)

Jameson believed that the colonists were not to blame. Quite the contrary, they all displayed a "loyal spirit" though they seemed to suffer from "the total absence of all sympathy on the part of the English government." Jameson openly criticized imperial politics as it was practiced at home and she tried to awaken metropolitan minds to these colonial questions that should concern any educated man or woman: "a system of mistakes and mal-administration, not chargeable to any one individual, or any one measure, but to the whole tendency of our Colonial government; the change of measures; the fluctuation of principles destroying all public confidence […] (11)."

On the imperial project for Britain: Jameson and the Wakefield system

Jameson’s mission in writing this political panorama of Upper Canada, consisted in developing sympathy and support towards the decent British settlers living in Canada. It would seem that she counteracted the various comments found in the radical British press shortly after the rebellions, according to which England should let go of her colonies as they were only bringing trouble to the mother country. She was also going against the Tory and Whig newspapers that represented the colonists as unable to rule themselves. Instead, Jameson put forward her views of a solid British empire, of self-governed English nations, as if her imperialism had been invigorated by her first-hand knowledge of Canada. Indeed, far from the condescending haughty ethnocentric tone she had adopted at first, she awakened her readers at home to the poor state in which many settlers found themselves because of the lack of proper imperial coordination on the part of the imperial centre and she alerted her readers, her female readers, on the need to change the imperial project.
Indeed, there was hope for the British Empire in Upper Canada, because according to Jameson, "besides being a small place, it [Toronto] was a young place." She advocated a strong united Empire in which both colonists and English men would find their interests: "In spite of this affectation of looking back, instead of looking up, it [Toronto] must advance – it may become the thinking head and beating heart of a nation, great and wise, and happy; - who knows? (69)"

Inspired here by the idea of Wakefield’s liberal "imperial project" for the British Empire, she clearly supported his vision of the Empire as a harmonious whole, composed of loyal nations. She anticipated the principles developed in 1839, by Durham and Wakefield, in Report on the Affairs of North America, according to which more measures of responsible government should be placed in the hands of "young men of talents" in Upper Canada. As she stated: "As far as I can understand, the government of this province is not derived from the people who inhabit it, nor responsible to them or their delegates. (91)" The overpowering constitutional presence of the British executive was denounced by Anna Jameson. More "community feelings", "honesty" and a natural sentiment of attachment towards the mother country would flow once the Tory clique were removed or in a minority. Tensions and strife provoked by "the strangely anomalous condition of the governed" would be solved if Lieutenant Governors promoted the democratic principles of the Constitution in the colonies. Jameson appealed to the middle-class public to influence the Colonial Office and to lobby in favour of a proper "imperial project".

Her contribution to the imperial public debate, which was particularly heated in the metropolis in 1838 and 1839, resided in her British imperial enthusiasm. Defending the interests of the colonists was not incompatible with the idea of a strong Empire combined into a federation whose centre would be the metropolis. Wakefield had promised nothing less to his followers and to his readers. Throughout her book, Jameson reminded her readers that her political contribution to the subject of the British Empire had been prompted out of feminine concern for the Canadian subjects and for their "moral" safety. With her
close analysis of Upper Canada, she seemed to illustrate what Wakefield had theorized in *England and America* in 1833.

Her political representation of the British Empire reflected the feminine views that she hoped her female readers would eventually share with her. First, Britain had to preserve her Empire at all costs as Canada was a magnificent country which would serve the prosperity of Britain, as "in climate, in soil, in natural productions of every kind, the upper province appeared to me [...] well calculated to become the inexhaustible timber-yard and granary of the mother country.(11)" However, it did not mean that colonies should be neglected or used as mere granaries. Colonists, British settlers, would bring to it their "energy" and "civilization" as well as some "moral development." Toronto, once reformed politically and socially, would not "be looking back", but "looking up" and progress would ensue in for it to become "the thinking and beating head and beating heart of a nation, great and wise, and happy."(69) However, she suggested that in order to reform this "colonial patronage" and these "local jealousies" that were destroying the peaceful progress of the colonies and promoting Tory politics instead of a more communal concern for the people, a federation of the colonies should be enforced by the imperial government. Moreover, such a Union of the colonies might "secure the subjection of the whole to the British crown". Here too she anticipated Durham’s conclusions.

At this stage her views on the future of the British Empire as a loose aggregation of replicas of the mother country echoed Wakefield’s Empire utopia. Jameson's dream, which she shared with her female and male readers, was that of a strong Empire, composed of British nations, - beginning with the federation of the five Canadian provinces - in which the metropolis would not be challenged by the margins:

It seems, on looking over the map of this vast and magnificent country, and reading its whole history, that the political division in five provinces, each with its independent governor and legislature, its separate correspondence with the Colonial Office, its local laws, its local taxation [...] may it not also have perpetuated local distinctions and jealousies – kept alive divided
interests, narrowed the resources, and prevented the improvement of the
country on a large and general scale? (71)

Furthering Wakefield's dream of Empire and using her capacity to
envision, a faculty she deemed feminine, Jameson did not rule out the time when,
she believed, Canada might become a country within the British Empire. After
many reforms and a "fair proportion of social consideration and influence of
young men of talent", as well as the federation of the five colonies, Canada might
go from colony to country though this was not yet the case in 1838, save for some
female colonists like Traill:

Canada is a colony, not a country; it is not yet identified with the dearest
affections and associations, remembrances, and hopes of the inhabitants: it
is to them an adopted, not a real mother. Their love, their pride, are not for
poor Canada, but for high and happy England, but a few more generations
must change all this. (66)

Canada would only become a country when some "patriotic feelings",
which she described as "the dearest affections and associations, remembrances
and hope of its inhabitants" would be felt by the colonists. She believed that in a
near future Canada, now the "adopted mother", would eventually outshine Britain
in the heart of the emigrants and become in its turn "a real mother"(66). In a rare
instance of woman's direct imperial discourse, the female traveller seemed here to
reflect on the way the British Empire would evolve and develop in the course of
the decades to come. In 1838, Jameson showed great liberal foresight and a real
perception of colonial politics.

In these insightful chapters, Jameson provided a first instance of reflection
on the question of "nationalism" and "patriotism" in the white colonies through
the writings of a British visitor, acknowledging, as Durham did a few months later

\footnote{Anna Jameson was familiar with Wakefield’s ideas as it must be noted that Anna Jameson was
a close friend of Mrs Grote the wife of historian George Grote, himself a close friend of Edward
Wakefield and a founding member of the National Colonization Society in 1831. Thomas, Clara,
\textit{Love and Work Enough, op.cit.}, p. 145. Anna Jameson also patronized the dinner parties organized
by Mrs Buller, Charles Buller’s mother, in London as we can infer from her letters to Ottilie.}
in his *Report*[^437], the role of national pride and the individual’s loyalty to the community. She particularly insisted on the importance of the sentiment of "attachment" to the new land, which Catharine Parr Traill had clearly evoked in her *Backwoods*. Jameson also declared that the imperial centre had to play an important role in fostering such a sentiment of colonial attachment to the colony and the homeland, thanks to a reform of the colonial system. Her developments were empirical. Observations on imperial politics were provided here by a woman with a good knowledge of Toronto. She heralded Lord Durham’s recommendations in his *Report*, which many imperial historians still describe as very liberal and central to Empire-building[^438]. Most of Durham’s recommendations, formed out of his observations of Lower Canada, were gradually applied to Canada then to the rest of the white Empire, in the following decade. But Anna Jameson was already working on her political chapters in the first months of 1838 when Durham was still preparing to go to Canada. Anna Jameson published her book in November 1838 while Britain was awaiting Durham’s return to London and the release of his Report. In his *Report on the Affairs of British America* published in February 1839, Durham deemed it urgent to provide Canadians with the possibility of being governed by the full English constitution of 1688[^439], not a colonial version of it, by introducing the British principle of “responsible government”, that is to say the colonial legislative


[^438]: Central to his Report, was Durham’s development on “responsible government” which promised the colonies a degree of political independence within a larger empire, heralding the relationships most colonies and dominions will hold with the home country in the Commonwealth system.

[^439]: For Durham, the “English” Constitution of 1688 had the great virtue of preventing rule by clique and faction which plagued colonial politics.
assemblies should be given the power to dismiss irresponsible ministries in the manner of the British House of Commons.\(^{440}\)

Offering colonial assemblies this democratic independence in their system of government and in their domestic affairs would necessarily foster their development while ensuring their attachment and loyalty to the home country. Thanks to the system of "responsible government", the Liberals in the colonies would at last be given the possibility of acceding to power. Durham also suggested a Union of the two troubled colonies, Lower and Upper Canada, which, in due time, would put the colonies on the road to federation with the other colonies in Canada\(^{441}\) by eradicating French nationalism, the “the fatal feud of origin” that had plagued Lower Canada. Creating a united Parliament would then also lead to the eradication of the old Tory oligarchy and factious loyalties in both colonies and would serve to promote the growth of liberal ideas in Canada. Anna Jameson, with her far-sighted analyses and recommendations, pronounced with a woman’s "soul and senses", had said no less in November 1838. Federation was eventually supported by the British Parliament in the 1860s, leading the five Canadian colonies to organize themselves in a dominion on July 1, 1867.

Anna Jameson on how to reform morals and manners in Upper Canada and on women's roles in this imperial project

In Winter Studies, Jameson sees herself as the envoy of educated middle-class British women in Canada, her role to bring back sketches of the colonial world and to study the manners of its inhabitants among whom she is "yet a stranger – helpless as to means, and feeling my way in a social system of which I know little or nothing"(32). The British middle class, which divided into sub-
groups, ranging from lower to upper middle classes had gradually developed subjective components, based on consciousness, ideology and language, which defined social and political behaviour and above all shared forms of identity to which members of this huge developing group adhered. Some subjective criteria, like similar cultural practices, created a form of bourgeois identity to which foreign cultures or colonial manners and customs could be compared. Among the criteria which had to be found in a developed or "advanced" middle-class society, Kidd and Nicholls observed "the practice of religion, voluntary and charitable activities, leisure pursuits, the cultivation of professional status, education, writing – and their organizational and institutional forms: churches, schools, newspapers, voluntary and charitable associations, socio-cultural networks and professional bodies." It is observable that many of these activities were best measured by upper-middle-class women themselves, who were involved in religion, leisure activities, education and writing. Equipped with the social parameters of the upper-middle-class English and German civilisations she was well acquainted with, Anna Jameson deemed Toronto a colony where there was "no society" (65), a small community "remote from all the best advantages of a high state of civilisation" (69), where the Westerner must "passively endure much that annoys and disgusts any one accustomed to the independence of a large and liberal society, or the ease of continental life." However, the imperial visitor also believed that means to improve this "young place" could be brought from the home country thanks to social reforms or cultural interaction, in order to improve the morals and manners of this small "provincial town" where gossip, mutual fear and jealousy seem to prevent any "mutual benevolence":

With the interminable forest within half a mile of us, – the haunt of the red man, the wolf, the bear – with an absolute want of the means of the most ordinary mental and moral development, we have here conventionalism in the most oppressive and ridiculous forms. If I should say, that at present the

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443 Kidd and Nicholls, op.cit., p. xx.
people here want cultivation, want polish and the means of acquiring either [...] (69)

But Toronto, which represented the only society she encountered in Canada during the first six months of her stay, was not hopeless after all. According to Anna Jameson, improving the moral and cultural standards of such places was part of the "imperial project" which should begin at home. She encouraged the political reform of the colonial constitutions, but she also wished to awaken the concern of her contemporaries to the need for moral progress and the development of a high culture in these remote provincial communities in Canada. In order for Toronto to grow into a prominent city, "the beating heart of the nation", morals and manners which were literally absent had to be brought from Britain by visitors and emigrants. Like Wakefield before her, she suggested that the moral and social worth of colonies could be transformed under the influence of middle-class families emigrating from Britain. In fact, she acquired the idea that Upper Canada could grow out of its swamp, on which Toronto was built, and turn its interminable forest into small pleasant communities in the backwoods. There in the bush where she stayed with two British families, she began to realize the great source of self-improvement that British middle-class settlers, like the Traills or her friends, were bringing to the colonies. Toronto was plagued by the Toryism of "a petty colonial oligarchy" which concentrated "the worst evils of our old and most artificial social system at home" (65), while communities in the backwoods could not stand such artificiality and social restraints, quite the contrary.

More particularly, during her visit to the bush, Jameson discussed and spent time with the female members of these middle-class settlers’ families. After her encounter with these "valuable women", she believed that "the means of the most ordinary moral and mental development" lacking in Toronto, could be introduced in Canada by gentlewomen settlers like Catharine Parr Traill or like Jameson's hostesses in the woods. Catharine Parr Traill had attracted Anna
Jameson by her pleasant depiction of Canadian communities. At last, Jameson could verify the truth behind Traill’s statement that she and her siblings were bringing "moral and mental refinements" to the secluded communities in the backwoods of Canada. Improving the colonies and fostering moral progress was also a woman’s business.

**Jameson’s first contribution to the progress of Upper Canada**

Anna Jameson naturally got involved in the improvement of society in Toronto, as she could bring to the capital city her own European knowledge and culture to bear on some of their "domestic" issues.

Taking her female penfriend as a witness to the degradation of the city she believed represented colonial society at large, Jameson suggested that women had a fine perception of the state of morals and manners in society and that their judgments and comments about it would clearly improve it. She stressed the fact that women alone were capable of foreseeing what was best needed to reform societies, while men did not perceive the moral flaws that might plague a community. Addressing her female pen friend she resorts to a discourse of femininity when she explains how her comment on the absence of "honesty" in Toronto had been received by political leaders, "[…] but if I say *they* want honesty, you would understand me, *they* would not."

Jameson's contribution to the improvement of society in Toronto concerned the education issue that was connected to the sale of clergy reserves. She became involved in the debate which was clearly connected with her liberal acquaintances, as the promotion of primary education in the colony was supported by the Reformers, these educated, middle-class colonists, "young men of talents" who for now were excluded from colonial government in the grip of Tories. In fact Jameson joined their cause, out of feminine sympathy but also out of metropolitan ethnocentrism. According to her early observations, Canadians were not literate and not educated since she heard through conversations "that in the
distant townships not one person in twenty or thirty could read and write. (32)"

She noted Toronto inhabitants wanted “cultivation, polish and the means of acquiring either.” The ideas that she “heard in conversation” or which were circulated in the “provincial papers” were “strange, crude, ignorant, vague opinions.” (32) The only new ideas or new books that came to Toronto arrived from the mother country. The imperial culture luckily dominated this “ignorant colony” and saved it from chaos and barbarism, Jameson suggested.

She illustrated her imperial cultural mission towards Canada thanks to a very telling metaphor “the grains of truth”:

I was reading this morning of Maria d'Escobar, a Spanish lady, who first brought a few grains of wheat into the city of Lima. For three years, she distributed the produce giving twenty grains to one man, thirty grains to another, and so on, hence all the corn in Peru. Is there no one who will bring a few grains of truth to Toronto? (70)

Feeling like a British Maria d'Escobar, Anna Jameson wished the colonial society of Toronto well as she launched into a crusade to improve the state of Canadian society. Her first attempt at bringing "a few grains of truth to Toronto" took the form of her proposal to introduce some plans to improve education. She wished to tackle this issue by bringing in her own European expertise. She thought of having some educational methods and treatises circulated in the local newspapers, such as the recent treatise on modern education by French educationist Victor Cousin, or a similar work published by a German educationist.

[...] it might do some good – it might assist the people to some general principles on which to form opinions; whereas they all appeared to me astray; nothing that had been promulgated in Europe on this momentous subject had yet reached them; and the brevity and clearness of this little preface, which exhibits the importance of a system of national education [...] would I thought – I hoped – obtain for it a favourable reception. (32)

She offered to write these pamphlets on educational issues herself and to provide the local authorities with some advice. However, her offer was rejected by the influential people she talked to: "cold water was thrown upon me from every side. (32)". Her condescending, class-based attitude, which could be described as
philanthropic, also reflected her imperial attitude towards the "retarded" colonial society she was visiting. The Canadians she talked to visibly interpreted her attitude as a display of imperial superiority or British pity towards them. Jameson underlined she was still considered a "stranger" to the community:

My interference in any way was so visibly distasteful, that I gave my project up with many a sigh, and I am afraid I shall always regret this. True, I am yet a stranger, helpless as to means and feeling my way in a social system of which I know little or nothing. (32)

In fact, with this anecdote, Jameson placed Canada in the cultural margins of the Empire, which could only be saved from the darkness of ignorance thanks to anglicization and the intervention of the mother country in the person of a few liberal thinkers like herself. But Canada was resisting intellectual progress: "with what difficulty and delay a new idea find its way into the heads of the people (33)". Mrs Jameson’s English reviewers were glad to pick up this anecdote, which was selected by Mrs Tait, from Tait's Edinburgh Magazine as a sample of amusing moments in Jameson's narrative. It depicted the backwardness which visitors were sure to find in the backwoods of Canada until British civilization eventually reached them: "Truth is sure to prevail at last; but Truth seems to find so much difficulty in crossing the Atlantic."(32)

Jameson's general attitude was in keeping with her class and feminine status/position in Canada. Her concern for the welfare of "good society" and her promotion of reforms in the colony were prompted by feminine sensitivity. She believed for instance that "all the governors sent to Canada for the future" be married men "for the presence of a female at the head of the little provincial court and particularly if she be intelligent and good-natured and accomplished – is a greater advantage to the society here (164)." Her humorous comments or her long diatribes on the lack of education of the Canadians and on the backwardness of the Canadian society where alcoholism was spreading, was aimed at correcting the vices and flaws of the colonial world. She wished to alert her readers by raising their concern about the degrading moral state of their colonies.
Canada renewed and regenerated in the bush, the future of the colonial world

Improvement should first come from the centre of the Empire, from Britain, thanks to a few enlightened British visitors like herself circulating information, but also sounding the alarm for concerned metropolitan readers about the state of "their" Empire. But she also found some great potential within the colony, "in the midst of all this, I cannot but see that good spirits and corrective principles are at work [...] it [Canada] does not absolutely stand stock-still (212)". At the end of her second volume which corresponds to the end of her journey through the remote communities of the Canadian bush on her way to Indian territory, she became acquainted with the other districts of Canada where middle-class settlers and poorer emigrants, fellow Irish subjects like herself (she was née Anna Murphy) laboured honestly to improve land and their own prospects.

Progress and improvement could come to this "magnificent country" from these British middle-class emigrants who would hopefully continue to join the ranks of those genteel families already established in the backwoods. Here she shared colonial reformers' views on Empire building, quoting Wakefield: "everyone agrees that something must be done to attract to the province emigrants of a higher grade [...] (99)" Catharine Parr Traill's personal narrative which attested to a personal colonial effort and a moral mission in the bush might explain the reason why Mrs Jameson was "pleased" with it: "The book interested me, and pleased me very much, and it is thought to give so favourable view of things, that they say it has made many persons emigrate." Jameson’s feminine imagination which she said enabled her to foresee a great future for Canada if improvement and progress were brought to it, seemed to envisage these colonies as some imperial Bourgeois project, particularly suited to gentlewomen, as we shall see. Traill represented the community in which she settled as an example of "good society", a combination of "young men of talent" and educated gentlewomen who in the future would take charge of and command the colony thanks to "their
superior education and character". Jameson came across instances of good society in the western districts, during her *Summer Rambles*. She described British middle-class families living in nice houses, “forest chateaux”, on large homesteads: "The society in this immediate neighbourhood is particularly good: several gentlemen of family, superior education, large capital, among whom is the brother of an English and the son of an Irish peer… their estates are in flourishing progress.(243)” Their life hardly resembled Catharine Parr Traill's struggling moments in the backwoods. However, Jameson generalized the case of these well-off patrician families and made it into a rule. Hard-working middle-class families emigrating to Canada would eventually establish themselves as the squirearchy of the New World, Jameson seemed to suggest, while they provided a good moral influence on the lower classes, "plebeian English" artisans who were brought much into intercourse with their superior in rank in the building of these new communities (224).

Her visit to the western districts which happened at the beginning of the summer, took her from one beautiful villa to the next, from one happy settlement to the next: "The whole of the district between the two great lakes is superlatively beautiful, and was the first settled district in Upper Canada, it is now the best cultivated, has a large population and many fruits come to perfection (218).” She provided a representation of Canada that furthered her demonstration that success and improvement could exist and be brought to the colonies thanks to the import of "the best classes" from England or Ireland. Wakefield's principles were verified on the spot and she "approved with sympathy (172)" the absence of artificiality in the life of these genteel settlers:

Mr M- told me that the proceeds of the farm did not furnish the means of independence for his sons, so as to enable them to marry and settle in the world. He has therefore established two of his sons as storekeepers. I could perceive that there had been certain prejudice and feelings to be overcome, the family pride of the well-born Irish gentleman and the antipathy to anything like trade, once cherished by a certain class in the old country. […] He did not know with what improved sympathy I regarded the foolish prejudices of my country. (172)
Contrary to Toronto’s "lack of benevolence and honesty" which she attributed to the Tory "petty oligarchy", Jameson found in the remote districts "an atmosphere of benevolence and cheerfulness breathing round, which penetrates to my very heart.(171)". In her description of one of these Arcadian domains, living in a "golden age" (171), like the estate of "Stamford Park", standing out amidst the half-civilized villages, she combined her discourses of femininity, class and imperialism to suggest that more of these estates would be developed in the years to come: "It is the only place I saw in Upper Canada combining our ideas of an elegant, well-furnished English villa and ornamental grounds with some of the grandest and wildest features of the forest scene. It enchanted me altogether"(202).

Her imperialism was quite maternal when she appealed in the name of these honourable families to the pride of "the great speculators and moneyed men in England", asking them to "speculate here instead of sending their money to the US.(204)" What the British Empire needed, according to Jameson, were morally and socially stable colonies which would need to be supported by a metropolitan effort to invest in decent roads and other infrastructures.

They have projected a railroad from Hamilton westward through the London and Western districts – certainly one of the grandest and most useful undertakings in the world – in this world, I mean. The want of a line of road, of an accessible market for agricultural produce, keeps this magnificent country poor and ignorant in the midst of unequalled capabilities.(229)

Her colonizer's gaze was particularly "pleased" when, during the summer, she visited all the budding economic centres in the districts around Toronto, Niagara, Hamilton, London and Blandford where she observed, and "contemplate[d]", the industrial activities and the potential each small centre represented for the colony but above all for the Empire at large.

Hamilton is the capital of the Gore district, and one of the most flourishing places in Upper Canada with a population, annually increasing of about
3000. The town is about a mile from the lake shore, as space which in the course of time, will probably be covered with buildings [...] the commencement of a public reading-room and literary society, of which I cannot speak from my own knowledge, and which appears as yet in embryo.[...] There was an air of business, and bustle, and animation about the place which pleased me.(229)

With this thorough overview of Canada, a feminine contribution to the public debate on Empire building that ranged from the observation of the public sphere in the colonial world to the private sphere of the patrician homes, Jameson's representation of Canada was ground breaking in 1838. Jameson provided her readers with a complete and novel view of the colonial world. She combined what would have been described before as the "capitalist vanguard" discourse with its "lust for progress" and its narratives of economic success, with a more feminine "exploratrice sociale" discourse, when Jameson attempts to project or to divine the future of the country in some irrational manner:

I gazed and meditated till, by a process like that of the Arabian sorcerer of old, the present fell like a film from my eyes: the future was before me, with its towns and cities, fields of waving grain, green lawns, villas and churches, and temples turret-crowned, and meadows tracked by the frequent footpaths and railroads with trains of rich merchandise steaming along: for all this will be! Will be ? (267)

Even though she believed that Providence would provide, she particularly wished "that the government would do something to remove the almost universal impression that this province is regarded by the powers at home with distrust and indifference.(230)" Her purpose in publishing this "Summer Rambles" volume was to display the rapid progress of Canada which still lacked funds and support from British investors. The Colonial Office, she suggested, should do "something to produce more confidence in public men and public measures, without which there can be no enterprise, no prosperity, no railroads". She justified her

444 Pratt, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes, Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London and New York, Routledge, 1992, p. 152, "Ideologically, the vanguard's task is to reinvent America as backward and neglected, to encode its non-capitalist landscapes and societies so manifestly in need of the rationalized exploitation the Europeans bring."
involvement in the public debate on economic and political policies for Canada (described by Harriet Martineau as inquiring about the "domestic state" of foreign countries) not on the count of expertise, but because she looked at the country with new eyes, her woman's eyes: "What that something is, being no politician, nor political economist like Harriet Martineau, I cannot point out, nor even conjecture. I have just sense enough, to see, to feel, that something must be done." (230)

Jameson on women and the woman question in Canada

Jameson's feminine concern for the moral development of the colonies, as well as her upper-middle-class consciousness, prompted her to dedicate several paragraphs to the qualities emigrants should possess before settling in Canada, particularly women.

Under one aspect of the question, gentlemen travellers are right: [...] they are right in the opinion that the condition of the women in any community is a test of the advance of moral and intellectual cultivation in that community; but it is not a test of the virtue or civilisation of the man. (513)

Central to community building in Canada, in typical feminist discourse, she placed middle-class intelligent and educated women among the most desirable settlers. They could improve and reform the manners of the backwoods and eventually those of the urban society. At the same time these gentlewomen would find a new environment in which their independence, their education and their middle-class refinements would lead them to shine. The intertextual references to Catharine Parr Traill's The Backwoods of Canada indicate that Jameson adhered to Traill's thoughts on the topic. In order to visit Traill's environment which had "pleased her so much", as she wrote to her friend Ottilie, and to experience that freedom of movement and freedom of speech which Anna Jameson had lacked when staying at her husband's home in Toronto, she expressed the wish "to see the Backwoods" on her way to the "Indian country". She asked to stay with settlers
and to see for herself what the living conditions of women were really like in the bush. "The wife of an Emigrant Officer" as authoress Catharine Parr Traill had been first presented on the cover of the 1836 edition of *The Backwoods* that Jameson had read, was among these women that Jameson had wished to meet. Traill was one of these "gentle and well-educated females", with "mental refinements" who had followed their husbands to the "rough districts" of Upper Canada. Traill's personal narrative, as well as Anna's encounter with other Traill-like, well-educated female settlers, helped her elaborate her reflections on the role of women in the colonies. Then with the mirror-effect that necessarily guided imperial visitors, Jameson pondered on the uncomfortable position of single or married middle-class educated women in England compared to women in Canada.

**The position of middle-class women in Canada and "the woman question" in Britain**

In these Canadian pages written in 1838, Anna Jameson was one of the first women in England, with Harriet Martineau, to rekindle the feminist debate over the topic of women's education and women’s legal status, since the end of the 18th century. In the 1850s, Jameson would become the mentor of the Ladies of Langham Place, a group of young upper-middle-class feminists publishing *The Englishwoman's Journal*. She was also recognized as the spiritual "mother" of the Girton girls. According to Judith Johnston, Jameson belonged to the category of "the intellectuals who accompany any social group rising to power, and who give that group homogeneity, economically, socially and politically." Jameson accompanied the middle-class women in their search for their rights, political and private, and for their participation in society. She had begun supporting the woman question in previous works but she seemed to develop her views at length in *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles*. She seemed to seize any opportunity to

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446 Judith Johnston, *Anna Jameson*, op.cit., p. 9
digress from Canadian scenery or a Canadian anecdote to a long diatribe on the so-called "weaker sex" and women's every day sufferings in English society. For instance, seizing the opportunity of a fire in a home in Toronto during the night, and the conclusion she heard from a few men present that the old wooden home would be replaced by a good brick house for the benefit of the community, Anna Jameson reacted according to the utilitarian doctrine according to which "any public benefit is based on individual suffering". She then digressed to provide a general example to make her point, focusing here on the woman question, particularly the hypocrisy of Victorian society towards prostitution. She suggested that for the benefit of many men, some women were sacrificed and sexually exploited while society closed its eyes on the situation. She declared that to reform society, women should unite and stand for their rights against the vileness and hypocrisy of men. Women had the power to improve society morally and to fight for their political and legal rights if they organized themselves:

We are told openly by moralists and politicians that it is for the general good of society, nay, an absolute necessity, the one-fifth part of our sex should be condemned as the legitimate prey of the other, doomed to die in reprobation, in the streets, in hospitals, that the virtue of the rest may be preserved and the pride and the passions of men gratified […] The sacrifice of a certain number of one sex to the permitted licence of the other is not general good, but a general curse – a very ulcer in the bosom of society[…] Unless we women take some courage to look upon the evil, and find some help, some remedy within ourselves, I know not where it is to come from. (73)

Her feminism naturally led her in the following decade, to join the campaign for higher education for women alongside Emily Davies and Frances Power Cobb, signing along with Harriet Martineau, Elizabeth Gaskell and other women of letters, "The Property of Married Women" petition drafted by Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon, which was presented to Parliament in 1856.

It is now clear that reviewers of Winter Studies felt that Anna Jameson was using any excuse or illustration found in her Canadian environment to digress towards the woman question. Mrs Tait in Tait's Edinburgh Magazine had
declared the comments too crude and unfeminine: "What a dismal picture does this lady give of the condition of all women in civilized life and of their sexual relations." Jameson carried her own development on British women and "their content and independence" throughout her second and third volumes. On more than one count, the Canadian colony was represented as an "improved" or reformed society compared to the mother country. Jameson developed her first thoughts on "the condition of women" in England from her secluded room in wintry Toronto and in the midst of a broken marriage. In the style of Harriet Martineau who easily digressed from direct observations of the American morals and manners to comments on England’s morals and manners, Jameson also chose to digress from Canadian women and Red Squaws to general comments on the woman’s cause in British society, namely women’s legal position, women’s education, women’s independence, women’s property.

Before her departure for Canada, Britain had become even more conservative on the subject of women’s duties and rights than during the Georgian era. The rise of the middle classes seemed to have led to the publication of series of etiquette and conduct books. Among these conduct books was a French treaty written by Aimé Martin, *De l'éducation des mères de famille, ou la civilisation du genre humain par les femmes*. In this book, published in 1834, the author confined middle-class women to the domestic world while recognizing their virtuous character. Their mission was to reform society from within as mothers and educators of future generations. These ideas had already been expressed by Rousseau and attacked by Wollstonecraft in 1798. But this separate-sphere ideology was gaining further ground among middle-class readers in the 1830s. Sarah Lewis's translation of Aimé Martin's treaty, *Woman's Mission*, was already going through its seventh edition in 1838, and other conduct books were being praised in prominent reviews. Such was the case for Sarah Ellis' *The Women of England, their Social Duties and Domestic Habits*, published in 1839, shortly followed by her *Mothers of England*, then *Daughters of England*. Mrs Ellis

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447 *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, February 1839.
corroborated the public discourse on the mission of women in England, which clearly considered that middle-class women belonged at their "fire-side". There, shielded from the vitiated, malevolent influence of the outside world, women could develop their feminine traits and character, their "grace and frailty" so decried by Anna Jameson. Most shocking for Jameson was the suggestion that women should abandon all sorts of "intellectual" pursuits and consider matrimony as their ultimate goal in life.

Surely, it is dangerous, it is wicked, in these days, to follow the old saw, to bring up women to be "happy wives and mothers;" that is to say, to let all her accomplishments, her sentiments, her views of life, take one direction, as if for women there existed only one destiny – one hope, one blessing, one object, one passion in existence; some people say it ought to be so, but we know that it is not so, we know that hundreds, that thousands of women are not happy wives and mothers – are never either wives or mothers at all.

One of the reviewers of the influential *Edinburgh Review* in April 1841 supported Mrs Ellis's views on the question of limited education for women by stating: "With much that Mrs Ellis says, we entirely concur; and particularly in deprecating over-education and the laborious exercises to which youthful minds are sometimes subjected."

Jameson disagreed with the limited horizon now offered to women. She repeatedly attacked this new ideology in her Canadian volumes, putting forward the importance of developing women's intellectual capacities through education:

The cultivation of the moral strength and the active energies of a woman's mind, together with the intellectual faculties and tastes, will not make a woman a less good, less happy wife and mother, and will enable her to find content and independence when denied love and happiness. (120)

This digression, found in the first volume of *Winter Studies*, represents a rare instance in travel texts of an open support for the cause of women in England. Jameson used the advantage of distance, in the margins of the Empire, to assess the lack of progress of the home country on the woman question. Providing

\[448\] *The Edinburgh Review*, February 1841, “Review of books”.\]
recommendations and advice to British women on how they should fight for their rights, Jameson sounded particularly angry and virulent on the topic. That same year, Harriet Martineau, writing about the status of women in America, also included more universal developments on the woman question in one of the appendices of Society in America, published in 1838, which Jameson quoted to back up her own demonstration.

Women especially should be allowed the free use of whatever strength their Maker has seen fit to give them; it is essential to the virtue of society that they should be allowed the freest moral action, unfettered by ignorance and unintimidated by authority; for it is an unquestioned and unquestionable fact, that if women were not weak, then men would not be wicked; that if women were bravely pure, there must be an end to dastardly tyranny of licentiousness.\footnote{Quoted by Anna Jameson after reading extracts of Society in America in American newspapers, p. 75.}

Moving to the topic of women’s irresponsibility before the law in the British system, she attracted the attention of her female readers to the fact that the Upper Canadian Assembly seemed more progressive than the British courts at home. Indeed, evoking a bill debated in Toronto on the protection of mothers in cases of the seduction of a woman by some unlawful seducer, whereby it was voted that provisions for the child born out of wedlock should be sought from the supposed father, she stated: "This bill originated in the legislative council, and it is worthy of remark that they are enacting here, a law, which in England has been lately repealed.\footnote{Quoted by Anna Jameson after reading extracts of Society in America in American newspapers, p. 75.} So that her intelligent female readers could register the conservativeness of British society, Jameson placed side by side the progressiveness of the Canadian bill with the harsh provision passed under the New Poor Law Act (1834) which was now making women responsible for their own misconduct, "into which, in nine cases out of ten, they are betrayed by the conventional license granted to the other sex.\footnote{Quoted by Anna Jameson after reading extracts of Society in America in American newspapers, p. 75.}" She also pointed to the incoherent, illogical English legal system which refused to see women as responsible beings before the law in economic, marital or political matters, while
they were declared legally responsible for their "own honour and chastity.(94)"

She also openly criticized the fact that contrary to Upper Canada where the women from the lower class seemed to be protected by this new bill, in Britain the law always seemed to condemn women from the poorer classes: "But I as a woman, with a heart full of most compassionate tenderness for the wretched and the erring among my sister women, do still aver that the first step towards our moral emancipation is the repeal of that law [the New Poor Law provision].(94)"

Most shocking of all for Tait's Edinburgh Magazine was Anna Jameson's impertinent comparison between the condition of savage squaws in her third volume450 and that of Western women, particularly British women. There, in the western territories, Jameson continued to reverse the "norm" and placed native Canada not in the margins of England's moralising or enlightening influence, but as a new source of influence. She somehow relocated England in the margins of enlightened and civilised Canada, but did so by representing this Canada under the guise of the Red Men and Women with whom she had spent some time. Jameson contradicted the analysis of previous travel writers when they stated that Indian women were mere slaves to their husbands. According to her observations, in the tribe the squaws were respected since labour was divided between the hunters and the mocassin makers; they were consulted by their husbands which was not necessarily the case for a huge portion of women in "civilised" England: "Compare her [the squaw's] life with the refined leisure of an elegant woman in the higher classes of our society, and it is wretched and abject, but compare her life with that of her servant-maid of all work, or a factory girl – I do say that the condition of the squaw is gracious in comparison.(516)"

In Jameson's somewhat overstretched comparison, the so-called savage females were considered as responsible individuals in the tribe, with regard to female rights of property, as the goods they owned – clothing, mats, cooking and hunting apparatus – could not be taken away from them when their husbands died. When such an event occurred, Jameson underlined that they were given all his

450 "The Indian women", volume 3, pp. 512-520.
possessions and belongings, including the lodge. Besides, squaws could dispose of their own property or revenues in any way they wished: "the corn she raises, the maple sugar she makes, she can always dispose of as she thinks fit – they are hers.(518)" British married women were not as far advanced in their legal and financial rights.

In order to bridge the gap between the conservative Old World and the progressive New World, Jameson used women as a necessary connector. Societies should be judged by how they treat women. Morals and manners in Canada, even among the natives seemed to place it above the Western world as in the colonies, women were seen as "useful" partners and their talent recognized either in the tribal system or in home making and community building in the backwoods:

From the hints I have rather illogically and incoherently thrown together, that we may assume as a general principle, that the true importance and real dignity of woman is everywhere, in savage and civilised communities, regulated by her capacity of being useful; or in other words, that her condition is decided by the share she takes in providing for her own subsistence and the well-being of society as a productive labourer? Where she is idle and useless by privilege of sex, a divinity and an idol, a victim or a toy, is not her position quite as lamentable, as false, as injurious to herself and all social progress, as where she is the drudge, slave and possession of the man? (519)

**On opportunities of emigration for middle-class women**

In the backwoods of Canada, Jameson came across some happy and useful women during her *Summer Rambles*, when, alone at last, she was able to interact freely with people and the country and to speak her mind without embarrassing "Mr Jameson". At the end of the winter, she was hankering for some adventure away from her painful marital situation: "Let but the spring come again, and I will take to myself wings and fly off to the west!(102)" There in the west of the colony, she was able to enjoy the freedom of the Canadian life she had pictured in her mind when reading Catharine Parr Traill's narrative when she had "wish[ed] much that I were going to live such a life, instead of residing in a small, vulgar,
factious city, where I shall be afraid to speak, almost think, lest I should inadvertently hurt Mr Jameson's interests, she had told her friend Ottilie in a letter from Portsmouth, less than six months before her summer excursion to the bush.

Excluding herself from the possibility of remaining in Canada, because of her marital separation and the pursuit of an already-established reputation and career in England as an authoress - Jameson suggested to her female readers that among themselves, some "really accomplished women, accustomed to what is called the best society" (248), would succeed in Canada. She developed her argument after having described the great personal accomplishment in which, she said, she had found some of her gentlewomen hostesses, the mother of twelve children whom she was bringing up in better conditions than in England as they lived on beautiful estates, on "perhaps the finest land in Upper Canada (242)".

The society in this immediate neighbourhood is particularly good: several gentlemen of family, superior education and large capital, among whom is the brother of an English and the son of an Irish peer, a colonel and a major in the army, their estates are in flourishing progress (244).

The women who complained about their lives in Canada were necessarily superficial women pining "as if they had been so many exiled princesses"(248): women who were not qualified to live an independent intellectual life according to the authoress’s criteria.

I have observed that really accomplished women, accustomed to what is called the best society, have more resources here, and manage better, than some women who have no pretensions of any kind and whose claim to social distinction could not have been great anywhere, but whom I found lamenting over themselves. (247)

One woman who Jameson described as a "new friend and kind hostess" was "of quite a different stamp.(247)" Her character was not "frivolous" and though she might not consider Canada as "her terrestrial paradise" as the lack of

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servants and the difficulty of educating her family were "subjects of great annoyance", she was accomplished and had "recently given birth to a lovely baby, the tenth, or the twelfth, of a flock of manly boys and blooming girls" (248)

Besides, her world in Canada was not limited to her fireside or to motherhood, since she seconded her husband on the estate and she found the time to take walks in the surrounding woods, to sketch and to read.

However Jameson, realizing that some upper-middle-class women did not adjust to emigration, believed that adjusting to the new country took resources and intelligence. Indeed, she observed that the second generation of female emigrants or those who had been brought early to Canada by their parents "had adopted a sort of pride in their new country, which I liked much. (246)"

The unhappiness one experienced at first when away from home was compared to the unhappiness many women experienced in their married life. Jameson believed that women should accomplish themselves outside marriage if they wished, or in marriage if it were their own choice. But if they chose to marry, they ought to enter matrimony as independent, thinking women and as equal partners to their husbands.

Jameson’s depiction of married life appeared rather dark:

It is almost most certain that in these days when society is becoming every day more artificial and more complex, and marriage, as the gentlemen assure us, more and more expensive, hazardous and inexpedient, women must find means to fill up the void of existence. (118)

If society was still very conservative and hypocritical by forcing women to marry, Jameson suggested that intellectual practices could transform women’s oppressive reality, as well as their minds: "It is most certain that among the women who have been distinguished in literature, three-fourth have been either in nature, or fate, or the law of society, placed in a painful or a false position (118)."

Thanks to education acquired beyond the ordinary domestic skills, women would be able to reflect on their own position as "slaves to their husbands" and also accomplish themselves in whatever destiny they chose for themselves either as single independent women, wife or mother, or as emigrants. The cause that
Jameson championed was first of all that of upper-middle-class women who had to learn how to survive in inhospitable oppressive British society which at times, was worse than the inhospitable backwoods in Canada:

No, no, women need in these times character beyond everything else; the qualities which will enable them to endure, and to resist evil; the self-governed, the cultivated, active mind, to protect, to maintain ourselves.[…] Some people say it ought to be so, but we know that it is not so, we know that hundreds, that thousands of women are not happy wives and mothers.(120)

Catharine Parr Traill fitted the ideal portrait of the strong gentlewoman as she too had made a career in literature in Canada in order to rise above her unhappy condition when confronted by some kind of "void in her existence." Traill must have pleased Anna Jameson in her display of her character and qualities. The author of The Backwoods of Canada had survived the harsh pioneer conditions of the woods thanks to her "high-spirited cheerfulness of which well-educated females often give extraordinary proofs.452" The gentle hostess Jameson encountered at Blanford, "amid these forests wilds", whom she transformed into a pioneer heroine, also displayed this "cheerful spirit"(248) which educated middle-class women possessed. Jameson combined her development on the woman question with her imperial views. In order to develop the British colonies into respectable and reformed societies, Jameson clearly encouraged young English gentlewomen to consider Canada as a window of opportunity to fulfill themselves, with its "active out-of-door life in which she must share and sympathise" and its "in-door occupations which in England are considered servile for a woman"(258). The colonies were represented as an escape from the "too artificial society" in which they had evolved at home. Traill too had decried the "artificial refinement of fashionable life in England (10)." Jameson suggested to young intelligent educated women they should leave England to the too-artificial members of their social class and emigrate to Canada to experience their full potential.

In *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, Anna Brownell Jameson promoted Canada as a country unaffected by the separate-sphere ideology. Women's efforts and participation were required and they were well appreciated both outside and inside the homes. In England, she stated, married women disappeared in the shadow of their husbands, “becoming *feme covert* [sic] by law”, preferring to remove themselves to the seclusion of their homes where they did their best to serve their spouses. In Canada, such a position was untenable and undesirable. Husbands could not protect or "cover" their wives as couples hardly had a house upon their arrival or the least comfort or fireside to offer their family in the first year. Instead of serving their husbands, Canadian middle-class wives assisted them and shared all the worries that concerned homesteading. More often than not, gentlewomen took complete charge of the household and the estate when their husbands were sick or away on business. What feminists like Frances Power Cobb or Caroline Norton described as the "non-existence" of women, did not apply in Canada. Personal narratives of gentlewomen in the bush told stories of "empowerment". Catharine Parr Traill had shown her readers how Canada had revealed her capacities, her inner strengths and gave her the possibility of "shining" which would not have been the case in England. Jameson underlined such merits and resources in Canadian women and she wished her English sisters to adopt this chin-up attitude:

The cultivation of the moral strength and the active energies of a woman’s mind, together with the intellectual faculties and tastes, will not make a woman a less good, less happy wife and mother and will enable her to find content and independence when denied love and happiness.(120)

At first, Jameson's hostess/heroine in the woods did not appear as the typical, independent, pioneer gentlewoman Traill had accustomed her British readers to. When Jameson met her friend, she had just given birth to "the tenth or the twelfth baby". She portrayed the "accomplished" middle-class woman as a typical mother whose intellectual interaction with the "outside" seemed somehow exaggerated by Jameson in order to make her point. However in spite of the load
of household duties which Jameson hardly alluded to, this hostess found time to entertain Mrs Jameson with her intelligent conversation and to take her along her favourite paths in the woods where she sketched from nature, "how lavish, how carelessly profuse, is Nature in her handiwork! (238)"

In 1836, when Traill was already recommending future migrants to the woods be educated gentlewomen, she was breaking ground. While conduct books at home were keeping women away from "over-education", Traill encouraged women to seek relief and comfort from domestic duties in some mental activities like botany, collecting and recording indigenous and native plants of the New World.

[...] the writer is earnest in recommending ladies who belong to the higher class of settlers to cultivate all the mental resources of a superior education [...] She would willingly direct their attention to the natural history and botany of this new country, in which they will find a never-failing source of amusement and instruction, at once enlightening and elevating the mind, and serving to fill up the void left by the absence of those lighter feminine accomplishments, the practice of which are necessarily superseded by imperative domestic duties453.

Traill depicted Upper Canada as a "privileged domestic place". Such was an ideal sought after by educated British women, like Anna Jameson, Harriet Martineau, and other feminists in the 1840s and 1850s. England was not yet a liberal or progressive society when it came to women. What had been patriarchal habits were now erected as an ideology: separate spheres were there to stay in England and they were not easy to break. Martineau saw no contradiction between further education and managing a household, quite the contrary. Martineau's domestic routine resembled the settler's wife whose duty it was to "haud the house in order." The female philosopher believed that education would enable gentlewomen to lift their spirits and to seek higher moral attainments in literature, philosophy or even economics. For Martineau, a single or a married woman who obtained for herself such a position in life would thus create the ideal household.

These women should be in charge of educating or uplifting the lower classes. Unmarried Harriet Martineau praised her own talent for household management. The most intelligent women were those who were able to save time every day for intellectual pursuits.

Jameson represented Canada as a pleasing abode for educated middle-class women who could reconcile their "domestic genius" and their intellectual capacities in pioneering before rising to social prominence and patrician ease. She described the ideal settler for Canada as a kind of woman who proved herself superior to the general masses of her conduct-book educated fellow sisters at home.

A woman blessed with good health, a cheerful spirit, larger sympathies, larger capabilities of reflection and action, some knowledge of herself, her own nature, and the common lot of humanity, with a plain understanding which has been allowed to throw itself out unwarped by sickly fancies and prejudices, - such a woman would be as happy in Canada as anywhere in the world. A weak frivolous, half-educated or ill-educated woman may be as miserable in the heart of London, as in the heart of the forest.(259)

Once women had shone in their domestic accomplishments as wise intelligent household managers, Jameson suggested they could seek "moral relief through intellectual resource." This expression belongs to Harriet Martineau's prose but it also recalls Traill's description of her ideal life in the woods. Such activities of the female mind and body were used by Martineau to describe her ideal bourgeois world in her proto-feminist texts. Anna Jameson also idealized the condition of women in British America. She envied this sisterhood spirit, this solidarity between gentlewomen that she saw for herself in the districts. She suggested the same spirit of solidarity should be extended in Britain. According to Anna Jameson, in building communities in Upper Canada women naturally worked together and supported each other, contrary to England where support and benevolence had given way to jealousy among her own class and lack of

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solidarity between women, whereas in Canada, endurance and support were necessarily required from genteel settlers. Such was one lesson from the bush that should be brought home to her English female readers: "There is no salvation for women but in ourselves: in self-knowledge, self-reliance, self-respect and in mutual help and pity.\(^{(75)}\)"

**Canada, out of the margins: British women and colonial-building**

Clara Thomas in the afterword to the New Canadian Library edition of *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* has stated that Jameson's "deeply concerned feminism" which had been "voiced in the course of an ostensible travel narrative", "protected its author from those male critics", "while at the same time informing and exhorting her women readers.\(^{456}\)" We have shown that under the cover of her Canadian trip and by using the example of a remote colony, Jameson had been able to develop a feminist discourse mainly addressed at her female readers. However, her feminist discourse seemed to combine with her imperialist discourse to convey a message to them. They too should pay attention and concern to Empire building and they too should participate actively into the creation of a British empire that would become middle-class in morals and manners. Besides, if it were well developed it might provide an ideal abode for women of this class.

Jameson explained to her female readers that "Canada is a colony, not a country", as some settlers still looked to the mother country, as "high and happy England". She underlined the feelings of "boundless loyalty to the mother country" and the "attachment" to the "British government", which to her heralded a great future for the British Empire.

Jameson's reflections on the role of the "sentiment" of attachment to the mother country and its importance for the strengthening of colonial ties, led her to

point to the role of women in colony building. Attachment or sentiments towards Canada, as Catharine Parr Traill had shown, were primarily feminine or maternal sentiments. Jameson agreed when she wrote “I like patriotism and nationality in women.” Women emigrants were able to nurture connections with the adopted land where their children were born and would grow. Jameson observed these feelings among the second generation of female emigrants. At the same time, female emigrants kept a connection with the country where their acquaintances lived, where they had "childhood scenes" as Traill mentioned in *The Backwoods of Canada*. Jameson described "patriotism" as "a sort of pride in their new country". However pleased the colonial visitor was to see some young women attached to Canada, she noted for the sake of her readers at home that most recently emigrated gentlewomen, "without a single exception", were "unable to forego the early habitual influences of their native land". In other words, Jameson believed that in Canada women would never "go native", as they retained their British habits and manners, or the imperial connection which was also based on sentiments. Catharine Parr Traill's final sentimental note concerning her love of Canada, her use of the new Canadian vernacular, did not seem to have struck Jameson as an instance of the wearing and tearing of English habits.

Jameson clearly developed a gradual sympathy for the colonial world in which she evolved and where she lived for several months, contrary to many male travellers who were mere passers-by from Britain. This was reflected in her text in whose final chapter she admitted having formed some sort of attachment to Upper Canada herself. Canada was described as a "magnificent" country. Upon her return to Toronto after two months of *Summer Rambles*, as she was about to return to England, she sighed: "I arrived at the door of my own house in Toronto".

In her final pages, Jameson, learning about the accession to the throne of young Victoria, cried "amidst these remote wilds". Resorting one last time to her combined discourse of femininity and imperialism, she equated the future of

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457 See final section of Chapter 2.
Canada with the future of the young Queen thus placing Canada at the centre of Victoria's new Empire. She also considered as essential the question of attachment to the mother country. Now Victoria's "exiled" daughters had found a flesh-and-blood Britannia to revere:

And what a fair heritage is this [Canada] which has fallen to her! A land young like herself – a land of hopes – and fair, most fair! Does she know – does she care anything about it? – while hearts are beating warm for her, and voices bless her – and hands are stretched out towards her, even from these wild lake shores.(495).

Through this analysis of Jameson's text from the perspective of her discourse on Empire-building, it has been shown that Canada as an empirical example of a society in the making provided Jameson with an opportunity to join in the public debate. We know that her observations had been solicited by her publishers. However, she ventured so far as to criticize imperial practices at home, treading here in deep waters for a female travel writer. For her English women readers, from the margins of Empire, she was able to expose her social theory on education for women. Her comments benefited the development of the colonies in North America, which she connected sentimentally with the destiny of the young Queen, representing here a strong federation of independent nations under British rule. Her reflections on an Arcadian Canada for educated gentlewomen also served as food for thought for her female readers at home. Her younger feminist friends from Langham Place would use her equation between Canada and colony building by educated middle-class women to set up an emigration scheme to Canada for educated, single, middle-class women in 1862, as I will demonstrate in my conclusion. Jameson's writings would be influential in the debate on "surplus middle-class women" within the Female Middle Class Society and in the pages of *The Englishwoman's Journal* founded by Emily Faithfull, Barbara Bodichon and Maria S. Rye. Anna Jameson had provided her encouragement to the group of young women formed around Emily Faithfull and Barbara Bodichon at the

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458 Anna Jameson was the one who suggested the idea of *The Englishwoman's Journal*, Thomas, *Love and Work Enough, op.cit.*, p. 209.
beginning of the 1850s. The ageing authoress regularly invited the young feminist reformers whom she called her "adopted nieces" to her house. Jameson's ideas about women's work, education and financial self-support developed over the years of observation and travels which were then consigned in lectures, influencing the young women's plan on providing colonial outlets, particularly Canada which Jameson knew well, for the "800,000 women" who needed to "find husbands, work and honest maintenance."

Anna Jameson's liberal ideas on women's access to freedom in the Empire also fashioned the representation of Canada as an ideal world for independent-minded young women. The young independent feminists launched into a "surplus" middle-class women emigration scheme to British Columbia, then to Ontario in the 1860s. Debates over the plan, over the selection of women to be sent to Canada, as well as over their final destination, choosing Canada over Australia, filled up the "letter to the editor"'s section of the *Times* between 1860 and 1863, as well as pages in the *Englishwoman Magazine*.

Jameson's text, though published at the same time as Martineau's *Society in America*, was influenced by Martineau's truthful and opinionated views on American society. Extracts from Martineau's work appeared by instalments in the press in England and they were circulated by Canadian and American newspapers. Jameson was able to read some extracts from Martineau's "long-awaited book", in the *New York Albion* (251). Jameson described Martineau as "a good woman, and a lover of truth for truth's sake", writing "in a good and womanly spirit, candid and kind." Jameson felt influenced by Martineau's skills and particularly her "high principle and high feeling", and admired the fact that she stated her opinion exactly without fear of reprisals or bad reviews, as "they are things which will not be appreciated"(251). Jameson then tried to imitate Martineau's "even tone of good-nature and good-temper", as well as her sociological approach in her

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460 Jameson's words quoted by one of the women of the group in "A Wreath on the Grave of the late Anna Jameson", *Argosy*, XXXI, 1881, p. 456.
account of Canada. This I believe is observable in the composition of the manuscript that seems to have been interspersed with well-constructed social observations and political digressions on the "domestic state" of Canada. When Winter Studies and Summer Rambles was published in November 1838, a few months after Society in America, Mrs Jameson received the long-sought-after accolade of Harriet Martineau, who acknowledged the quality of the work and particularly the lasting impact that some of Mrs Jameson's considerations and observations had on her own thinking:

I feel so deeply the support and delight of your sympathy, as shown in your Canada book, that I acknowledge your right to all my thoughts on that set of subjects. I am always recurring in thought to that book.461

Could Martineau have changed her mind about "dull" Canada, after reading Jameson’s narrative?

461 Thomas, Clara, Love and Work Enough, op.cit., p. 139.
CHAPTER 5
The Empire Writes Back - Susanna Moodie, Roughing It in the Bush or Life in Canada. (1852-1854)

Between Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada published in 1838, at a time of heightened tension between Canada and the metropolis, and Susanna Moodie’s Roughing it in the Bush, published in 1852, at a time when the appeased colonies had received some measures of devolution, a decade had gone by during which several texts and essays had been published on Canada by male authors, travellers or colonial theorists. In 1838, Anna Jameson had tried to influence the colonial debate with all her feminine might, arguing that Upper Canada deserved the attention and support of the metropolis in terms of political and economic policies to foster and sustain the development of these deserving small nations which were destined to become the stronghold of a British imperial federation. She wished the imperial project to be revised by Britain, under more liberal principles, so as to provide Upper Canada with responsible government and more autonomy in colonial affairs. Her far-sighted representations of a prosperous Upper Canada were somehow confirmed by Susanna Moodie in Roughing it in the Bush and Life in the Clearings (1853) in which the Canadian settler/author described Canada as formed of flourishing communities displaying great progress thanks to the works of its colonists, and to the granting of responsible government in 1849. Susanna Moodie also heralded the birth of a great nation which, according to her, Canada should become before the end of the century.

In Winter Studies and Summer Rambles, Anna Jameson had also noted the great symbiosis that existed in Canada between active, educated, intelligent British gentlewomen and the backwoods in which they were destined to shine in forwarding the progress of small communities. Anna Jameson had also praised the progressiveness of Canada, where the value and usefulness of women’s labour was recognized and praised, as opposed to Britain where indolence and vanity
recommended to upper-middle-class women they should not work, where their contribution was not valued as equal to that of men, where women were not considered as responsible beings. Anna Jameson had clearly combined her reading of Traill’s personal narrative with her own observations of women residing in the backwoods of Upper Canada when she placed Canada above England on matters pertaining to the condition of women. Susanna Moodie naturally furthered this impression with her metropolitan readers, since she staged herself as the central character of this pioneering tale in the woods of Upper Canada. She too stressed the qualities she possessed and those she had gained or learnt during the difficult years of toil and suffering she had experienced on her small farm in Canada. Susanna Moodie also echoed Jameson’s impressions when she depicted the Canadian colony and Canadian life in general, as empowering deserving middle-class women whose true character was revealed to themselves in the accomplishment of their colonial duty.

In the metropolis, reflections on the future of the British Empire had been brought about and stimulated by the Canadian rebellions which, for the public, had come as a great surprise. After Durham’s return to London and his publication of Report on the Affairs of North America in February 1839, the Canadian colonies occupied the public sphere in the 1840s, featuring in the Parliamentary debates, public lectures and published colonial theories. The Canadian rebellions had triggered a series of questions on the principles underlying the development of the British Empire. The Tories revered the principles of a strong controlled empire, the Radicals were ready to dispose of the colonial possessions altogether and the more “liberal imperial project” promoted by Edward Wakefield and his group of colonial reformers, - the basis of Durham’s Report and in Wakefield’s Art of Colonization (1849) – put forward theories on how to develop the Empire into a long lasting Commonwealth of nations. In the introduction to his Lectures on Colonization, Herman Merivale underlined the opposing directions dividing the Colonial Office, Parliament and the public in 1840:
Witnessing all these changes [the renewal of thoughts on our first American settlements] and foreseeing more, a school was arising of men disposed to question the advantage of colonial empire altogether. But as if to meet this new generation of skeptics, there arose also the young and sanguine sect of colonial reformers. These contemplated a reconstruction and great extension of the British dominion, beyond the seas, on principles of internal self-government and commercial freedom.\footnote{Herman Merivale, Lectures on Colonization and Colonies, delivered before the University of Oxford, in 1839, 1840 and 1841, reprinted in 1861, London, Oxford University Press, 1928, vii.}

Among the middle-class public, the Wakefield Principle - as it was referred to in the press without any further need to introduce its recommendations - had become quite popular because of its simplicity and pragmatism. In July 1840, James Spadding wrote several essays devoted to the Wakefield system in the \textit{Edinburgh Review}:

\footnote{James Spadding, \textit{The Edinburgh Review}, July 1840.}

[...] this sudden rush of adventure and concern for the opposite corner of the globe, must be attributed to a discovery in colonization, now familiarly talked of under the name of “the Wakefield Principle” which some friendly newspapers hold up as the one thing needful to make mankind rich, virtuous and happy [...] a specific for all disorders of the world, so simple and so efficacious that the whole efforts and skills of the Colonial Office can hardly prevent it from taking effect.\footnote{James Spadding, \textit{The Edinburgh Review}, July 1840.}

One of the principles recommended by Wakefield was based on the introduction of the full English constitution where the white colonies were asking for it in order to develop some small self-governed British provinces abroad which would remain attached to the mother country. At the same time, British capitalists should help the colonies develop into commercially independent nations where laissez-faire and free trade should be promoted after a short period of financial assistance. Gradually, these autonomous provinces would gather into a federation under the supervision of the mother country and they would become trading partners.

When, in 1839, Merivale began to deliver his Oxford lectures, his object had been to “convey information on a very popular and interesting topic, on which
information in a condensed shape [is] not easily attainable […] the phenomena of colonization and the growth of colonies.464” By 1849, when the main Canadian colonies, Lower and Upper Canada, now Canada East and Canada West, received some measures of devolution, the British public was largely acquainted with the imperial project and with the growth of colonies in Canada. In 1849, The Colonial Magazine described the British public as enthusiastic when colonial matters were discussed: “It seems to us that not only the national feeling is in favour of preserving what has been already acquired, but that there is an incessant demand for the formation of new establishments.465” Similarly, The Times praised Wakefield’s The Art of Colonization, which aimed at convincing the public at large of the importance of reforming the colonial system to preserve the Empire: “Now it is the duty of every statesman who values that prestige which is a real source of power to England, to justify such a sentiment by his own colonial policy. Let him, whether in office or in Parliament, do his best to make the colonies of England serviceable to the honour and greatness of England, in their widest capacity.466” In fact, the public had been convinced that Britain would have much to gain from its reformed Empire, leading Tories to find some new inspiration in imperial planning.

In 1851, when the Great Exhibition opened to the British public, displaying sections on India, Canada, Australia and the West Indies, visitors discovered artifacts, etchings, lithographic prints and trinkets from the Empire to which they could relate. In the Canadian section, a huge Indian canoe was on display hanging in the air, as well as a sleigh, snowshoes, bear fur and stuffed caribous. More generally speaking, British visitors to Crystal Palace could visualize the diversity of their Empire towards which they were now developing great national pride and sympathy.

466 The Times, 22 March 1849.
After one decade of lengthy political debates over the revision of the system of colonial rule in Canada, during which essays, articles, reviews and lectures were devoted to the revision of the “imperial project” in terms of politics and economics, a large number of British readers must have found the reading of a “colonial autobiography” written by a British woman living in Canada, published by Richard Bentley in 1852, of great interest. It brought a new perspective on the state of mind of those living in the remote communities of Canada from the pen of a couple of colonists, Susanna and John Dunbar Moodie. The book was entitled *Roughing it in the Bush*, and subtitled *Life in Canada*. Its author was Susanna Moodie, Catharine Parr Traill's sister. She had emigrated to Canada in 1832, in the same dire circumstances as her sister, when the decision was taken by her husband and herself to seek a better future, a “life of independence” or at least its bourgeois interpretation, in Upper Canada, since there was no opportunity for a former army officer and his family to lead such a life in Britain.

Susanna Moodie’s personal narrative of 29 chapters chronicles her first years of pioneering in Canada when, as a gentle British emigrant, she left her home in England for the backwoods of Upper Canada to make a living. The reader follows the journey of young Susanna from her arrival in Quebec then throughout rough rides to Upper Canada, where the family first settled on a “cleared farm” which John Dunbar had rented out, near the Hamilton district. He was the prey of a land jobber since the land of this farm was not arable. The genteel British family is then harassed by their Yankee neighbours who were squatting the main log cabin when the young English emigrants arrived. The emigrants have to make do with a shanty. After less than a year near Hamilton, the couple then move to Douro County, near the Traills and Susanna’s brother Samuel Strickland. John Dunbar Moodie had again purchased an uncleared farm without seeing it. The Moodies soon realize they are not fit for such a hard farming livelihood and the cost of supplies needed to make their plot prosperous

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467 See chapter 2 for details on the emigration of the two Strickland sisters.
leaves them in a painful financial situation. Susanna Moodie recalls having had to stoop to toil with her hands to help her husband with many tasks on the farm. When the rebellions break out in 1838, John Dunbar is recalled to serve in Toronto against the rebels led by William Lyon Mackenzie. While he is away, Susanna writes to Sir George Arthur, Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, to beg him to keep her husband in the militia or in some employment that would provide him with a fixed salary. In 1840, on New Year’s day, Susanna and her children say “Adieu” to the woods and join Dunbar Moodie in Belleville in Hastings County, where he has been appointed Sheriff thanks to Sir George Arthur. In fact, in 1851 when Susanna sends the manuscript *Roughing it in the Bush* to Richard Bentley, she has been living in Belleville for a decade already. Her pioneering experience has only lasted seven years, contrary to the impression she gives to her reader.

Following the pattern of “colonial autobiographies” described in chapter two of the present study, Susanna Moodie’s progress in the bush, both physical and personal, can be charted in chapters such as “Quebec”, “Our Journey Up the Country”, “Our First Settlement, and the Borrowing System”, “A Journey to the Woods” or “Disappointed Hopes”. There, the narrator reflects on her physical journey to the woods, and provides some emotional self-reflection on the status of a typical female emigrant. These autobiographical aspects clearly resembled her sister’s introspective testimony in *The Backwoods of Canada*. However, contrary to her sister’s more sober narrative, Susanna Moodie added some anecdotal chapters in which she wished to display her literary talents. Hence “Old Satan and Tom Wilson’s Nose”, “Uncle Joe and his Family”, “John Monaghan”, “Brian the Still Hunter” are separate amusing vignettes about some native characters peopling the bush in Canada. Her husband, John Dunbar Moodie also added separate short fictional pieces of his own: “The Village Hotel”, “The Land Jobber”, “The Ould Dhragoon” which all tend to distract the readers from the main narrative. To this very packed manuscript was added a long poem, at least in

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468 See chapter 2 for our literary analysis of the two narratives.
the British editions; the poem, entitled “Canada” held a liminal position in the volume, inserted before the first chapter, in which Susanna Moodie praised the values of the New World. Last but not least, in the second edition of Roughing It, a very important chapter “Canadian Sketches”, written by John Dunbar Moodie and which had been omitted by the publisher when the book was first released, brought up-to-date information and statistics on the state of development of Upper Canada in 1852.

The following year, Susanna Moodie wrote a sequel to Roughing It in the Bush, without necessarily paying more attention to the overall composition of the volume. Life in the Clearings was also a combination of up-to-date personal views and more general considerations on the progress of the colony. While Roughing It had chronicled the first years of Susanna Moodie in the bush in the 1830s, in 1852 Life in the Clearings presented the writer-narrator as living in a small city where her husband had been appointed sheriff. Both texts are inseparable in our analysis of Susanna Moodie’s colonial discourse from the margins, as they complete each other. The second book, Life in the Clearings, was presented by the author as correcting some of the anecdotal, but out-dated, representations she might have mistakenly conveyed about Canada to her British readers.

Susanna Moodie provides us with the rare example of a struggling woman of letters in the margins of the Empire. Her personal letters reflect her obsession with fame and with the idea of making a name for herself in the literary world, both in America and in Britain. During her first years in Canada, she sent out short stories and poems to local newspapers and American magazines, some of which she had already published in Britain under the name Susanna Strickland. The main source of inspiration for these early texts was still Britain. Once in Canada, she used this backdrop to write short stories that would find a market in Britain. Susanna Moodie's literary production in the margins was intensive and prolific. First destined to gain fame in the literary world in the metropolis, her writing became a means of earning some valuable dollars and pounds to make up for the losses on their farm. Over the years, she composed short stories, novellas,
romances, poems and two non-fiction texts on her life in Canada, *Roughing it in the Bush* and its sequel *Life in the Clearing versus the Bush*. She achieved some fame in Britain, then in North America thanks to her “glowing narrative of personal incident”, *Roughing it in the Bush*.

Her fictional prose and poems have been much studied since the 1960s by Canadian literary critics. However, her most important non-fiction texts, *Roughing It*, and *Life in the Clearings*, have not really been examined from the perspective of social and imperial history. In what follows, I intend to look at Moodie's most well known and most successful texts from the viewpoint of their reception in Britain. I will examine the colonial discourse that bore her imprint throughout the 500 pages of *Roughing it in the Bush* and its sequel. What comments on her former homeland did she include in her personal narrative? How did she envisage her “mission” as a colonist? How did she represent Canada and its prospects to her British readers? Finally, how did Susanna Moodie consider the British "imperial project", from her margins? Nicholas Thomas in *Colonialism's Culture* reminds imperial historians that examining colonialism from the vantage point of the periphery highlights the “disjuncture” between imperial ideas and practice, between metropolitan imperialists and colonists abroad. Such a "disjuncture", which can be observed in Catharine Parr Traill and Susanna Moodie's personal narratives, is interpreted by Nicholas Thomas as a sign that "colonialism was a popular social experience” as well as a political arrangement and “a literary discourse.469"

Susanna Moodie's several editions of *Roughing It*, like Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods*, continued to popularize and to "domesticate" the white colonial Empire for metropolitan readers. Like her sister’s first-hand testimony on pioneering, Susanna Moodie’s narrative was destined to enlighten "armchair travellers", to quote publisher John Murray, but above all middle-class readers who intended to emigrate, on the «truth» and the "reality" of emigration. Susanna

Moodie depicted the everyday life of the middle-class families that had bravely and proudly left Britain for the white colonies. As educated gentlewomen and women of letters before their departure for Canada, the Strickland sisters were able from the margins to produce knowledge about the colonies that could vie with, interact with, or correct imperial knowledge produced by official texts such as emigration pamphlets, official reports, the London newspapers or travel narratives. Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill could both boast of being active participants in the "colonial project" of Britain in the margins and as such they established their authority as writers with some expertise on colonial Canada. They were more legitimate in their representation of Canada than travellers who were just transient.

In fact, since colonial reformers believed and had prognosticated that the "human factor" was essential to the building of loyal British communities in the colonies, such personal narratives were a means of verifying if the principles of the "imperial project" devised by Wakefield truly held water in Canada. Anthropologist Nicholas Thomas underlines that the “colonial project” was a socially "transformative endeavour" for those who undertook it in the colonies. It was also "localized, politicized and partial" as, though planned out in the metropolis, it was set up by colonists themselves in the margins. Similarly, the "colonial project" was engendered by historical developments, but also by "ways of narrating them." In other words, Traill and Moodie’s personal narratives were important contributions to the narration of Empire building that must be examined. They chronicled the progress or failure of the British imperial project in the margins. But they also reflected on the colonial endeavour of British middle-class families in the backwoods or the bush, to claim Canada as their new land and that of their newly born. Susanna Moodie’s personal chronicles of community building in Canada also deciphered the social, political and economic transformation of these transplanted communities in the margins of Britain.

In Roughing it in the Bush, Susanna Moodie dwelled at length on the "transformative" effect which gentle English families experienced, when
transporting themselves from their motherland to the colonial world. David Cannadine noted recently that the British Empire had been extensively studied as "a complex racial hierarchy", but that it had received far less attention as an "equally complex social hierarchy" or indeed as a "social organism, or construct.\textsuperscript{470} Susanna Moodie's description of the social organization in a Bush community, as well as Anna Jameson's development on society in Toronto in 1838, provide social historians of the Empire with first-hand accounts of the middle-class participation in colony building: the mysterious “human factor”. Edward Gibbon Wakefield, having established in his \textit{Art of Colonization} (1849) that middle-class mothers and wives were central agents to the establishment of colonial societies, Moodie's personal narrative of her everyday involvement in her Canadian community seems all the more valuable in our social analysis of the British Empire as a middle-class social construct\textsuperscript{471}.

Central to the dynamics of middle-class emigration, Wakefield had also put forward the desire to achieve the Bourgeois Dream, in fact the opportunity for struggling middle-class families at home to establish themselves as small "masters" or squires on their colonial estate and to regain a "bourgeois" life style in the colonies: a "life of independence", with a beautiful house and a few servants. Family fathers should be guaranteed that they would be able to secure a prominent position for themselves and their families in the colonial world. Good social connections and political positions for the father or his Canadian born sons were part of the Bourgeois Dream, according to Anna Jameson in \textit{Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada} (1838). Could the colonial world provide such a dream? Susanna Moodie and her husband John Dunbar Moodie endeavoured to analyze their own personal success in Canada using this grid of "bourgeois" references to represent it to their metropolitan readers. Through such texts, Cannadine notes that their authors revealed to their metropolitan readers that the Empire was "a functioning social structure and an imagined social entity", in

\textsuperscript{471} See chapter 2 for our development on middle-class women in the Wakefield system.
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which status was "fundamental over all other categories." As for Susanna Moodie, she can be seen as performing the functions of "legitimation" and "elaboration" of the ideologies of the new middle classes living in Canada. With *Roughing it in the Bush* which Susanna Moodie designed for her middle-class British readers, the colonial author handed to the mother country and to her former middle-class fellows, a mirror in which to look at their social flaws and moral evils. By contrast, Canada appeared as a new haven for decent Evangelical middle-class families who wished to recreate a proper society with a new ethos and new communal values.

In a first section, we will examine the manner in which Susanna Moodie and her husband resumed their literary pursuits in Canada and in Britain shortly after their emigration, thanks to their knowledge of the British publishing world. Susanna Moodie, thanks to the numerous letters she exchanged with publishers both in North America and in London, with Richard Bentley more particularly, provides us with a rare instance of the day-to-day struggle of a "colonial" female author from the margins to make a name for herself. We will see how Canada became for the emigrant couple of aspiring authors, a great opportunity to write on a topic that would as a matter of course attract metropolitan readers and publishers at home. For their metropolitan public, the Moodies had to fashion and market Canada as an eventful emigration narrative. The fate of this "colonial" book will also prove of interest, as the various stages it went through, from production in the margins to its final reception in London, aptly show the irreconcilable gap growing between the colonial margins on the one hand and publishers and readers in the metropolis, fostered by physical and cultural distance, on the other hand. Susanna and John Moodie’s full message was truncated by their publisher, causing many misinterpretations of Susanna’s intention in representing Canada.

\[\text{Cannadine, Ornementalism, ibid, p. 9}\]

In a second section, we will focus on Susanna Moodie’s overall message to British middle-class readers. Thanks to her 19-year experience of life in the colony (15) Moodie was able to go even further than Catharine Parr Traill in her reflection on the transformative effect of emigration. Distance and greater hindsight enabled her to intensify the "mirror-effect" of her autobiographical account. Couched in the same didactic tone as her sister’s narrative, Moodie thus provided her British readers with some "valuable lessons" from the Canadian bush. She expressed a very personal admonition towards the English middle class, criticizing the morals and manners of the mother country and the vacuity of metropolitan life, in an Evangelical sermon from Canada. Her narrative will be examined as a first instance of post-colonial literature since the text conveys the overall impression that the Empire was writing back to the centre.

**Canada or the indomitable inscription of “marginal” authors**

Mary Jean Corbett established that many female authors, like Elizabeth Barrett Browning for instance, feared the publicizing of the self. Some female autobiographers, like Harriet Martineau, kept their diaries and letters private. This did not seem to be the case in these colonial autobiographies from Canada as the core material of their work was their personal and private thoughts about their role, place and inscription in the colonies. Clearly, publicizing the self, particularly the "colonial" self, was part of the attraction found by metropolitan readers, in these gentlewomen pioneers’ texts.

In other words, Canada played a central role in Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill’s literary career. Without Canada, without their specific status of British middle-class gentlewomen settlers, without these non-fiction texts, their small literary career, which had begun before their emigration, would not have taken off in England. Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill's

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fictional texts had not brought them recognition. Even though in a few published short stories or novellas, they had used Canada as a backcloth, they hardly ever attracted reviewers' attention. *Flora Lindsay, or Passages in an Eventful Life*, the fictional version of the Moodies’ emigration published in 1854, in the wake of the success of *Roughing it, or Mark Huddlestone* serialized in Canada then published in London, are two of Moodie's novels. They were classified by the reviewers in the sub-category of "frontier romance" in Britain, but they are not mentioned in any British literary anthology. What brought the colonial authors’ recognition in England were their life narratives. Moodie and Traill's private correspondence reveals an indomitable authorial obsession with their inscription in the world of literature at home in England, while their position in the margins of Empire marginalized them even more by confining them to a non-literary land. They used Canada to publicize their own selves as deserving colonial mothers and dutiful daughters of the Empire, but also as talented writers in order to inscribe themselves as women of letters in the English literary hall of fame.

**Susanna Moodie’s egotistical obsession with publishing in America and in England**

The Moodies had hardly landed in Canada when Susanna sent some of her poems and her husband’s, already published in home-circle journals in England, to local newspapers in Upper Canada, as well as to American literary magazines. To the editor of *The Albion* in New York, "the most literate and reliable weekly newspaper in North America", which covered British news as well recent literary productions at home, Susanna sent two Canadian poems in March 1833. To Bartlett, the editor, she boasted about her literary career at home which emigration had forced her to abandon:

[…] if the assistance of a pen, deemed not unworthy of public notice in my native land, when held by Susanna Strickland, can in any way be acceptable to you, and your readers, it will afford me much pleasure to transmit to you, from time to time, a few small original poems. I now enclose the first flight
of my muse on Canadian shores. But this chilly atmosphere, at present, is little favourable to the spirit of Poesy.\(^{475}\)

At this stage, obsessed with finding deserving readers, prejudiced Susanna already complained about the lack of high culture in Upper Canada where she was sure no educated readers would be found to match the quality of her poetry and prose: "The little sympathy with such feelings can meet with, in a new colony has made me anxious to seek a more liberal channel of communication with the public", she wrote to Bartlett. She then went on to praise the high value of *The Albion*, his editor and his upper-middle-class readers: "I know no one to whom I can better apply than to the Editor of a Journal, which finds its way into the study of every respectable family on this side of the Atlantic, and is not inferior in literary merit, to any publication of the same class in Great Britain.\(^{476}\)

The first notice she received in America came from the editor of the *North American Magazine*, Summer Fairfield, who was a poet and a very controversial critic. Nonetheless, Susanna’s poems came to the attention of the poet during a visit in Canada. Carl Ballstadt notes that between 1834 and 1836, Fairfield published eleven long poems by Susanna Moodie, including non-original ones, and one by her husband. Susanna boasted about her success in her letters home, particularly when Summer Fairfield did not hesitate to compare Mrs Moodie to famous female English authors and poets: "Even the celebrated Hermans, Baillie, Norton, Jameson, Howitt and Shelley, of England, may rejoice in such a sister.\(^{477}\)" However, the circulation of her poems remained quite confidential in the colonies and none of them brought her money.

Her first paid contributions seemed to have been for *The Literary Garland*, an English literary magazine published out of Montreal by John Lovell. Between 1838 and 1851, each issue of the magazine contained at least one of her contributions in the form of a long poem, a short story or a serialized fiction, in


\(^{476}\) Ibid, Letter 35.

\(^{477}\) Ballstadt et al., *Letters of Lifetime, op.cit.*, p.75.
fact pieces that the author later sent to *Bentley’s Miscellany*. Susanna Moodie’s name became a fixture in the magazine. Her writing activity seems to have been quite intense, as quantity seemed to supersede quality by far when the Moodies were in debt. Susanna Moodie truly became a professional woman of letters when she learnt how to make the most money for her contributions. Her correspondence with John Lovell was essentially about business matters, not literary ones.

Now for pounds, shillings and pence. I find our account for last year amounts to 6 4/2 sheets of prose and one sheet of original poetry, which at 2 dollars per page our original agreement, amounts to 8£, the prose to £32.10 – being a total of forty pounds ten shillings.

[...] I should feel greatly obliged to you, to send me an account, that I may have some idea of the quantity of writing which it will require for me to pay off the old arrears [the buying of a piano through Lovell].

In the same letter to John Lovell, she also mentioned having tried to sell the copyright for one of her serialized novels to Harper and Brother in America. Having received no news from them, she mentioned to the *Literary Garland* editor that she was thinking of contacting Bentley in London to make the most of her "original" Canadian texts. She had also in mind the writing of a book counting on her sister Agnes to help her with the project: "My sister Agnes would be a great help to me now in selling a book of my own. I’m reading her *Queens* and I’m greatly delighted with the work."

In 1851, advising a certain Mrs Louisa Murray whose prose had caught her attention, on how to make a name and a living for herself in the publishing business in the colonies, Mrs Moodie taught her how to use her prose as a source "of emolument and fame":

> The low esteem in which all literary labor is held in the country [Canada] renders it every thing but profitable employment but Mr Lovell’s offer of remuneration although small, is not to be rejected without due consideration – “What is worth publishing”, my good friend Tom Roscoe used to say “is

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479 Ballstadt *et al.*, *Letters of a Lifetime*, op. cit., Letter 42, Susanna Moodie to Louisa May Murray, Belleville Jan. 13, 1851: “In disposing of my MS by the sheet, I always reserve the right of copy, as at some future time, I may wish to publish such articles in a collective form.”
worth paying for” – and I have found the five pounds per sheet, that I have received from Mr Lovell for articles contributed to the Garland for the last twelve years, no inconsiderable help in bringing up a large family.

Susanna Moodie seemed to have learnt all the tricks of the trade by the time she decided to publish in Britain after her own source of “emolument and fame” had dried out in Montreal. For instance in 1852, in order to enhance the value of her book before the English public, Susanna Moodie, who was still unknown in spite of a series of sketches she had published in Bentley's Miscellany from 1848 until 1850, deliberately used her Strickland family connection in the "notes on the author" that featured at the beginning of Roughing It. She reminded the public of the fact that her sister was no less than the by-then famous historian Agnes Strickland, thus suggesting that literature and talent ran in the family. Such a connection did not particularly please Ms Strickland. Susanna Moodie's correspondence showed that the two sisters were not on speaking terms at the time. But Susanna Moodie still boasted about her (af)filiation with Agnes Strickland, "Author of the Lives of the Queens of England" to whom she dedicated her Roughing It as "a tribute of affection". This seemed to have been used as an instance of personal publicity by Richard Bentley and Susanna Moodie, simply because Agnes Strickland was well respected in the world of reviewers. However, Susanna had to withdraw this dedication from the second edition as she explained to her publisher, " [Agnes] has wounded my feelings so severely about this dedication, that it is to me a perfect eyesore in front of my unfortunate book. Could I have foreseen her reception of it, thousands would not have induced me to place it there."

Similarly, after the success of Roughing It in the Bush, Susanna wished to pursue her literary career with Richard Bentley, hoping to place some of her sketches already published in The Literary Garland in his Miscellany. Instead he asked her for new material, in fact "a pendant" to Roughing It, in a most up-dated

480 Ibid, Letter 42.
version which would be both entertaining and inform British readers about her experience in a city in Canada.\footnote{Bentley to Susanna Moodie, 29 June 1852, quoted in Ballstadt et al, Letters of a Lifetime, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 110.} This second non-fiction piece did not meet with a favourable reception in Britain. \textit{The Spectator} even went as far as to declare the book a "money getter" (13 August 1853). Besides, Susanna Moodie was shocked by the reviews of her three novels, \textit{Mark Hurdlestone} (1853), \textit{Flora Lindsay} (1854) and \textit{The Moncktons} (1856) whose serialized versions had first appeared in the \textit{Literary Garland}.

I hope all the works you are about to publish may prove to you a mine of wealth. I suppose by this time, you have received the advance sheets of \textit{Geoffrey Moncton}. [...] It has been highly spoken of in all the Canadian papers as the best of all my writings. I hope you will think so too, and that you will find it just the book you wanted me to write.\footnote{Ballstadt et al, \textit{Letters of a Lifetime, op.cit.}, Letter 60, Susanna Moodie to Richard Bentley, Belleville, Dec. 8, 1855.}

To her great surprise, the British public did not seem to respond as well to her tales as the educated Canadian colonists or the American public. Such had been the conclusion of \textit{The Spectator}'s review of \textit{Mark Hurdlestone}, which was deemed fine "for a colonial readership, but not adapted to a more experienced English one.\footnote{\textit{The Spectator}, 8 January 1853.} As for \textit{The Moncktons}, which Bentley agreed to publish out of sympathy for his Canadian friends the Moodies who were going through another difficult period financially speaking, it was already published in America before it was released in Britain. Susanna Moodie had already sold the copyright of the manuscript to De Witt and Davenport\footnote{Ballstadt et al, \textit{Letters of a Lifetime, op.cit.}, p. 112.}, thus getting paid twice for the same volume. While she was still waiting for the reception of her \textit{Moncktons} in Britain, she wrote to Richard Bentley about the success the book had had in America, enclosing a good review from the \textit{New York Tribune}:

Geoffrey is selling magnificently in the States and in Canada. The reviews in both countries, have been unanimous in their opinion, that it is my best
book. [...] It has only been out a month, and we have nearly sold the 5000 copies. 486

In fact, the book was harshly criticized by The Athenaeum, which called it "a foolish novel." 487 The novel hardly sold in England. This surprising gap between the reception of her book in the Old and the New World led Susanna to put an end to her British career, preferring to pursue her connection with North American publishers and readers whose culture and values she seemed to share.

From production to reception: meeting the requirements of the metropolitan publishing world

The elaboration of Roughing It was a long-lasting project. In fact, it was a family project as Susanna Moodie, whose sole name appeared on the cover, solicited John Dunbar Moodie for "small" contributions. The text was literally a project that partook of the family's literary ambition, as both Susanna and her husband were aspiring writers before they married. Writing about the reality of life in Canada vied with the more materialistic need to publish. The "colonial" authors also had to take into account the constraints of publishing in London, which they both seemed to have known beforehand when they both had tried to publish some manuscripts in the 1820s. Many of these constraints had been imposed by their own publisher Richard Bentley who, in a way, "commissioned" Roughing It for his audience. Moreover, the distance margins/centre also interacted in the production and the reception of the work. Indeed the original text and its first published version differed. This caused some hostile remarks and reactions on the part of readers and reviewers against the powerless colonial female author, as will be seen.

John Dunbar and Susanna Moodie's correspondence, either in their separate letters to friends or in their intimate letters to each other, revealed their

487 The Athenaeum, 23 February 1856.
indomitable dream of inscribing themselves as man and woman of letters in Britain. Besides, writing professionally would enable them to put an end to their painful attempt at farming in the bush. Canada seemed therefore to recede to the margins of their literary production, in the sense that it became a mere excuse to publish texts and manuscripts, as long as its novelty attracted readers. John Dunbar Moodie - who in his letters home was holding travel writers and emigration pamphlets responsible for his demise as a farmer in Canada, having believed naively some of their rosy representations of the New World - still shared with them as an author the idea that Canada could be a good topic to promote his own literary career. What is more, selling Canada to the British public could also become a new source of revenue for him and for his wife. It seems that neither of them spared their efforts to sell their manuscript using Canada as an attraction for publishers. My purpose here is to show that *Roughing It* is the final result of these "commercial" efforts that lasted almost two decades. This slightly undermines the overall didactic meaning which Susanna Moodie tried to impart to the book. Would the intended lesson from the Bush to metropolitan readers in fact be a mere commodity book?

Carl Ballstadt in his 1988 scholarly edition of *Roughing it in the Bush*\(^{488}\), as well as John Thurston in *The Work of Words* published in 1996 have both provided new analyses of the production stage of *Roughing it in the Bush*. Using the information found in the Moodies' correspondence (patiently edited by Ballstadt, Hopkins and Peterman), as well as in fictional extracts from Moodie's novels, Thurston reconstructs the elaboration of the original text. *Roughing It* remains an intriguing volume that caused a great stir in Canadian and English periodicals when it was issued by Richard Bentley in 1852. Indeed, Moodie scholars have shown that the several contradictions, irresolution, disunity and "generic amorphousness" of the published text by English settler Susanna Moodie,

can be partly explained by the doings of the editor, Richard Bentley, who participated in the final composition of the volume. His intervention was prompted by market factors which eventually “vitiated any configuration at the center which could be attributed to an autonomous author and her final intentions”, explains John Thurston. The life of this "colonial" book was apparently a further instance of what we described, in chapter three, that is to say Traill’s dispossession of her original manuscript by the intervention of Charles Knight. Susanna Moodie was not entirely dispossessed of her manuscript but she nonetheless had to comply with the rules of the metropolitan market. She had to provide an entertaining picture of the colonial world for her readers instead of the true picture her sister clearly insisted on in 1836. She trusted her publisher with her manuscript and lost control over the production of the final volume. This resulted in her own work being truncated of an important section, which transformed the meaning of her original text.

The large Moodie family correspondence, thoroughly edited by Ballstadt, Hopkins and Peterman in *Letters of a Lifetime* and *Letters of Love and Duty*, uncovered the purpose of the Moodie pair in publishing *Roughing it in the Bush*. The manuscript was not sent to any English publisher, it was literally "forged" to suit the requirements set by Richard Bentley, with whom John Dunbar Moodie had remained in contact since 1836, when Bentley had published his narrative on the eleven years Moodie had spent in South Africa. In *Letters of Love and Duty*, we learn from a number of letters exchanged between John Dunbar Moodie and the house of Bentley-Colburn that the idea of a manuscript on Canada was his idea.

John Dunbar's conception of personal narratives as a means to make money presided over the writing of *Roughing it in the Bush*. A letter John Dunbar Moodie sent personally to Richard Bentley from Canada, since his friend and

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490 Carl Ballstadt, Elizabeth Hopkins, Michael Peterman eds, *Letters of Love and Duty, The Correspondence of Susanna and John Moodie*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, p.3-58
acting agent in London, James Traill, was not negotiating a contract for him fast enough, revealed that Moodie knew how to drive a hard bargain when it came to selling a manuscript. Prior to their departure for Canada, John Dunbar Moodie had already tried to sell some of Susanna’s poems to the publishers Smith and Elder, to whom he had also offered to write a volume on his Canadian experience. He had also left his manuscript on South Africa with a friend working for the “great man” Henry Colburn. Richard Bentley probably came across Moodie’s proposal for a Canadian volume when still working with Henry Colburn.

Thus John Dunbar Moodie, from his farm in the Canadian backwoods, tried to establish a contract with the firm of Richard Bentley, now independent from Colburn’s, offering to write a volume about his Canadian experience. In 1836, John Dunbar desperately needed a source of revenue to compensate for his losses in the colony following his unwise investment in a plot of uncleared land in the bush. The topic of the book - his personal experience in Canada – was a secondary consideration, coming after the need to publish to meet his personal financial requirements:

Several months ago I learned from my friend Mr James Trail… that you had made some offer to him of publishing at your own risk; a MS of mine containing an Account of an eleven years’ residence as a settler at the Cape of Good Hope – allowing me one half of the profits, should the work prove successful… I immediately wrote him to conclude a bargain with you on these terms if you should not feel inclined to purchase the MS altogether.

Bentley was just starting up his own business and it would have been too expensive for him to buy a manuscript. Bentley was probably very wary of signing authors of personal narratives from the colonies, as he could not rely on a readership at this stage of his business venture. John Dunbar Moodie left it up to

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491 Ballstadt et al. eds, Letters of Love and Duty, ibid, Letter 8, John to Susanna, London, May 24, 1832
494 Ibid.
Bentley to choose the appropriate title for his South Africa's emigrant narrative, which he had called *The Colonist*. He was aware that the title was “too general” and that there might be a need to change it into something more specific to attract readers. Reading the title and sub-title picked by Bentley, one gathers that the publisher had packaged the book for sportsmen looking for wild game and exoticism⁴⁹⁵ instead of presenting it as an emigration pamphlet for South Africa.

John Dunbar Moodie, in the same letter, tried to sell his plan for a manuscript about Canada, which he thought he was more than qualified to write after having resided two years in the colony. There, he told Bentley, he had had “every opportunity of becoming acquainted with the mode of life and prospects of a settler”. Moodie was eager to obtain a publishing contract and he promised Bentley an “impartial account of the country”, from “actual experience” unlike the books written on Canada by “birds of passage” or “influenced by interested motives.”⁴⁹⁶ Moodie was well aware of the rules of the publishing business and he was able to promote his yet unwritten work, in order to convince Bentley of its potential interest for a British audience. This also indicates that the Moodies knew how to adapt a text to suit the taste of the English metropolitan audience. In order to present himself as a knowledgeable settler, Moodie hid his own difficult situation in Canada. This would have prevented him from fulfilling his plan of providing an «impartial account». He thus pretended that he was “hitherto doing successfully”. In short, Moodie as a professional writer simply agreed he would write a commissioned work on Canada for Bentley:

> If you are inclined to treat with me for a work on Upper Canada, I shall be happy to undertake it, - but my time is so valuable here that I could not afford to sacrifice it without a fair prospect of an adequate remuneration… should you prefer purchasing my Cape MS I should leave the price entirely to your own liberality.

⁴⁹⁶ Ballstadt *et al* eds, *Letters of Love and Duty*, *ibid*, Letter 11, John Moodie to Richard Bentley, Douro, November 9, 1833
In fact, the personal narrative on Upper Canada which would be at the heart of the text appeared very secondary to John Moodie. Such a calculation casts doubts over the «sincerity» and duty with which Susanna Moodie pretended she wrote her narrative. Bentley responded to Moodie's book proposal, in April 1835: "Too much has lately been written on that country as to make it doubtful how far such a book would succeed here." However, Bentley added that he would be glad to read such a manuscript if John Moodie went ahead and wrote it. Bentley did not seem to believe that the public would be interested in yet another book on Canada in 1835. John Moodie did not write his personal narrative but Susanna Moodie did, including in the manuscript some chapters written by John Dunbar as well as a long conclusive chapter on Canada’s economic and political progress in 1852 destined to impress future deserving emigrants. He finally came round to writing the pages he had planned to write almost two decades before. Susanna Moodie's volume was the result of a team effort that found its origins in John's early plans for making money as a professional writer and using Canada to do so.

Fifteen years separated Bentley's kind proposal to consider John Dunbar Moodie's Canadian narrative from the publication of Roughing It. In the meantime, the Moodies had written several fictional pieces for North American magazines and newspapers, such as The Albion, North American Quarterly Magazine, Lady's Magazine and Museum. Their literary pursuits and their dire financial means had even led them to launch their own magazine Victoria Magazine between 1847 and 1848, a periodical intended for the education of farmers and mechanics. The couple was regular contributors to Montreal's Literary Garland owned by John Lovell, until the editor stopped printing it in December 1851. Susanna Moodie's autobiographical sketches that formed the

497 Quoted from the Bentley Papers, British Library, Ballstadt et al., Letters of Love and Duty, p.13
498 Ballstadt, Hopkins and Peterman also show that Moodie had corresponded with a group of land speculators in Texas who were promoting land for settlers. Moodie offered to write his settler's life in Texas for them in exchange for a free trip from Upper Canada to Texas and a salary.
nucleus of *Roughing It* had been first written and published in these magazines.\textsuperscript{500} Then she reprinted the same pieces in *Bentley’s Miscellany* in 1848, before compiling these loose chapters in her personal narrative. Making money out of publishing clearly prevailed over originality of subject.

The tastes of the «colonial» readership might be slightly different from the educated, middle-class readers at home but the Moodies thought they knew how to adapt their texts to a specific audience, either mechanics or English middle-class readers. However, after reading the critical reviews on her book, Susanna Moodie realized the public’s tastes were fluctuating, even in Britain, and in the wake of *Roughing it in the Bush* she sent series of sketches to Bentley couched in different styles ranging from comedy to tragedy. She hoped the series would meet Bentley’s approval “and that of the public – of the latter, however, I feel very doubtful. When once a prejudice has arisen in the public mind, against a writer, it is very difficult for him, or her, to obtain fair play\textsuperscript{501}.” The English readers whose tastes the Moodies knew in 1832, had obviously changed in 1852.

*Making a career as colonial writer at the centre of the Empire*

The personal narrative of the Moodies was eventually published by Richard Bentley in 1851. In fact, Bentley was aware that several sketches that formed *Roughing It* had been previously published by Susanna Moodie in Canada in the *Literary Garland*. Bentley only requested that Susanna Moodie use her Canadian experience and the Canadian background to compose humorous scenes and amusing sketches, even though duplication of her own prose and «recycled» old poems formed a great part of *Roughing It*. Besides, the context was quite favourable to the publication of personal narratives from the Empire, as this was the year of the Great Exhibition. After having visited Crystal Palace and its

\textsuperscript{500} Ballstadt, Hopkins and Peterman, *Susanna Moodie, Letters of a Lifetime*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1985, p.73

colonial pavilions, a very large public from all classes – from first-class to one-shilling visitors that represented a fourth of the British population at the time - had been curious and interested in discovering how some English men and women like themselves could live in the remote parts of “their” Empire. The Canadian pavilion displayed minerals, food products and a number of artifacts designed to resist the cold conditions of life in the backwoods.\(^{502}\) Hunt's *Handbook to the Official Catalogues* captured the visitor's attention by picturing a romantic scene in the heart of the Canadian forest, which appealed to women's imagination:

Seated in one of those light and elegant carriages, wrapped in the warmest furs, ornamented with the gayest colours and tempted by a sky that equals that of Italy in brilliancy, the Canadian thoroughly enjoys himself, even though the thermometer sometimes be 30 degrees [Farhrenheit] below the freezing point.\(^{503}\)

Susanna Moodie also sought a “proper” audience like most colonial authors at the time, since the main outlet for her didactic prose, *The Literary Garland*, had stopped publication. Indeed, over the same decades, as the Strickland sisters were writing their texts in the margins, Thomas Haliburton, the celebrated author of Sam Slick, had also begun a literary career writing from Nova Scotia. His humorous novels about the colonial world were popular among the British audience. However, in a letter he wrote to his publisher John Murray in 1826, Haliburton explained his purpose in publishing his “colonial” texts in the mother country. First of all, there was no proper publisher in Canada so that there was no outlet for authors to sell their texts. But Haliburton also explained to John Murray that he used his fictional texts that dealt with colonial politics to bring the colonial situation of Canada to the British readers' attention and to raise the level of knowledge of the colonial world. Thomas Haliburton was the son of a Loyalist


family, who championed both the preservation of the Empire and the reform of
the colonial institutions in it$^{504}$:

Everything which tends to make our country better known in Great Britain –
does it a positive advantage – because the more these colonies are known on
that side of the water – the greater value must be placed upon them by the
Mother Country, which will have the effect of strengthening the ties which
bind them to each other$^{505}$.

There was no specific mission of that kind in Susanna Moodie's attempt at
selling her texts. Thomas Haliburton was looking at maintaining a close tie
between the colonies and the mother country, using the fictional text to promote a
form of "Canadian" culture with which the metropolitan reader could become
acquainted or become interested in. Besides, Haliburton, in the same letter to his
publisher in 1826 also suggested that having his texts released in England might
serve a second purpose. Publishing texts in the metropolis meant that soon,
American publishers would take hold of them, as there were no copyright laws to
protect authors and their English publishers. The benefit would not be financial
but cultural as Haliburton hoped the knowledge about Canada that he tried to
circulate at home, would also circulate in the margins where colonists hardly
knew about their own colony. In other words, his task as an author was to promote
Canada in removing it from the margins and then in replacing it within the
margins:

There is another advantage which may in some degree flow from this work
– that it tends to make the Nova Scotian himself better acquainted with the
value and usefulness of the soil he inhabits and to turn his attention to the
many advantages he enjoys under the present state of things.$^{506}$

What I wish to show is that the Moodies had not necessarily
categorialized their own writing and publishing act as clearly as Thomas

$^{504}$ See W.H.New on Thomas Haliburton's "satire and speech", in A History of Canadian
$^{505}$ Thomas Haliburton to John Murray, December 1826, John Murray House, papers, 50,
Albermale Street, London.
$^{506}$ Thomas Haliburton to John Murray, ibid.
Haliburton had done, in spite of the very dogmatic tone adopted in *Roughing It*. Promoting their own financial interest in finding an outlet and an educated public for their texts, as well as promoting the colony to serve their own interests as colonists, presided over the composition of *Roughing It*.

Susanna Moodie received several payments from Richard Bentley. She had agreed on a payment for the manuscript on a half-profit basis. John Thurston has found details on the number of editions and issues of *Roughing It* in his work *The List of Publications of Richard Bentley and Son*[^507]. According to him, the book went through two editions in 1852. First 2,500 copies were issued. There was no indication about the number of copies released in the second revised edition, which included the missing final chapter, “Canadian Sketches”. Eventually a popular edition was released in 1857, at a time when renewed interest for middle-class emigration, particularly towards British Columbia, led female emigrants to read Moodie and Traill’s texts - from what I gathered from reading private papers of female emigrants leaving for Victoria and Vancouver. Moreover, the book was published in America as early as 1852 without any financial compensation for Mrs Moodie at first, before she renegotiated contracts with the American publishers Dewitt and Davenport, who tried to buy the original plates of *Roughing It* from Bentley in 1854.

Though the Imperial Copyright Act had been passed in 1842 that forbade unauthorized reprint of British books in the colonies, it discriminated against Canadian authors and their publications, as no account was taken of their rights either under British or American law[^508]. Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill were not considered British or American authors, which positioned them in the margins of the law. *Roughing It in the Bush* was pirated by Putnam, the prominent American publisher. Susanna was actually flattered by it. Once the British public turned their backs on her “colonial” prose, Susanna Moodie eventually approached an American publisher who remanufactured her manuscript to obtain

some royalties for the American version of her text, under the regulation of American copyright law. Richard Bentley made her the “generous gift” of the copyrights of all the works she had published with him in 1865\textsuperscript{509}. Moodie’s narrative of the Canadian Bush now found a new lease of life under a genre the American press called “frontier romance.”

From the numerous letters she personally exchanged in a friendly epistolary correspondence with Richard Bentley from April 16, 1852 onwards, useful information can be gathered on the bargains and contracts which Susanna Moodie obtained from Richard Bentley over the years when she hoped her books would be attracting the interest of the British public. The business tone adopted by the professional woman of letters indicates that Canada receded well into the margins of her own concerns, when she realized the public did not care about Canadian stories anymore. Over the years, she offered Bentley manuscripts on didactic short stories based in England, on anecdotes taken from British history and some long poems. Moodie tried to pursue a literary career in England, prompted by the need for some authorial inscription in the metropolis and most of all prompted by having to resolve the uneasy financial and social problems of her family, as this extract of a letter to Bentley clearly shows:

I likewise beg your acceptance of the last copy I possess, uncut, of a small volume of poems, published two months before I left England, on my own account. This little work, contains most of the poems written by me between the ages of 14 and 20. It was put to press by the particular request of some kind friends, who loved me well, and through whose influence, the edition of 500 copies, sold, paying its expenses, and leaving a profit of some 25 or 30 pounds. It was well reviewed by many of the best papers and magazines and I might have been tempted to try it again, had I not left England, and fallen into the troubles and trials which subsequently beset us. After my death these little poems may have an interest which at present they do not possess\textsuperscript{510}.

\textsuperscript{510} Ibid, Letter 54, Susanna Moodie to Richard Bentley, January 1854.
Her letters to Bentley reveal how much Susanna Moodie looked to the metropolis to obtain signs of reassurance concerning her own career. The seat of high culture, represented by the English reviews, would ideally validate the quality of her work, find her a larger educated public than in Canada and remove her from the «marginal» position in which she was struggling for recognition and publishing outlets. We also read about the dire financial straits in which the Moodies lived in Canada either in or out of the bush. For instance, after the publication of Roughing It, Susanna Moodie confided to Richard Bentley how desperate she was to place another manuscript with him while she was waiting to receive her share of the profits from the first volume. In April 1852, Susanna Moodie took her English career in her own hands by writing directly to her publisher without asking the Moodies' new literary agent John Bruce to intervene.

I thought it best to negotiate with you in my own name, for the sale of a new work. Roughing it in the Bush, if I may judge from the reviews that have reached the Colony, has met with a favorable reception in England; and this circumstance has induced me, to offer to you for publication a tale, entitled, «Mark Huddleston, the Gold Worshipper», being the first, of a series, that employed my pen during the long winter evenings of 1838-39, that I spent in the bush, during the absence of my husband on the frontier.\textsuperscript{511}

In this very first letter exchanged directly with Bentley, Susanna Moodie tried to sell a series of sketches she had already partly published in the Literary Garland. Susanna Moodie elaborated on the “colonial” persona of the woman writer from the bush which she had already presented to her readers in her “colonial autobiography”. Banking on the obvious public interest for Canada, she even suggested to Bentley a title for the collection of sketches she planned to send him: “I thought that this series of tales might aptly be styled 'Tales of a Canadian Winter Hearth’” adding “although the scenes and characters described are not Canadian.”\textsuperscript{512} Susanna Moodie did not seem to be worried about the lack of truth and realism in the representation she thus conveyed of Canada. The overall

\textsuperscript{511} Ballstadt et al, Letters of a Lifetime, op.cit., Letter 44, Susanna Moodie to Richard Bentley, Belleville, April 16, 1852.

\textsuperscript{512} Ibid, Letter 44, Susanna Moodie to Richard Bentley, Belleville, April 16, 1852.
impression she gave of the country was anecdotal. Canadian people were presented to the British public as part of the New World folklore.

**The publishing stages of Roughing It: the fate of the "colonial" manuscript**

*Roughing It* was relatively well received by the literary reviewers in England, who read it as an eventful narrative of emigration that conveyed a rather gloomy view of the colony. If the good reviews contributed to its promotion they did not necessarily increase its sales, as Thurston underlines. However, the book was not well received in Canada. In fact, the publisher, Richard Bentley, was partly responsible for the severe criticism Mrs Moodie’s work received in the colony. The publisher was also partly responsible for the unalloyed, clear-cut, depressing representation of Canada that Mrs Moodie had provided in this first edition which was reviewed at home and abroad. In fact, Richard Bentley had not included the final chapter “Canadian Sketches”, written by John Dunbar Moodie in the very first edition of *Roughing It*, which was then sent to reviewers without the up-dated enthusiastic assessment of John Dunbar on the progress of Canada. The “colonial” situation of the authors, too far away in the margins and unable to supervise the manuscript in London, led the first version of the published manuscript to convey a misrepresentation of the Canadian colonies. “Canadian sketches” had been designed to provide the readers with a rather positive factual and statistical account of Canada’s progress among nations and the great prospect it represented for deserving emigrants. It was meant to moderate the otherwise “gloomy sketches” with which Mrs Moodie brought the book to a close in the chapter entitled “The Magic Spell” (or “Adieu to the woods” in the following editions). In fact the final words of Susanna Moodie, in the very first British edition and the pirated American editions, did not hold out much hope for future emigrants. It read as a warning, as if Mrs Moodie were deterring emigrants from settling in Canada.
From the reading of the various letters she exchanged with her British publisher, it is clear that Susanna Moodie did not accept the critical comments addressed to her in Canadian reviews which attacked *Roughing It*. She was accused of having depicted Canada as a "prison-house". The original English version, which had immediately been pirated by Putnam in April 1852, was most likely the version read by Moodie's critical Canadian reviewers and it did not include Mrs Moodie's opening patriotic poem "Canada", as long poems were usually edited out of British narratives by Putnam, to save time and space. Susanna Moodie's American edition did not sing the praises of Canada and the emigrant's concluding sentences read as a warning against Canada in this original version:

> If these sketches should prove the means of deterring one family from sinking their property and shipwrecking all their hopes by going to reside in the backwoods of Canada, I shall consider myself amply repaid for revealing the secrets of the prison-house, and feel that I have not toiled and suffered in the wilderness in vain.\(^{513}\)

Susanna Moodie was obviously judged and condemned by Canadian reviewers, as she complained to Bentley in 1856 about the hatred Canadian readers felt against her. The British and American reading public represented the only alternative to her now:\(^{514}\)

> It is difficult to write a work of fiction, placing the scene in Canada, without rousing up the whole country against me. [...] You don't know the touchy nature of the people. Vindictive, treacherous and dishonest, they always impute to your words and actions the worst motives, and no abuse is too coarse to express in their public journals, their hatred and defiance. [...] Will they ever forgive me for writing *Roughing It*?

\(^{513}\) See the 1986 Virago press edition of *Roughing it in the Bush*, a reproduction of the very first two-volume edition released by Bentley in January 1852, p.515. Virago press, faithful to its feminist principles, edited out Mr Moodie's contributions so that this particular modern edition contained Mrs Moodie's own words and must have been close to the original version reviewed by literary critics in 1852.

In her 1871, first and only true Canadian edition, Mrs Moodie defended herself against her detractors, “I am well aware that a great, and I must think, a most unjust prejudice has been felt against my book in Canada.” She explained that her Canadian critics did not read her text properly or appreciate the full manuscript for what it stands for, “not one word was said against the country in my book, as was falsely asserted.” In their aggressive remarks against her work, Canadian reviewers accused her of inventing and lying about Canada. In fact, she explained to her Canadian readers that she never intended to speak ill about the country and that the “family” she wanted to deter from “shipwrecking all their hopes by going to reside in the backwoods” was not the hard-working honest labouring-class emigrant family but upper-middle-class emigrants like herself and her husband. She said that she would rather see the latter settle in small villages than on uncleared plots of land: “It was to warn such settlers [...] that my work Roughing It in the Bush was written.”

John Dunbar Moodie had conceived his "Canadian Sketches", as a counterbalance to Susanna's final paragraphs. With his sketches, he intended to tone down the previous pages of his wife’s narrative, the "somewhat somber hues" of the "preceding sketches of Canadian life" (492) John Dunbar Moodie described Susanna's narrative as representing the past, "truthful pictures of scenes and characters, observed fifteen and twenty years ago", while in contrast, he was providing a contemporary representation of it for readers to measure the quick steps of the country's progress. John Dunbar Moodie seemed to anticipate the heavy criticism that would be aimed at Mrs Moodie's chapters if she closed her manuscript on these sketches. This self-reflective act of writing displayed a sound knowledge of their metropolitan reading public on the part of the Moodies. They were well aware that closing Mrs Moodie's manuscript without a more hopeful

516 See Carl Ballstadt's edition of *Roughing it in the Bush* which studies the various editions of the manuscript, Ottawa, Carleton University Press, 1988, p. 672.
representation of Canada, would necessarily convey to the readers “erroneous impressions of the present state of the country.(492)” Clearly, without Mr Moodie's addition, the reader had no means of guessing the date of composition of Mrs Moodie's manuscript, as she had left out of her life narrative the last twelve years during which she had lived at Belleville leading the life of the local sheriff's wife. Her experience in the woods had only taken up the first six years of her life in Canada. However the whole book focused on that part of the author's life that had been meaningful for her and eventful for the whole narrative. Besides, analyzing the general impression conveyed by the "somber hues imparted by the difficulties and privations with which for so many years the writer had to struggle(492) " and the possible reception of his wife's gloomy description of the «prison» of the woods, John Dunbar Moodie acknowledged the opportunity the couple might have had to write a best-selling book, "it would have gained in popularity with that class of readers who peruse books more for amusement than instruction (493) ". But Susanna Moodie had wished to write "truthful pictures or scenes" and to instruct her readers. However, John Dunbar Moodie suggested that their auctorial authority could easily have abused their reader: "Had we merely desired to please the imagination of our readers, it would have been easy to have painted the country and the people rather as we could have wished them to be.(493) "

But the Moodies' "marginal" position prevented them from bringing out that final well-rounded representation of Canada in time for publication. It was Richard Bentley who, in a way, "painted the country and the people" as he "wished them to be. " Indeed being away from the imperial centre, Susanna's manuscript was entrusted to John Bruce who approached Bentley. Bruce then "saw the work through the press, reading the proofs and making alterations and corrections.518a. Richard Bentley mentioned in the introduction to the first edition that “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.\textsuperscript{519} George Parker analyzed the interaction of John Bruce and Richard Bentley regarding the original manuscript and he notes that Bentley had asked John Bruce to revise the text in order to omit "some of the poetry." \textsuperscript{520}

To the Moodies' dismay, the final chapter was not included in the first edition. Apparently, two additional chapters, "Canadian Sketches" and "Jeanie Burns" had been sent separately once agreement to publish the manuscript had been received. But the material arrived after the text had been sent to press. 2,250 copies circulated without the "Canadian Sketches" and "Jeanie Burns." However, John Dunbar's contribution was immediately added to the second edition a few months later in November, as well as to the subsequent 1854 and 1857 editions.\textsuperscript{521}

The reason why Richard Bentley published two versions of Moodie's text partakes of his shrewd editorial management. This was a way for him to secure the English copyright of the original text. He knew that the first volume would be illegally copied by American publishers straight away. Also, by introducing authors' alterations in the text or additional matters in the way of prefaces or notes,\textsuperscript{522} Bentley protected himself from other ungracious illegal borrowings or copying. As we know, Susanna Moodie did not see this publishing trick as beneficial to her career.

Susanna Moodie was greatly disappointed that the last chapter was not included: "These chapters would have proved a very useful, and almost necessary addition to the work, and Mr M. and myself regretted exceedingly, that they arrived too late for insertion.\textsuperscript{523}" She would have wished to add "Jeanie Burns" too which she described as a true and pathetic narrative. She believed such a scene would have offset the overall impression of amusing sketches.

\textsuperscript{519} Introduction to the first edition, January 22, 1852.
\textsuperscript{521} John Thurston, \textit{A Work of Words}, op.cit., p. 221, footnote 9.
\textsuperscript{522} This publishing strategy was used by other publishers but it is clearly explained by Royal Gettman, \textit{A Victorian Publisher. A Study of the Bentley Papers}, Cambridge, CUP, 1960, p. 47.
Mr Bruce has the Manuscripts with him; and should you wish to append them to a second edition of the work, if it should be so fortunate as to reach a second edition. We only ask of you the sum per sheet that you give to the contributors to your excellent Miscellany.

My distance from England, and the necessity of being explicit, in order to save time, will I hope Sir, prove a sufficient excuse for the unceremonious manner in which I have addressed you.[…]

PS: I have not seen a copy of the Canadian work; so I cannot refer you to the page at which “Jeanie Burns” should be introduced. But it ought to come in before the account of “Uncle Joe and his family”. Mr Moodie’s chapter should be the last of the volume. I am sure a cheap edition of the book would sell well on this side of the water, as numbers of persons are enquiring for it.

In fact, Richard Bentley first published these two chapters in his monthly literary magazine, *Bentley's Miscellany*, sending to the Moodies ten pounds per sheet. “Jeanie Burns” was published in August 1852 and “Canadian Sketches” in September and October 1852. No reference was made to the authors. S.M. was affixed to a stanza at the beginning of “Jeanie Burns” and the text begins in *medias res* with no reference to the actual context. Similarly, “Canadian Sketches” were published *verbatim*. There was no introduction about the actual author or indications about the condition the author was writing in. The text opened up with references to “the preceding sketches” with no explaining which sketches the text referred to. The second part of “Canadian Sketches” was crowned by a poem called “God Save the Queen.” In March 1853, “The well in the wilderness, a tale of the Prairie founded on fact” was published in *Miscellany*. The author of the short story is presented as “Mrs Moodie author of *Roughing it in the Bush.*”

Judging from the first reviews that appeared in Britain, it was clear that the reviewers had read Mrs Moodie’s first version of the manuscript. *Blackwood’s Magazine* reviewed the first edition, which, without the final “technical” chapter written by John Dunbar Moodie, appeared to this critic to be destined for a female

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524 Ibid.
525 Ibid.
readership only. In Mrs Moodie's representation of Canada, the country looked bleak but romantic enough. Emigration to Canada was not considered as a desirable fate for English gentlewomen. The reviewer adopted a gentle mocking tone to consider the demise of poor Mrs Moodie in Canada. He/she noted however the ability and resources that women of their rank seemed to possess, when transported into colonial backwoods.

[...] 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 decreed otherwise, may you equal her in fortitude and courage. Meanwhile, transport yourselves, in imagination's car, to Canada's backwoods, and behold one, gently nurtured as yourselves, cheerfully condescending to rudest toils, unrepiningly (sic) enduring hardships you never dreamed of. [...] in the rugged and inclement wilderness harder than the meanest of the domestics, whom, in her own country, she was used to command.\

Since most reviewers (in The Literary Gazette, The Spectator and The Atheneaum) and readers at home and abroad read the first version of Mrs Moodie's personal narrative, it would be interesting to examine the truncated message of the first edition of Roughing it and more particularly Moodie's didactic and dogmatic message to her middle-class readers.

John Thurston has shown that there were too many factors in the composition of Moodie's work for it to be seen as "typical, or unified and consistent." Therefore, he posits, it should not be considered as representative of what nineteenth-century Upper Canadian colonists thought of their life in the margins. I agree with him and I also believe that "the contingency and extemporaneity of a woman using the resources at hand [...] to wrest from widely varied circumstances the substance of a self-definition" was not necessarily representative of her own class or of other colonists. However, in the metropolis, Susanna Moodie's personal narrative about her life in Canada was the only one of its kind and metropolitan readers saw it as representative of the colonial mind. Criticisms against Susanna Moodie's dogmatic tone and her self-appointed

position as “bard” of the Upper Canadian community infuriated Canadian readers. However, Susanna Moodie maintained to her detractors that she represented the voice of the middle classes in the colonial world. In 1871, she reminded her Canadian audience that a "number of persons" had since told her that "[my] book 'told the history' of their own life in the woods". Her book, she also reminded her readers, had been intended as "a warning to others" from her own class who intended to emigrate to Canada. What personal lesson taught by Canada did she intend to convey to the metropolis?

_Roughing it in the Bush, the Canadian Social Gospel spelled out for Mrs Moodie's English readers_

Catharine Parr Traill's introduction to _The Backwoods of Canada_ had ended on an interesting note. Traill wanted to underline the most important task she had assigned to her work. Indeed, her introduction closed on a didactic address to the reader, a warning in fact, sent from the backwoods to the urban centres of England: "it is hoped that this little work will […] inculcate some lessons not devoid of moral instruction." Traill's experience as an author of juvenilia for the moral instruction of the youth seemed to have influenced her writings. In the same way, Moodie assigned a didactic mission to her narrative with which she hoped would reach and transform her readers, thanks to her reforming parable of "the emigrant in the bush". The overall impression the reader received from these colonial autobiographies was that of personal "sacrifice", "duty" and "fortitude": three typical Evangelical expressions which Susanna Moodie uses in the first paragraph of her introduction to qualify the experience of emigration, as a sort of colonial atonement, - the sacrifice made by the emigrants in the name of the mother country’s colonial project:

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 [...] 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 their mind, and arm themselves with fortitude to meet and dare the heart-breaking conflict.(11)

Traill had encapsulated her own contribution to the knowledge of Canada into a well-known English motto: "Forewarned, forearmed"", she wrote, "is a maxim of our forefathers, containing much matter in its pithy brevity; and following its spirit, the writer of the following pages has endeavoured to afford every possible information to the wives and emigrants of the higher class [...].529"

It seemed to the two colonists that some valuable moral lessons had been taught to them in the New World, which in turn should reach and enlighten the British readers of the Old World. From the angle of post-colonial analysis, we could consider these lessons of moral instructions, issued from the margins, as a first instance of the Empire (here the colonists) writing back to the centre, couched in the language of Evangelical preaching in the case of Roughing It in the Bush.

Mrs Moodie’s Canadian experience: a spiritual lesson to the English upper middle classes

In 1852, in Roughing it in the Bush, a genteel English female emigrant to the Canadian bush, Susanna Moodie, shared with her British readers her seven-year experience as the wife of an English settler in the backwoods of British North America. Numerous analyses of Mrs. Moodie’s work have examined its literary values or lack of it, and have tried to make some sense out of this eventful personal narrative. In fact, as we have just seen, Roughing it in the Bush's composition reflected the Moodies' contingency: to publish for financial reasons, to bank on their personal experience as "bourgeois" settlers in Canada and to make a name for themselves as authors. Therefore, I believe that the thread that holds the narrative together was the female author's egotism and self-righteousness, the mirror-effect coupled with the parabolic message, explaining

529 Catharine Parr Traill, The Backwoods, op.cit., p. 9
the order in which the chapters were presented. I do not believe that there is a deep meaning in the volume which one should consider as a non-fiction text. This last point seemed particularly important for Susanna Moodie who wished to bring to the page the unrosy "truth" about Canada which the authenticity of her experience guaranteed. However, Moodie interspersed the overall general message of her personal experience with entertaining and amusing vignettes which displayed her literary talent. Seeking the author's personal “writing back” to the imperial metropolis necessitates some excoriation of the text.

With Moodie's attempt at combining literary and poetry pieces and personal anecdotes and thoughts, the final manuscript seems composed of several layers, of multiple threads. The book is quite puzzling when one tries to define its genre since readers were successively exposed to Tennysonian-like English Idylls, sublime landscape descriptions, picturesque vignettes, entertaining sketches, self-inspection moments, moralizing tales and comments about the fate of Canada and its middle-class settlers/colonists. Finding an overall meaning to the work can be quite troublesome and this explains the numerous interpretations and misinterpretations that circulated in the metropolis and in the colony in the two decades following the publication of the text. We have exposed Moodie’s egotism in the first section of this chapter, we shall now consider her didactic purpose that runs throughout the volume in which the author regularly admonishes and preaches to her metropolitan readers.

Mrs. Moodie herself assigned finality to her work in 1852, in the introduction to the very first edition. She admitted having conceived *Roughing it in the Bush* as a useful warning for future British upper-middle-class emigrants based on the value of her own example, which she assumed was very representative of what happened or would happen to people of her own class if they ventured to Canada. She clearly chose to write for middle-class readers530:

The following quotes and pages refer to New Canadian Library edition, 1989, based on “the second edition with additions” published by Richard Bentley in November 1852.

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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 (15).

In the introduction to the 1871 edition she explained to her fellow Canadians that the message she had wished to convey in 1852 was not designed for all the future emigrants to the mother country, but only to one specific group, those of her own class whom she saw as unfit to survive in the Canadian bush. Here again she stressed the final receiver of her "message". Besides, according to the author, *Roughing it in the Bush* also praised the New World as Mrs Moodie had listed all the advantages of Canada for other emigrants:

Reader! It is not my intention to trouble you with the sequel of our history. I have given you a faithful picture of life in the Backwoods of Canada; I leave you to draw from it your own conclusions. To the poor industrious working man it presents many advantages, to a poor gentleman none (489).

Mrs. Moodie’s mixed messages about Canada become clearer if one reads the text as a narrative designed for a middle-class audience for whose reading tastes the Moodies had conceived their Canadian volume. Central to Mrs Moodie's personal narrative one finds a moral design that Ann Laura Stoler usually describes as "the philanthropic moralizing mission that defined bourgeois culture in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century." Mrs Moodie articulates her colonial experience and her knowledge of Canada for her *bourgeois* readers, by enhancing the core value of mid-Victorian bourgeois culture - a moralizing or evangelical mission - on both sides of the Atlantic. Susanna Moodie's colonial autobiography can be read as a mere personal tale of social demise in England and social rise in Canada. Susanna Strickland and John Dunbar Moodie are presented by the narrator as born into upper-middle-class families having been downgraded to the status of mere unwanted lower-class emigrants when J.D. Moodie's officer’s half-pay could not

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531 Ann Laura Stoler, "Cultivating bourgeois bodies and racial selves", *Cultures of Empire*, Catharine Hall ed., Manchester, Manchester University Press, p.90
provide for a patrician house and servants in England to which both his wife and he had been accustomed in their youth. Susanna Moodie and her husband had hoped to recapture their former status by establishing the family on an estate in Canada. Before and after their emigration, Susanna insists on the fact that the Moodies were considered as outcasts by their former upper-middle-class friends and fellows, having failed socially at home. To belong to the bourgeoisie in England, one had to have some wealth. From the margins of the Empire, thanks to the valuable lessons of *Roughing it in the Bush*, Susanna Moodie challenges this "money or wealth" criterion to propose a new criterion, colonial duty, which enabled emigrant families to regain their former status and to claim some prestige in Canada. She challenges the materialistic bourgeois English social hierarchy by introducing new criteria: duty towards Empire-building and Evangelical duty and solidarity towards the lower orders. If both these duties were fulfilled then she states that Canadian emigrants formerly from the upper middle class would be seen as deserving, if not more deserving than any member of this class in England. What Moodie shows through her personal example is that in Canada her family fulfilled their bourgeois dream, while leading a better Christian life than many of those whose "sarcasms" had forced them to leave England for Canada.

As we are going to see here, Susanna Moodie wrote a tale or a parable of bourgeois colonialism in which she showed that genteel emigrants were more deserving than their metropolitan fellows from the upper middle classes. In Canada, Susanna Moodie suggested that colonists like her family represented the Elect in the New World, the regenerated communities upholding the true Christian values that Britain had lost. Ann Laura Stoler in *Race and the Education of Desire, Foucault's «History of Sexuality» and the Colonial Order of Things*[^532], points to the fact that "colonialism was not a secure bourgeois project. It was not only about the importation of middle-class sensibilities to the colonies, but about the making of them." Susanna Moodie provides useful information for today’s

historians of the Empire, on the “making” of these “middle-class sensibilities” in Upper Canada and on the establishment of the bourgeois project which was the cement of the white British Empire, according to Edward Gibbon Wakefield’s plan.

**Emigration to Canada as a «spiritual pilgrimage»**

Susanna Moodie, like Catharine Parr Traill\(^3\), reconstructed her life journey in Canada for her readers. In the typical Protestant life-writing tradition she assigned some finality or meaning to her personal journey, to her progress. According to the gentlewoman emigrant, her mission or her fate as an exile in Canada was to learn a lesson in fortitude, humility and Christianity, taught to her in and by the Canadian Bush. She felt her duty was then to tell it to the rest of the world; "It may be your lot to suffer, but others will reap a benefit from your trial (267)." She shaped her story in some kind of secularized “confessional” work. This genre is described as follows by John R. Rosenberg in *The Circular Pilgrimage*:

> Christian history moves in a circular (or perhaps more accurately a spiral) design. It begins with man’s existence in a paradisiacal state, recounts his fall from edenic innocence, and depicts a long period of estrangement and exile, promising eventual redemption through Christ. Confessional writing superimposes this design on the ego’s experience.\(^4\)

Susanna Moodie wanted to convey to her readership a personal, religious and reforming message according to which Canada was the one and only Christian country that had been revealed to her by God. In *The Circular Pilgrimage*, Rosenberg also analyzes the form and purpose pursued by authors of spiritual autobiographies. Susanna Moodie's “emplotment” of her personal journey in Canada followed the typical pattern of spiritual autobiographies:

\(^3\) See chapter 2.
As a pilgrim firmly on the road to the promised land of divine grace, the autobiographer tries to identify for the reader the landmarks and road signs that designate the chosen path. The spiritual autobiographer attempts to illuminate what he or she perceives as the revealed plan of divinity and to demonstrate how the emplotment of that plan on his or her life has led to significant change.535

Readers of Roughing it in the Bush have all been struck at one point or another by the abundance of references to religion, to spirituality, to the Gospel, to moral reflections or to parable-like chapters built around emblematic characters. Though central to middle-class culture in the 19th century, such characteristics were not typical of travel narratives or emigrant's narratives. The colonial autobiographies of both Traill and Moodie stand out among other works from the white Empire. Both texts read like spiritual autobiographies as their authors adopted the subjective method of recounting events underlined above by J. Rosenberg. Besides, most of the poems or stanzas on Canada that illustrated Susanna Moodie's chapters also echoed the overall effusive confessional style. Mrs Moodie depicted her picturesque Canadian surroundings by lingering on the Eden-like quality of this New World spreading before her eyes. At times, she broke into tears when contemplating some landscapes when her soul started communing with the Almighty, in a Goethian palingenestic experience. Mrs. Moodie, like Catharine Parr Traill, also described a central moment when in the deep of the Canadian bush she felt an instant conversion which she described as a religious epiphany. The bush taught her she had to relinquish her English upper-middle-class manners and stoop to work with her hands. After this founding moment, Mrs Moodie accepted her fate in Canada and tackled her new emigrant life, as she believed it was her Christian mission to do so.

Spiritual quests or spiritual autobiographies are led by moments of self-introspection that Moodie relished. She exposed to her readers her increasing disillusion about her emigrant condition, her faltering faith, her moment of revelation in the bush and her spiritual vision in which she saw Canada’s

535 Ibid, p. 17.
"glorious future" (the theme of her liminal poem). Canada and the seclusion provided by its bush or its long winters became the perfect stage for the pilgrim to reflect on her own life, values and faith. Like John Stuart Mill in his *Autobiography*, the resurrection of the spirit often happened "in the dry heavy dejects of the melancholy winter." In fact, in the course of her journey, Canada appeared as a supremely spiritual place, far above the Old World, where her British middle-class readers lived and where she believed communion with the Almighty was disturbed by too many material contingencies. Canada very early on became an exceptional place where Christian values were regenerated.

Mrs Moodie's personal moral exemplar articulated a Christian Evangelical message to her British readers, since it is clear that they were invited to follow her through her spiritual quest and to share the conclusions of this moral parable. Susanna Moodie called on to her middle-class metropolitan readers on many occasions as in a sermon, conceiving literature as a vessel to convey reforming messages. Susanna Moodie's early metropolitan literary career - interrupted by emigration - had brought her to some reviewers' attention thanks to the writing of "moral" tales. In 1828, she had written to her friend James Bird, the editor of one of these numerous home circle magazines: "I hope it may do some good among the young folks of the rising generation." She told him that she intended to have the piece she was then writing published in the popular monthly *Spirit and Manner of the Age, A Christian and Literary Miscellany*. In the same letter, she confided to James Bird the enthusiasm she had felt while reading the poetry of Cowper whose literary value she did not praise but whose reforming quality was remarkable according to young Susanna. She looked up to him as a model for inspiration:

But his sentiments are noble, excellent, sublime! I venerate the independent spirit, which pervades his works. He possesses a mind so clear and comprehensive, so divested of prejudice that I consider him as a Reformer

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of the Vices of mankind to stand unrivalled. His satires particularly his 
«Progress of Error» must strike home to every heart.537

Thus, for young Susanna Strickland, didactic poetry, "divested of prejudice", was as pregnant with meaning as a piece of prose and one is not surprised to find poetry used for that purpose, punctuating or echoing the Evangelical message conveyed in the prose sections. For instance, the long poem entitled “Canada” placed at the incipit of her work, between the introduction and the first chapter, reads like a symbolic key to Roughing It. The poem sings the glory of Canada as a true Christian abode for lost souls who, though rejected by their mother land, have been chosen by God to fulfill a mission in this exceptional New World: "With prophetic glance, I see/ Visions of that future glory, /Giving to the world’s great story/ A page, with mighty meaning fraught." Here Moodie lyrically evoked Canada as the Promised Land where people, exiled from the Old World and dismissed by unchristian souls, had been appointed by God to form communities that would become leading examples for other nations.

In this religious hymn to Canada, the country was presented as “blest and free”, a home for sufferers and the homeless who had been turned away by their mother country, - Britain -, "lands that cannot feed their own". Canada was described as a holy shrine "with winter’s stainless snow, / Starry heavens of purer glow, / glorious summers...basking in one glaze of light." The European pilgrims were "led by that God, who from his throne/ Regards the poor man’s stifled moan..." Settlers were described as Elect people "Theirs was a mission truly grand/ Brave peasants whom the Father, God/ Sent to reclaim the stubborn sod." Mrs. Moodie represented Canada as the only Christian country in the world where communal values were represented and in which true Christian values were developed, fusing (in typical Victorian aesthetics) Romantic and Christian conceptions of man in his world.

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

537 Ballstadt, Letters of a Lifetime, op. cit, Susanna Moodie to James Bird, September 5, 1828.
When peace and *Christian brotherhood*
Shall form *a stronger tie than blood*,
And Commerce, freed from tax and chain,
Shall build a bridge over 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. (19-20)

By praising the coming of a renewed and regenerated Christianity to these Canadian communities, Susanna Moodie, the poet, presented the British pilgrims formed by the industrious labouring classes and a few deserving men and women "of independent means" such as her family, as Evangelical torch-bearers and "truth" holders. One also remembers that these poems were edited out of the illegal un-copyrighted American version that was circulated by Putnam in North America, causing prejudice to the author.

*Canada, the backcloth to Mrs. Moodie’s pilgrim’s progress*

Adopting the classical pattern of the "Pilgrim’s Progress", Mrs. Moodie conveyed to her Victorian readers the impression that, like early Christian pilgrims, she and her family had been thrown on the road by an alienated world that rejected them. Mrs. Moodie reconstructs the spirit in which her family departed from the vitiated Old World, where decent men could not make an honest living, and where former friends and fellow socialites (Moodie called them "the Mr and Mrs Grundies") looked down on them and sneered: "On thy [Canada's] bosom sickly care/ Quite forget 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.(18)"
Like Bunyan’s Christian before her, Susanna Moodie, as she tells her readers, had had to leave her home and to look for a Christian place where honesty, decency and other values would be recognized for their own worth. Like the Biblical pilgrims, Mrs. Moodie had had to journey alone in the darkness (represented by the Canadian backwoods) for seven days and seven nights (in fact seven years in her case). She had been obliged to suffer sore humiliation (poverty and social rejection) as well as to lower herself to accomplish tasks she disliked, for they did not suit her status (working at manual tasks on the farm). She had been compelled to reform her manners by stifling her own prejudiced English pride and selfish English dream (that of becoming a Canadian social leader). Finally she became virtuous by sacrificing the pursuit of social pleasure to the love of God and to the prosperity of His new land, Canada. Only then, having been tested and found true, could the pilgrim emerge from his/her last ordeal (represented by “the prison in the woods”) a clean soul, fit to take his/her place in a New World and to tell others about this spiritual lesson. In one of the final paragraphs of the last but one chapter of her somewhat melodramatic and egotistic narrative - entitled "A change in our prospects" - Susanna comes out of her seven-year seclusion in the woods, physically and morally metamorphosed by the values of the Canadian woods:

For seven years, I had lived out of the world entirely; my person had been rendered coarse by hard work and exposure to the weather. I looked double the age I really was and my hair was already thickly sprinkled with grey. I clung to my solitude. I did not like to be dragged from it to mingle in gay scenes, in a busy town [Belleville] and with gaily dressed people. I was no longer fit to the world; I had lost all relish for the pursuits and pleasures which are so essential to its votaries; I was contented to live and die in obscurity. (477)

Mrs. Moodie used the “mirror effect” of the reformed Canadian communities and of her own powerful experience to send her Evangelical message to the class-ridden English society, ruled by social prejudice, “Mammon worshipping” and by an absence of Christian values. From the margins of Empire,
mercantilism, materialism and the social race for status were seen as the sources of all evils, while by contrast the Canadian woods led the emigrants to experience the first torments and the original values of early Christians, now lost in urban Britain.

Susanna Moodie’s spiritual and social quest follows this classical Biblical journey tempered with romantic Victorian ideas of exile and spiritual renewal, when the emigrant stages her moments of doubts and dejection:

The children had fallen asleep. A deep silence pervaded the party. Night was above us with her mysterious stars. The ancient forest stretched around us on every side, and a foreboding sadness sunk upon my heart. Memory was busy with the events of many years. I retraced step by step the pilgrimage of my past life, until arriving at that passage in its somber history, I gazed through tears upon the singularly savage scene around me, and secretly marveled, “What brought me here?” (266)

Tennyson the poet Laureate in Mrs. Moodie’s times developed in the “Voyage” a characteristic metaphor to describe the tireless struggle of his aspiring age. Life, for the Victorian poet, was a “sea-journey” over “troubled waters”, a pilgrimage that demanded fortitude of spirit and steadfast defiance of the laws that seemed to condition man’s ineluctable free will. Tennyson’s aspiration towards spiritual fulfillment was endemic to many Victorian verses and worthy of imitation for the Moodies. Recalling her arrival in Canada after a long sea journey towards the Promised Land, seeking personal freedom for her family, Susanna Moodie stated that: "These men", she said referring to the British emigrants around them, including herself: " [...] become wealthy and prosperous and form the bones and sinews of a great rising country. Their labour is wealth, not exhaustion; it produces independence and content, not homesickness and despair. " (15) Susanna Moodie's poetic style also echoed the lines of Romantic poets before Tennyson who related their spiritual quests, having experienced the rebirth of their soul when confronted by wonderful majestic landscapes, like our female

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emigrants in the Canadian wilderness. The Romantics - like Lord Byron, another of Susanna’s favourite poets - interpreted the redemptive function of nature and its revealing powers, and he saw the City of God not as an extraterrestrial sanctuary but rather as an earthly paradise of perfect human government. Mrs. Moodie’s opening poem "Canada” was inspired by this Romantic English high culture to which she fused a Ruskinian theophany. Canada was therefore translated to the page in language, style and images that were common to the author and her Victorian readers.

The first step of Mrs. Moodie’s progress was quite predictable as it began with emigration, that is to say the choice of exile for her family. She described it to her “armchair” readers as the first ordeal sent to her and her husband to test their fortitude and their humility. She blamed “adversity” encountered in the Old World which cast them on the road of emigration: "Emigration may, indeed, generally be regarded as an act of severe duty, performed at the expense of personal enjoyment, accompanied by the sacrifice of those local attachment...(11)"

The second step of her progress took the form of the voyage over the sea, when the exile sacrificed his/her comfort and happiness to begin a life of ordeals. Mrs Moodie staged this moment as that of social rejection from the mother country: "What heinous crime had I committed that I, who adored you (Britain) should be torn from your sacred bosom, to pine out my joyless existence under a foreign clime." (73)

Mrs. Moodie insists on the unusual length of their sea trip from England to Canada, during which she was sick. But her sufferings were crowned by reward when land came close in the shape of Quebec City to which Mrs. Moodie devoted a vibrant ode. Beholding the Canadian landscape, she experienced her first soul awakening to “higher things”. Poems praising Canada are found in the first and second chapters of the narrative. She immediately associated Canadian land with God’s hand, "..In solitary grandeur sternly placed, / In awful majesty though sits alone... ". Canada becomes “Nature's throne» in which “Man finds himself with
God - alone.” Moodie the pilgrim identified Canada for her reader as the New Jerusalem placing all her hopes in it, "The mountain home of heaven-born liberty." (28, 33, 35)

Upon landing, when confronted by cholera and the masses of low-life immigrants, Mrs Moodie’s faith in her New Jerusalem was already slightly shaken. Her English social prejudices still blinded her, as she would recall at the end of the progress. Reflecting upon the first months in the bush, Susanna Moodie put forward this pattern of doubts and reassurance that were part of her spiritual and Christian transformation. The pilgrim had to go through moments of doubt and even rejection, in order to see her faith eventually triumph. When doubts overcame her, Mrs Moodie always counteracted her negative emotions by a short paragraph in which she told her readers that God had a plan for her and her family all along, even in the worst moments of her bush life. Families of deserving emigrants, true Christians, should always be assured of God's presence in Canada who had placed them on this road of hardship for a purpose:

After removing to the bush, many misfortunes befell us which deprived us of our income, and reduced us to great poverty. In fact we were strangers, and the knowing ones took us in; and for many years we struggled with hardships which would have broken stouter heart than ours, had not our trust been placed in the Almighty, who among our troubles never wholly deserted us. (110)

In accordance with the literary convention of spiritual autobiographies, religious awareness and revelation were also staged. Awareness and Revelation came to Mrs Moodie after a period of exile and solitude during which the pilgrim was enabled to cast away her original sins which in her case appeared to be her English upper-middle-class social prejudices and her English pride. In the solitude of the backwoods (a Victorian reinterpretation of the Valley of the Shadow of Death), the Moodies were secluded from “proper” society having to share the mundane life of a small sparse Canadian community. Having to borrow and to rely on others whose status placed them below her, in order to survive in the woods, led Susanna Moodie, like her sister before her, to shed her English middle-
class manners. The bite of poverty which the Moodies and the Traills experienced because of their lack of farming knowledge and their small means, taught them simplicity as well as simple Christian values, shared by the small close-knit communities in the bush: "Never did our beautiful liturgy seem so touching, and impressive as it did that day, - offered up in our lowly log-built church in the wilderness.[...] The turf here is of emerald greenness: in short it is a sweet spot, retired from the noise and bustle of the town, a fitting place in which to worship God in spirit and in truth."539

From early dejection and despair, the readers followed Mrs. Moodie’s personal moral transformation, which she enacts and stages, chapter after chapter. In the woods, Mrs. Moodie had to put her faith to the test, as hardships piled upon the family taking them down one step closer to poverty and destitution. The first hard lesson that the English gentlewoman learnt in the woods was that of manual work. She eventually condescended to help her husband, stooping to work with her hands when poverty became too biting. So far she had rejected manual tasks, which she believed were below her rank and status. Then, she learnt the value of a day’s work and this meaningful experience was presented to her readers as a God-send, as a further test to her own fortitude and her faith. This humbling lesson took her a step closer to the deserving Canadian emigrant that she believed God had planned to transform her into:

I had a hard struggle with my pride before I would consent to render the least assistance on the farm, but reflection convinced me that I was wrong - that Providence had placed me in a situation where I was called upon to work - that it was not only my duty to obey that call, but to exert myself to the utmost to assist my husband and help to maintain my family.(352)

Mrs Moodie's narrative in the bush, Canadian folklore and Canadian parables

Like Christian’s, Mrs. Moodie’s progress in the Canadian bush is punctuated by meetings with “characters” who seem to have been chosen to depict or illustrate a specific moral value. Each chapter of *Roughing It in the Bush* seems

to be built like a parable in which Mrs Moodie encounters a Canadian emblematic character who teaches her a useful lesson. Roger Sharrock in his introduction to the 1987 edition of *Pilgrim’s Progress* confirms the importance of the accumulation of fateful incidents in the plot: "Many of the figures and incidents that spring up along the route are created for the sake of and immediate effect and then passed over when a fresh incident occurs in Christian’s progress.\(^\text{540}\) The characters represented by Mrs. Moodie in her chapters were all typical of the Canadian woods. These denizens of the backwoods belonged to the folklore that Moodie staged for her readers. The characters were amusing but they also formed a predictable combination of emblematic characters - either sinners (Old Satan and his family, the land speculators described as “artful seducers”...), Good Samaritans (Jenny the Maid, the natives, Susanna’s brother, her friend Emilia, good neighbours on the road...) or Prodigal Sons (Captain N--, the failed gentleman settler...).

These archetypal encounters taught her through parable-like episodes how to abandon her British pride and prejudice and to adopt Canadian ways. The community in which she lived reformed her into sharing their true Christian values of selflessness, benevolence, sharing, compassion, humility, fortitude and cross-class solidarity. One finds similar patterns of moral designs in Tennyson’s poetry in which the personal journey went generally from pride to suffering and humility, to redemption and selflessness\(^\text{541}\). As a true Victorian heroine and woman of letters, Mrs. Moodie staged and cried out what Canada and its “natives” had revealed to her: "Ah, glorious poverty! Thou art a hard task master, but in thy soul-ennobling school I have received more God-like lessons, have learned more sublime truths, than ever I acquired in the smooth highways of the world."\(^\text{352}\)

In all early Christian pilgrimages, elements were sent to test the faith of the pilgrim to see if he/she was ready to rely on God’s Providence whatever the

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circumstances thrust on his/her path. The Canadian Bush provided the ideal backcloth for such a parable with its whirlwinds, snow, cholera, perils by water and fires. All these plagues crossed Mrs. Moodie’s path no less than five times, leaving the impression that Canada was a particularly dangerous place to live in for emigrants. However such perils were part and parcel of Mrs Moodie’s reenacting of her own spiritual journey. The moral argument prevailed over the "truth about Canada". Her own sister, Catharine Parr Traill had doubts about the veracity of all these encounters packed into one book. She confided in a letter to her friend Frances Stewart, who was asking her why she did not have more material to write novels, that she was not like her sister and her brother-in-law who, she claimed, often used adventures that happened to other people to include in their works.

Mrs. Moodie’s Social Gospel spelled out to Britain

What is clear to the reader is the lesson that Mrs. Moodie wanted to draw from her own spiritual experience in the backwoods. She felt that her moral exemplar could serve the design that God had conceived for her, in placing her in Canada: to teach the rest of the world about the coming of a new Christian nation and about its reforming powers. In chapter 14, entitled “A Journey to the Woods” she assigned herself that mission telling herself “the unerring hand of the Great Father has led you here. You form a connecting link in the destinies of many.” She added:

I retraced step by step the pilgrimage of my past life, until arriving at that passage in its sombre history; I gazed through tears upon the singularly savage scene around me, and secretly marvelled, “what brought me here?” “Providence” was the answer which the soul gave “not for your own welfare perhaps, but for the welfare of your children, the unerring hand of the Great Father has led you here. You form a connecting link in the destinies of many.”(267)

542 See the chapters “Burning the fallow”, “The Fire” or “The Whirlwind”: “Panting with terror, I just reached the door of the home as the hurricane swept the hill, crushing and overturning everything in its course. Spell-bound, I stood at the open door, with clasped hands, unable to speak, rendered dumb and motionless by the terrible grandeur of the scene…(432)”
She set about representing middle-class emigration to Canada as the ultimate Christian experience and as a transforming one for those who had the moral strength to bear it. In Canada, she learnt that poverty was not *ingrained*, that it was not a *sin*. Therefore the so-called Evangelical British upper-middle-class discourse towards poverty that consisted in blaming the paupers for their indolence and intemperance was unfounded: "The misfortunes that now crowded upon us [the Moodies] were the result of no misconduct or extravagance on our part, but arose out of circumstances which we could not avert nor control." (352)

As an outcast from her own original class, she learnt the lesson of honest poverty and saw life from the other side of the social barrier. In fact, her regular apostrophes to her middle-class readers "Ah! Ye who revel in this world’s wealth" (401) reminded them that they were privileged but not true Christians. They should not attempt to emigrate to Canada where their prejudiced Anglican minds and materialistic values would lead them to fail. They could only tarnish or spoil Canadian values of sharing. Only true Christians, pure souls or those ready to experience downgrading poverty that seemed to inevitably accompany emigration, were welcome in the New un tarnished, sinless Jerusalem.

The unpeopled wastes of Canada must present the same aspect to the new settler that the world did to our parents after their expulsion from the Garden of Eden, all the sins which defile the spot, or haunt it with the association of departed evil is concentrated in their own persons. Bad spirits cannot be supposed to limper near a place where crime has never been committed. (268)

In the New World, Christian commandments seemed to rule the life of the community, not materialistic principles, wealth or prejudiced class discourses as in Mrs. Moodie’s Britain. Susanna Moodie's discourse was received as very dogmatic and self-righteous by her English readers. Here she was clearly spelling out her Canadian social gospel to Britain.

But never was self-denial more fully rewarded; I felt happy in having contributed in the least to pay a just debt to kind and worthy people. You must become poor yourself before you can sympathize with them and fully
recognize them as your brethren in flesh. Their benevolence to each other exercised amidst want and privation, *as far surpasses the munificence of the rich towards them, as the exalted philanthropy of the Christ and his disciples does the Christianity of the present day.* (270)

Susanna Moodie openly criticized British middle-class Evangelicalism as practiced in England within and without the Church of England. In fact she had left the Church of England for Congregationalism in her early twenties and opposed the true Evangelicalism practiced by non-Conformist sects to the moral-ridden, paternalistic charity of the Anglican upper middle classes towards the poor, which sounded insincere and even hypocritical to her. There was no Christian benevolence unless men themselves felt the bite of poverty.

We found that manual toil, however distasteful to those unaccustomed to it, was not after all such a dreadful hardship; that the wilderness was not without its rose, the hard face of poverty without its smile. If we occasionally suffered severe pain, we as often experienced great pleasure, and I have contemplated a well-hoed ridge of potatoes on that bush farm, with as much delight as in years long past I had experienced in examining a fine painting in some well-appointed drawing-room. (353)

Susanna Moodie seems to spell out some Social Gospel, which she learnt from the Canadian bush, "I can now look back with calm and thankfulness on that long period of trial and exertion – with thankfulness that the dark clouds that hung over us […] when they did burst upon us, were full of blessings." (353) There in the Canadian bush, she discovered the truth of poverty, away from the so-called Christian moral explanations usually resorted to by upper-middle-class Evangelical Anglicans based on the Utilitarian principles and put forward in the discriminating practice of the New Poor Law (1834).

Mrs Moodie and her family did not suffer from destitution because of moral sins - though she explained that her proud attitude inherited from her upper-middle-class education was part of her social demise. The bouts of poverty, which led her to share the hard-working life of lower-class emigrants in the bush, had been first and foremost caused by economic reasons.
Still confidently expecting to realize an income, however small from the steam-boat stock, we had involved ourselves considerably in debt, in order to pay our servants and obtain the common necessaries of life; and we owed a large sum to two Englishmen in Dummer, for clearing ten more acres upon the farm. Our utter inability to meet these demands weighed very heavily upon my husband’s mind. All superfluities in the way of groceries were now given up, and we were compelled to rest satisfied upon the produce of the farm. Milk, bread and potatoes during the summer became our chief, and often, for months, our only fare. As to tea and sugar, they were luxuries we would not think of. (353)

Her family had fallen prey to land speculators twice when Mr Moodie invested most of their earnings in plots of land which were not cleared of stumps, by simply signing a piece of paper. This was common practice at the time among the land companies operating out of London in order to attract gullible emigrants to the backwoods. Land speculators working for the Canada Company were protected by the colonial Tory government whose members had invested in it. In the same way there was no possibility of a legal case against the money-mongering capitalists of Toronto who had promised Moodie a quick return for money invested in a new steamboat company. The stocks in which Moodie had placed high hopes eventually fell through. She warned her English fellowmen and women against the dehumanizing forces of Mammonism. Her moral and religious discourse to Tory Evangelicals at home was in fact a social criticism drawn from her experience in the margins. Her mission was to expose the moral “truth” that Canadian communities, yet unaffected by social competition, materialism and individualism could offer to her fellow English subjects. It was high time that metropolitan readers reformed their social habits and learnt to share Christian values with their brothers and neighbours especially when in need, instead of accumulating wealth and riches out of vanity. They should abandon the practice of philanthropy and Evangelicalism out of habit. In moral earnestness typical of the Victorian period she warned her reader at the end of her narrative: "The rich man gives from abundance, the poor man shares with a distressed comrade his all." (423)
In her sermon-like narrative, Canada is presented as a semi-Utopian world in which concepts of Social Christianity were put to practice and which in turn should inspire the Old World to follow its principles. Susanna Moodie's tone is very passionate. The personal agenda of the female author is never far from the surface. Anger against her former society and fellow class members fed her moral discourse, particularly when she evoked the sacrifice of her life and career at home, choosing emigration to Canada over social demise and mockery. In Canada, life was presented as happier and more valuable, she seems to say, than the sterile materialistic lives led at home by her fellow Victorians. Emigrants from the struggling classes in Britain understood they could escape the class-ridden home country for Canada, to seek a better life away from British class prejudice and slave labouring for the nation’s wealth. Near Dummer, Susanna Moodie describes a long line of cleared land and farms called the “English line” which, contrary to what her readers would expect, was not established by middle-class emigrants but by former Cornish miners:

The English line was inhabited chiefly by Cornish miners, who tired of burrowing like moles underground, had determine to emigrate to Canada, where they could breathe the fresh air of Heaven, and obtain the necessaries of life upon the bosom of their mother earth. Strange as it may appear, these men made good farmers, and steady industrious colonists, working as well above ground as they had toiled in their early days beneath it.[…] good food and kind treatment rendering them always cheerful and contented. (440)

Here again, from the margins of the Empire, a female author does not hesitate to reject the constraints of “reforming” and even “reformatory” literature to criticize English society. In England, in the 1850s, Elizabeth Gaskell had just ventured into the public debate over social reforms and a more co-operative Christian society, but she hid her personal views behind her characters. In 1852, no woman had yet dared openly criticize the moral decline of England and the obsessive Mammon-pursuit in which middle-class Victorians had lost their souls. Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin had opened up the way in Past and Present (1843) or in Modern Painters (1834, 1846). In Past and Present, for instance,
Carlyle forced contemporary England to recognize the contradictions in its ideologies and practice. According to Carlyle, the middle classes and the upper classes' basic attitudes towards work, wealth and social responsibility contradicted the Christian tenets that supposedly formed and informed their lives. Susanna Moodie was just as explicit as Carlyle and even more pragmatic as she held Canada up as a “mirror” to England. In it, the English public could see where they had erred and readers could also dream about a renewed and reformed society in which social cohesion between Christian values and Christian lives would bring happiness and further progress. John Dunbar Moodie's final chapter “Canadian Sketches” echoed Susanna Moodie's social criticism by suggesting that England was “doomed” compared to prosperous happy Canada.

Between 1832 when Mrs. Moodie emigrated to Canada and 1852 when she published her first personal narrative, Canada, like Britain or America, underwent a religious revival, in the form of Evangelicalism. Evangelicalism had begun its teaching work in the New World before awakening the Old World under the impulse of dissenting preachers at the turn of the 19th century. The Gospel was made available to the labouring masses thanks to cheaper bibles and to popular preachers who reached out to the lower classes in villages. Gradually Evangelicalism combined with the anti-slavery campaign that also revived the religious convictions of the 19th-century middle classes. But where 18th-century Evangelicalism had breached social barriers normally preserved by traditional churches like the Church of England, 19th-century Evangelicalism - whose reforming discourse had convinced Anglican and non-Conformist middle-class congregations – was becoming part and parcel of a more traditional, patronizing and paternalistic middle-class mentality.

An Evangelical believer is a man who believes in the fall and its consequences, in the recovery and its fruits, in the personal application of the recovery by the power of the Spirit of God, and the Christian will aim,
desire, endeavour, by example, by exertion, by influence, by prayer to promote the great salvation of which he himself is a happy partaker.\textsuperscript{543}

In Britain and America, through moral crusading, social activism and philanthropy, middle-class Evangelicals reintroduced social divisions. The followers of Evangelical dogmas, - more often than not Utilitarians - felt they had a religious duty to convert members of the lower class. Their purpose was to reform their drunkenness and indolence. Bringing them the word of the Gospel would ultimately transform the poor and the paupers into responsible men and women. However, this did not necessarily imply that the economic circumstances that created pauperism in the city slums, the actual root of all evils, were tackled. Blinded by utilitarianism, Victorian Evangelicals blamed the individual himself, instead of looking to the expanding industrialism and laissez-faire economics to identify the main causes of social distress in England. In Canada, Susanna Moodie used the example of the contented industrious Cornish miners to teach her readers that the lower classes were not condemned to wretchedness and sins.

Susanna Moodie converted to Congregationalism in 1831 shortly before her marriage. She had shocked many friends and her Anglican family. Congregationalism preached the value of group preaching and therefore of common conversion. Susanna Moodie seemed to have been introduced to this non-Conformist church through her Methodist friends, the Childses of Bungay, who were small publishers of a reforming home-circle magazine. Together they had tried to promote public literacy by publishing cheap Bibles. True to her early Evangelical practice, she published a short volume of poems entitled \textit{Enthusiasm, and other Poems} in which she related her conversion. Besides, her involvement in social reforms had been quite prominent though anonymous that same year. Before meeting John Dunbar Moodie, Susanna Strickland had been the ghostwriter of a former slave, Mary Prince, who was working as a maid at the house of one of her friends, Thomas Harral, another non-Conformist publisher.

Anti-slavery was then the greatest target of Evangelical humanitarianism. In the 1830s, the *History of Mary Prince, a West-Indian Slave (1831)* – supposedly written by its eponymous character - was used as an anti-slavery pamphlet by women campaigners who delivered the short volume from door to door. It was also presented by leading Evangelical anti-slavery campaigners to the Houses of Parliament as a testimony of a former slave to support the emancipation of other men and women like her, held in bondage in the West Indies, a practice which English men and women could not morally uphold.

With her essential contribution to this first important Evangelical campaign (as the anonymous author of Mary Prince's autobiography), Susanna Moodie successfully participated in the reform of English mercantilism and its evils as parliament lobbying resulted in the passing of the 1833 Emancipation Act. From this experience, the female author gathered that printed texts could work wonders to achieve the moral reformation of a given society.

**Canadian Evangelicalism: Susanna Moodie's lesson in Social Christianity**

Temperance was one of the main thrusts of the campaigns in the metropolitan slums by Evangelicals of all denominations including Church of England people. In Canada, Susanna Moodie ironically derides the traditional middle classes' lessons to the English poor about the sin of intemperance, by introducing the example of a drunken emigrant from the middle class, to show that such an evil was not the prerogative of poor people. In Canada, upper-middle-class gentlemen who emigrated without any will to work or desire to improve themselves morally, could also fall victim to alcoholism when their bourgeois dream escaped them:

[…] Tempted by the offer of finding themselves landholders of what, on paper, appear to them fine estates, they [half-pay officers totally unfit for pioneers] resign a certainty, to waste their energies, and die half-starved and broken-hearted in the depths of the pitiless wild.(443)

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To illustrate her point, she called to the fore the case of a “gentleman”, Captain N—»), who, like her husband, had come to Canada as a denizen of the backwoods. But the British gentleman, unable to cope with poverty and too proud to accept social destitution and the physical hardship of manual labour had fallen prey to alcohol and had dragged his family down with him. Here, she wishes to convey the lesson that her British middle-class readers were wrong in thinking that intemperance only concerned paupers, and that it could in fact be attributed to their lack of religious practice. Intemperance could also be the consequence of ingrained prejudice and egocentrism, common to upper-middle-class people. This was a proof that many gentlemen whose moral standards and religious practices were not elevated enough, would prove inadequate for life in Canada:

But the love of show, the vain boast of appearing richer and better dressed that our neighbours, too often involves the emigrant’s family in debt, from which they are seldom able to extricate themselves without sacrificing the means which would have secured their independence. (444)

This episode provided Susanna Moodie with the opportunity of staging herself as the Good Samaritan reaching out to the gentleman’s poor wife abandoned with her children in a shanty. There, putting into practice the Christian lessons of bush solidarity she had already learnt, she provided food, clothing and sisterhood to the poor gentlewoman546. Besides, the parable-like episode also enabled the author to draw the sad conclusion that the British upper middle classes should not come to Canada if they, the “vain and idle” were incapable of transforming their unchristian pride and habits and of learning the value of a hard day’s work. I consider Susanna Moodie's comment here can be considered as one of the keys to her narrative:

546 “The tears sprang to my eyes, and I thought, in the bitterness of my heart, upon my galling poverty, that my pockets did not contain even a single copper, and that I had scarcely garments enough to shield me from the inclemency of the weather. By unflinching industry, and taking my own part in the toil of the field, I had bread for myself and family, and this was more than poor Mrs N— possessed […] (450)”
This, although a long digression [her visit to Mrs. N---] will not, I hope, be without its use if this book is regarded not as a work of amusement but one of practical experience, written for the benefit of others, it will not fail to convey some useful hints to those who have contemplated emigration to Canada; the best country in the world for the industrious, well-principled man, who really comes out to work, and to better his condition by the labour of his hands, but a gulf of ruin to the vain and idle, who only set foot upon these shores to accelerate their ruin. (444)

In the final chapters, Susanna Moodie explicitly deterred her former middle-class fellows from coming to Canada. She declared them, with the benefit of hindsight and experience, a valueless, useless social group, “vain”, “indolent”, “idle”, “proud”, unable to provide for their poor and impoverished honest citizens who were “shoveled out” to Canada under “the vulgar sarcasms too often hurled at the less wealthy by the purse-proud, commonplace people of the world.” (11)

Her social and political criticism of her British middle-class readers' manners becomes quite straightforward as she addresses them directly in the final chapters: “Oh! Imagine, ye who revel in riches - who can daily throw away a large sum upon the merest toy...”(461). She wishes to attract to Canada those whose Evangelical aspirations, whose need for social reforms, whose disgust for the unchristian manners of their contemporaries would naturally lead to accept the hardships of a settler's life. Moodie represents Canada as a regenerated world for the true Evangelicals who dream of building Christian communities in the New World.

She adopts the overtones of Social Christianity or Social Gospel, a school of Christian thought which preached social solidarity and community spirit across classes and also advocated the moral reforming of society, in order to purge it of rampant individualism and laissez-faire spirit. The Canadian historian of religions, Brian Clark, gives a definition of English Canada's “Social Gospel” in A Concise History of Christian Canada:

These new ideas hinged on an enlarged conception of sin and salvation that, without rejecting the necessity of individual regeneration, insisted that
social institutions must also be redeemed in order to create an environment in which the individual could be healed and renewed\(^\text{547}\).

Susanna Moodie's lesson from the Bush heralded new social convictions which seven decades later will form the Canadian Nation's social project. The “Social Gospel” discourse and ideology would be preached in Canada in the 1920s and 1930s when the drawbacks of industrialization struck the slums and the working communities with poverty and unemployment. In the 1930s, preachers like John Line of Emmanuel College introduced a motion at the meeting of the Toronto Presbyterians declaring: “The application of Jesus’ principles to economic life would mean the abolition of the capitalist system.”

In fact as early as 1852, Mrs. Moodie described her spiritual experience in Canada as an enlightening experience in Social Christianity, which she wanted to convey to her English readers who were yet not aware of the values of such a Social Gospel. Indeed, the Canadian experience of poverty, that of shedding all material aspirations, leads her to throw out accusations which she directs at the mother country first, then at the upper middle classes whom she blames for having sacrificed some of its/their valuable children (her middle-class emigrants) on the altar of Mammonism and individualism. She seems to assimilate the English middle-class values and social attitudes (or Englishness) - of which she has been the victim at home - to the unchristian values that she mocks and undermines throughout her work. These are the true economic and social evils, not poverty and destitution. This discourse, with its surprising Utopian Socialist overtones would be developed in Canada, decades later, during the depression years when some left-wing churchmen formed the Fellowship for the Christian Social Order. Their pamphlets stated that the remedy to the industrial and economic dynamics was a sweeping reconstruction of the social order, which could only be achieved

in Canada, which in turn would preach it to other nations. Brian Clarke elaborates on this point:

The message proclaimed by advocates of the Social Gospel was that sin was not only personal but structural in nature: society was organized to serve Mammon, and to that end it ruthlessly exploited the majority of people. It subordinated the many to the few, immiserated the masses so that the rich could profit, robbed the poor of their humanity, and stripping them of all hope, deprived them of Christ’s offer of salvation. Yet true Christianity could regenerate even the most deformed social structures and bring society back to God.548

John Dunbar Moodie's final chapter confirmed that Canada would become an even truer Christian country as soon as a series of political and economic reforms - which had already begun to deal with the individualism and wild capitalism of the Tory clique in the 1840s – took care of the communal spirit, born in the settlers' community. John Dunbar Moodie believed that “municipal governments”(503) which represented direct democracy and communal management would be very “beneficial” to Canada. Moodie's open support for the Canadian Reformers led him to be despised by the Tory party in Belleville, where he was appointed sheriff. Introducing direct democracy in the form of municipal government came to spread Republican politics. In his conclusion to the second edition of Roughing It, John Dunbar also strongly praised Canadian Christian co-operative values, spelled out among the bush communities, which he said were extending their “influence on the minds of the people”, as they were “admirable political schools for a free people” and the townships were “now busy hives of industry and progressive improvement.” (506)

John Dunbar and Susanna Moodie underlined the values of a social and political community where solidarity prevailed across classes, preaching the reshaping of social relations and institutions according to the tenets of Christian Voluntarism. In so doing, they encouraged the emigration to Canada of these deserving English men and women who would voluntarily shed their English

548 Brian Clarke, "English-Speaking Canada from 1854", op.cit., p. 329.
prejudices and adopt Canadian values. Emigration would mean engaging themselves in a redeeming experience, close to that of “going native”.

Judging from the mocking tone in which the expression “Roughing it” was often quoted or used in the English language, after the publication of Susanna Moodie’s narrative, one gathers that her discourse might have deterred many well-established English upper-middle-class families from voluntarily joining the ranks of emigration. Readers at home used “roughing it” as a tongue-in-cheek expression when they wanted to express the idea that they had to make some effort to gain something. Besides, Susanna Moodie’s grandiloquence in her apostrophes to her readers from whom she seemed to demand an immediate effort of patriotism towards the new country, was not always appreciated by reviewers. She mingled colonial duty and Christian duty, promoting new criteria to measure the moral worth of the true middle classes. Michael Gauvreau, in “The Empire of Evangelicalism” describes the concept of Christian Voluntarism in these terms: “Organizations that in theory no longer operated according to hierarchical patterns of status and deference but were instead associations of individuals who freely chose to belong to them.”

Susanna Moodie prophesized Canada's future and established the moral superiority of the new country over the mother country. She represented Canadian people, at least the educated middle-class settlers like herself and her husband, as the leaders of these Christian communities whose patriotic project or national project she appointed herself to herald and to uphold. For the first time, Susanna Moodie offered to the metropolitan readers visions of what the margins could achieve in terms of a “national” project.

She clearly articulated a nation’s project which differed from the English “imperial culture” which the colonists, and particularly gentlewomen colonists, had been asked to defend and uphold in the colonies. According to Hans Kohn in

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Nationalism: Its Meaning and History, modern nationalisms took three concepts from Old Testament mythology: “the idea of a chosen people, the emphasis on a common stock of memory of the past and of hopes for the future, and finally national messianism.” Kohn describes this “national messianism” as a form of self-invested messianic mission that expressed “the struggle of heretical sects and oppressed classes for the realization of their dreams and aspirations.” Susanna Moodie undertook this messianic task in idealizing her new country.

Moodie's Roughing it in the Bush, as well as Catharine Parr Traill's The Backwoods of Canada, fit appropriately the category of post-colonial texts in the sense that they both filled the textual and physical distance between margins and centre with their comments and reflections on community and nation-making, suggesting that differences were born out of this physical gap in terms of culture and politics. Susanna Moodie, with her opinionated overtones and her personal agenda seemed to have been obsessed with a form of social vengeance towards the “Mrs Grundys of the world” to whom she was writing back. Her text conveyed the idea that the two worlds, the Old and the New, were taking separate roads. According to S. Moodie, Canada and its colonists would fare better than her former English class fellows, in all aspects of their lives:

If the Canadian people will honestly unite in carrying out measures proposed by the Government, for the good of the country, irrespective of self-interest and party prejudices, they must before the close of the present century, become a great and prosperous people.(527)

Post-colonial literary studies describe fictional or non-fiction texts from the postcolonial world as performing didactic, dogmatic or pedagogical tasks. Post-colonial writers from the former colonial world explain and articulate first to the readers of the imperial centre, then to his/her fellow ex-colonial subjects, the fact that they should take charge of the national narrative and regain the upper

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551 Moodie’s introduction to the 1871 Canadian edition.
hand on the production of knowledge on their colonized world. In order to do that, the post-colonial writer must adopt a new mode of enunciation. This mode described as “perlocutory” contains strong moral remarks addressed from the “colonized” periphery to the imperialist metropolis. Traill and Moodie adopted such a moral tone when both suggested to potential middle-class female and male settlers to abandon all their pretentious accoutrements or silly habits if they wished to emigrate to Canada. In the same way, both admonished the British government for promoting false hopes about Canada in emigration pamphlets. Generally speaking, Traill's attempt could be described in postcolonial analysis as “recapturing” or “reappropriating” her “reality”. She presented herself as the “authentic” voice from Canada while Susanna Moodie's work tends to legitimate the presence and the moral worth of a new people in the margins.

Traill and Moodie believed that their personal testimonies were useful social contributions. They posited themselves as the scribes, as the “bards” or “clerks” of these colonist communities, in whose name and for whose sake they were writing home. Jean-Pierre Durix in his general analysis of postcolonial literatures also notes the prominence of such a will among native authors to put their pen to the service of the “native” community, noting a desire “to legitimise their activity by seeking social recognition of their usefulness to the whole human community […] They came to consider themselves as the educated guides who could show the way to liberation.” In other words, locating Canada for the British public was a way for these women writers to regain a status as women of letters, buried as they were under their «colonist» status. But they also affirmed their positions as leaders of the community, not necessarily in terms of financial status as in Britain, but as educated middle-class women, as moral and intellectual guides, as socially useful to the community. They were writing home in the name of the Canadian margins and their people, so as to have their isolated efforts

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recognized and valued by the ultimate arbiters of education and class, the British reading public. In so doing they were seeking recognition, confronting experiences and establishing differences between the Old country and what was about to become a new country.
CHAPTER 6
The "Moodie effect" on imperial counter-narratives (1852-1867)

By trying to dissuade "undeserving" vitiated English upper-middle-class emigrants from migrating to Canada in 1852, Susanna Moodie established new rules for nation-building within the British Empire: long-time British settlers that formed the new colonial elite should be allowed to select the emigrants they wished to "hire" for their "new" country. The gentlewoman settler went further than her sister Catharine Parr Traill. Not only did she, like Traill, challenge the imperial representation of Canada circulating in official pamphlets but she also challenged imperial authorities represented by the Colonial Office at home. If the Land and Emigration Committee continued to present Canada as a land of milk and honey for the English "bourgeois" with their mammon-worshipping habits, this would lead Canadians to see their so-far untarnished social order and values contaminated by those of the Old World. Susanna Moodie wrote this narrative from the margins of Empire in order to accomplish her duty for her new country, her "adoptive country":

Canada has become almost as dear to me as my native land; and the homesickness that constantly preyed upon me in the Backwoods, has long ago yielded to the deepest and most heartfelt interest in the rapidly increasing prosperity and greatness of the country of my adoption, - the great foster-mother of that portion of the human family, whose fatherland, however dear to them, is unable to supply them with bread.(LC, 12)

Edward Said in Culture and Imperialism has studied the place held by fiction in the construction of the structure of feeling of colonizer and colonized. We could extend this remark to non-fictional texts such as the "personal narratives" studied here. Said analyzed the power of "narratives" in the formation of identity in the colonial or post-colonial world. On the one hand, authors from the imperial centre used their texts to forge the imperial culture, which would subsequently spread representations of the colonial world and feed the "spectacle

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554 Susanna Moodie, Life in the Clearings versus the Bush, London, Richard Bentley, 1853, referred to as LC in the following quotes, while Roughing it in the Bush will be referred to as RB.
of Empire" at home. On the other hand, "colonial" authors also used their pens to produce other narratives or counter-narratives and thus to forge their own culture of Empire which could counteract the effect of the imperial narratives: "Stories are the heart of what explorers and novelists say about strange regions of the world, they also became the method colonized people use to assert their own identity and the existence of their own history.555"

Susanna Moodie’s personal narrative belongs to this latter category. The categorical, admonishing tone used by the authoress in her Canadian narratives, *Roughing it in the Bush* and *Life in the Clearings*, published at the heart of the Empire had the power to counteract other travellers' narratives or official narratives. Said described post-colonial texts such as Moodie's as follows: "The power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism and constitutes one of the main connections between them."556" Susanna Moodie bridged the cultural gap between the margins and the metropolis but in so doing she suggested readers should shift the focus of moral or cultural power from London to Canada. In both her narratives, Susanna Moodie declared the New World was a source of moral regeneration where "redeemed" bourgeois citizens could start life anew when London or the "fatherland" in general had become too vitiated:

> Many are the weary, overtasked minds in that great, wealthy and powerful England, that turn towards this flourishing colony their anxious thought, and would willingly exchange the golden prime of the mother country for the healthy, vigorous young strength of this, her stalwart child, and consider themselves only too happy in securing a home upon these free and fertile shores. (LC, 21)

Narratives such as Susanna Moodie's or Catharine Parr Traill's, though reflecting personal journeys, were in fact collective ones. As has been revealed, both writers asserted and upheld their narratives in the name of their new community, either in the name of the "denizens of the backwoods" for Traill, or

the deserving "middle-class colonists" for Moodie. The overall impression they offered to their metropolitan readers however was that these communities were still middle-class in their habits and organization, but that these "bourgeois" communities had forged some new Canadian values and virtues for themselves. Philosopher Paul Ricoeur explains that these narratives are not necessarily the result of a preconceived notion of a community but that on the contrary, they forge the community and shape its identity by recording its structure, relationships and habits.\(^{557}\) Benedict Anderson also suggests that "the pilgrimages in which colonial elites participated, helped to forge an imagined community."\(^{558}\) Such seems to have been Traill's and Moodie's task when they recorded the pilgrimages of their families and many others to the backwoods of Canada, and the sacrifices they had to accomplish to bring civilization to the colony.

Their personal status as long-term emigrants to Canada helped to give the Moodies the "power to narrate", to tell the truth about the colonies in which they had settled and to whose improvement they had contributed. In so doing their narrative "blocks other narratives from forming and emerging", to quote Said. Similarly, we can observe that the Moodies also "assert their own identity and the existence of their own history" in the new "patria", or "matria" since Susanna Moodie recurrently refers to Canada as the "foster mother".

In the first section of this chapter, we will examine the patriotic discourse developed by Susanna Moodie in *Roughing it in the Bush*, but more openly in *Life in the Clearings* in which the author pitted the new Canadian character and the values of liberal Canada against the conservative English manners of her former fellow class members and their hovering imperial presence in Canada. Susanna Moodie's narrative also staged her participation in, and her elaboration of, a "national" project for the Canadian community when she addressed some of her Canadian readers in *Life in the Clearings*, stirring them into more action. Partha Chatterjee adds that "writing one's own history is a primary sign of the nationalist

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consciousness which shows that Others cannot write the nation's voice. In recording her sentiments of "in-betweeness" for her British readers, in making clear her patriotic feelings and even proto-nationalist feelings towards Canada, Susanna Moodie articulates a colonial discourse reflecting her personal agenda towards the metropolitan imperial project, based on her very personal experience. To the imperial project designed by the Colonial Office, she opposes her own views on the future of the colonies as independent nations.

Susanna Moodie's "national" project for Christian Canada differed from the "imperial project" elaborated for the Canadian colonies by Edward Gibbon Wakefield, Lord Durham and their English middle-class supporters, now shared by Liberal and Tories alike at home. Durham's official nationalism, based on "Englishness", posited that love for the mother country and the preservation of English habits and manners in the colonial world had to be cherished. Wakefield had emphasized the participation of middle-class women to that end. But once in Canada, Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill showed that they would rather "go native", adopt and promote Christian values and adhere to the Canadian values of community and solidarity, than copy and imitate the manners and habits of the upper-middle-class English Grundys from whose sarcasms they had fled England. Along with her husband, Susanna also argued that Canada was on the road to becoming an independent nation whose construction or development did not necessarily have to involve England anymore. Nonetheless, Susanna Moodie articulated to her metropolitan readers the manner in which Britishness could replace Englishness in the heart of the first generation of emigrants in Canada.

In the second part of this chapter, we will pay attention to the reception this colonial text received in the metropolis, particularly from the pen of female authors: travellers or colonists who reacted against Susanna Moodie’s Roughing it in the Bush and Life in the Clearings. Other narratives: the first produced by women travellers (Isabella Bird, Amelia Murray and (Mrs) Isabella Trotter), and

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the second by a gentlewoman colonist in Canada (Mrs Coppleston), would counteract Susanna Moodie's pro-Canada nationalist narrative. In the following pages, I will show how Susanna Moodie's Canadian narratives triggered off textual reactions that tried to revise or erase her representation of Canada in the minds of British readers. These counter-narratives were taken up by women whose positions in life corresponded to the people Susanna Moodie loathed so much. Susanna Moodie had asked a certain social group to stay away from Canada. This group was composed of the English upper-middle-class families, those who were mimicking the English aristocracy, those who supported Toryism, those who maintained high social prejudice, those who faithfully revered the Anglican religion, those for whom Evangelicalism remained a dry precept. In the eyes of many women from the new ruling elite in England (the Anglican, Tory upper middle classes) Susanna Moodie's outspoken narrative contributed to representing Canada as an underdeveloped, mediocre, petty bourgeois, colonial possession. After 1854, the moral and intellectual dichotomy between margins and centre was more than ever reflected in the vocabulary used in English women's texts to refer to the "colonies". The adjective "colonial" was attached to everything pertaining to the margins and to anyone belonging to them. To it were attached moral connotations of a lesser civilization or pettiness.

On the contrary, the adjective "imperial" began to evoke the high-cultured, intellectual, refined world of the metropolis of the 1850s and 1860s when decisions and representations of the English Empire were taken or made. I believe Susanna Moodie's constant pitting of the colonial bourgeoisie against the metropolitan bourgeoisie accelerated this depreciation of the white colonial world in England. Most reviewers of *Life in the Clearings* denigrated Moodie's dogmatism and mocked her mimicking of bourgeois life in the bush. This shift in the representations of the colonial world, especially in British North America, illustrated the shift in imperial politics at home where imperial politics would be revised. Women's discourses on the Canadian colonies, particularly upper-middle-
class English visitors' discourses, reflected and echoed the new metropolitan policies towards the Empire tending towards high imperialism.

**Susanna Moodie's Canadian patriotism – expressing the colonial voice in the "imperial project"**

At the end of *Roughing It*, Susanna Moodie suggested to her readers that by writing out her personal testimony on Canada she was fulfilling a divine mission. She told herself and her readers: "[…] the unerring hand of the Great Father has led you here. You form a connecting link in the destinies of many." (RB, 267) Thus she appointed herself as the legitimate "bard" or author of the New World, as the intellectual or woman of letters whose duty it was to "legitimate" the new Canadian society's values and ideologies. In the same way, at the end of his "Canadian Sketches", John Dunbar Moodie had closed the volume by suggesting he had accomplished his mission for Canada, “Reader! My task has ended. (RB, 524)” In choosing to publish in England, thanks to her small notoriety, Susanna Moodie also participated in the production and reproduction of budding Canadian culture. As man and woman of letters, in the absence of intellectual circles in colonial Canada and speaking in the name of the other exiled middle-class British subjects, she and her husband promoted themselves to the role of instructors and didactic sages, as well as moral counselors to the mother country. Acting as the representative of the middle classes in the bush, as well as other classes, addressing her fellow class-members at home, Susanna Moodie represented Canada as a cultural and moral "homogeneous" whole. She contrasted these moral certainties held together by Christian beliefs and their social application with the uncertainties and erring of the upper middle classes living in Britain.

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By acting as a go-between, between the middle classes living in the Canadian bush and the metropolitan middle classes, Susanna Moodie acquired a social function in the imperial sphere. Being the first women writers from Canada to provide this connection, this cultural link in the form of a literary exchange, Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill benefited from what Deirdre David, speaking of Britain, has described as "the emergence of intellectuals as secular prophets and moral teachers". More particularly as women intellectuals gained a degree of "cultural respectability" thanks to their "conventional function of moral guidance" which became "the property of a social group." If in Britain this concomitance had happened between the role of the "instructive angel in the house" and the need for secular prophets in the form of conduct books in the 1850s, this should have been even more true in Canada where women had always transited from the private to the public sphere, where both roles were easily assumed and fused. Susanna Moodie actually staged herself as one prominent "poet" in her community, someone to whom humbler people would turn in awe or out of curiosity. In *Life in the Clearings*, she recalls some encounters between herself, "Mrs M—the woman that writes" and some curious observers like this farmer’s wife:

"So", says she, at last, "you are Mrs M—?"
"Yes"
"The woman that writes?"
"The same."
She drew back her chair for a few paces, with a deep-drawn sigh, in which disappointment and surprise seemed strangely to mingle. "Well, I have he’rd a great deal about you and I wanted to see you bad for a long time, but you are only a humly person like myself after all.[…] (LC, 65)

Mrs Moodie provides herself with a "social function" in the name of the group, she is "the poet" whose prophetic visions she praises in her poetry. Such a self-appointed function places her automatically as a "leader or spokesperson" of the communities living in Canada. Hers, states David Carr about the rhetoric of

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"social narrators", "is the rhetoric that unites the group and expresses what it is about, where it has come from, and where it is going."563" Susanna Moodie used this voice and this rhetoric to show that the manners and virtues of the British settlers in Canada differed from those of the mother country, being more Evangelical and community-oriented and thus displaying an early form of a different "culture of Empire." By the same token, Susanna Moodie also provided her readers with a show of Canadian patriotism and even Canadian proto-nationalism. Ernst Gellner analyzes the part played by these intellectuals, or "bards", in nationalisms. He notes: "Writing soon transcends its purely technical use in record-keeping, and acquires moral and theological significance, the clerks or clerics, are almost far more than mere graph-technicians […] they claim to be the voice of the whole of it."564" Clearly, Susanna Moodie felt she was speaking up in the name of Canada, as she explained when reviewing in Life in the Clearings, the mission she had assigned to her first narrative:

It (Roughing it in the Bush) was written as a warning to well-educated persons not to settle in localities for which they were unfitted by their previous habits and education. In this I hoped to confer a service both on them and on Canada; for the prosperous settlement of such persons on cleared farms must prove more beneficial to the colony than their ruin in the bush. (LC, 329)

**Susanna Moodie on Canadian patriotism: Young Tory English Susanna vs. Liberal Canadian Susanna**

In the presentation that Richard Bentley gave of his new author in the 1852 editions, Mrs Moodie was introduced to British readers as an "authoress" who was already famous in Canada for her "loyal lyrics, prompted by strong affection for her native country", written "during the rebellion in Canada" which "produced a great effect in rousing an enthusiastic feeling in favour of law and order."565 " Richard Bentley was referring to two Canadian poems which Mrs Moodie had

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composed to encourage the Queen's Loyal troops - regular and volunteers - during the 1837-38 rebellions in Upper Canada, which pitted what she then believed were the British colonists against Yankee and French-Canadian rebels who presented themselves as "Patriots". These pieces, a poem and a song, were "circulated and sung throughout the colony" and presented by Bentley as displaying the authoress's "patriotism" towards the British Empire, not towards the colonists. The poems displayed young Susanna Moodie’s Tory imperialism, upholding the British colonies against the Canadian rebels, radicals and reformers. However if such had been Susanna Moodie’s position upon her arrival in the colony, the “glowing narrative of personal incident and suffering” published in 1852, should contradict Bentley’s perception of Susanna’s English patriotism. From her early, youthful, sentimental enthusiasm for the future of the British Empire in Canada in 1838, older Susanna’s feelings had evolved and in 1852, the narrator displayed stronger attachments for the colony against the imperial interests of the metropolis and local Tory cliques. Susanna Moodie’s patriotism and loyalty was now turned towards Canada and its "future glory."

Young Susanna Moodie had begun her Canadian/colonial career at a time when the Empire was threatened by internal strife. At that time, as a freshly-landed, upper-middle-class English emigrant, imperialism had blinded her and the "patriotic" inspiration of the lyrics for "Canadians will you join the Band – a loyal song" was clearly English-oriented. In her song she had asked the colonists to defend the English possessions in Canada, not to defend Canada as a separate entity. She had written these pieces in 1838, shortly after having been left alone to supervise their farm in the woods, while John Dunbar Moodie answered the call of conscription that had reached backwoodsmen. The call to arms was asking colonists and particularly former soldiers to defend the young Queen's empire
against the so-called Republican rebels under the leadership of William Lyon Mackenzie.

Susanna's account of this particular central episode in her life and in her narrative is given in the chapter entitled "The Outbreak." This chapter is particularly interesting as, with the benefit of hindsight, the female autobiographer revisits and combines her own life story with that of the colony. "The Outbreak" refers to the uprisings that had begun in Toronto on December 4, 1837, under the leadership of William Lyon Mackenzie. It also refers to the "outbreak" in her literary career, which had resumed at that moment. Indeed, once left alone on the farm, penniless for several months and overburdened with debts, Susanna Moodie resumed her writings, selling articles and tales to literary magazines in the colony, particularly to The Literary Garland. The "outbreak" also describes the opportunity she had had at that time to leave the "prison house" in the woods. Indeed, after writing to the Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, Sir George Arthur, to beg him to continue employing her husband in an official colonial position, she obtained from the Governor a position for her husband as Sheriff in the district of Hastings. Concomitantly, Susanna Moodie placed the fate of the colony, which was at a turning point politically (as rebels tried to free the colony from Tory English autocratic rule) in parallel with her own fate. She too was freeing herself from the burden of pioneer life in the bush and seeking financial independence for her family. The turning point in Susanna Moodie's life, from pioneer to "colonist", was brought about by the outburst of the rebellions in the Canadian colonies when she began making a name for herself in the margins, thanks to her patriotic songs. The rebellions also placed colonists on the road to "independence" as the imperial connection with the Canadian colonies was gradually transformed afterwards thanks to Durham’s liberal proposals.

Fredric Jameson, writing about post-colonial literature, posits that "the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public […] culture and society." He also notes that "national allegory is where the telling of the individual story and the individual experience
cannot but ultimately involve the laborious telling of the collectivity itself.568" The "Outbreak" chapter is a perfect example of such an intertwined narrative between individual and collective experience, revealing here the shifting of patriotic sentiments of a young female colonist and her husband, from Old England to her new country.

In the "Outbreak" chapter, Susanna Moodie recalls the context of the call to arms as it reached the bush in December 1837 where hardly any local news reached the emigrants: "Buried in the obscurity of those woods, we knew nothing, heard nothing of the political state of the country, and were little aware of the revolution which was about to work a great change for us and for Canada. (RB, 409) Recalling December 4, 1837, "that great day of the outbreak (409)", the narrator depicts a gloomy day during which she had accompanied her husband on a perilous boat trip to see a doctor, "with a sad foreboding spirit. " Returning from her canoe trip in the cold of winter, having heard from the doctor that Mr Moodie had broken a small bone in his foot, the Moodies found their servant Old Jenny frightened by some news she had heard from a gentleman who had left a document with her, during the Moodies’ absence:

She [Old Jenny] had a long story to tell us which could make neither head nor tail – how some gentleman had called during our absence, and left a large paper, all about the Queen and the Yankees; that there was war between Canada and the States; that Toronto had been burnt, and the governor killed, and I know not what other strange and monstrous statements. [...] we found a copy of the Queen’s proclamation, calling upon loyal gentlemen to join in putting down the unnatural rebellion. (RB, 411)

Susanna Moodie wrote about this significant moment in the history of the colony, with the benefit of hindsight. Susanna explains to her readers the loyalist upsurge that the young couple of settlers felt at first, when they had heard that Republican rebels were threatening "fair Canada": "the spirit of my husband was aroused, he instantly obeyed what he considered the imperative call of duty, and

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told me to prepare him a few necessaries, that he might be ready to start early in the morning. (411)" Susanna saw her husband leave the next day. She was then left "in the most absolute uncertainty as to the real state of public affairs (412)."

Resuming the rhetorical dialogue between the English, upper-middle-class, prejudiced, Tory, young Susanna and the wiser, older Canadian, Christian, Liberal Susanna, the narrator gently mocks the immediate early enthusiasm young imperialist Susanna and John Dunbar had felt. In 1850 and 1851 when Susanna Moodie composed the "Outbreak" with humorous distance, the true facts about the actual political situation in Upper Canada in 1838 were now clear to the older colonists. Those who had been described as rebels at the time, were only resorting to a desperate gesture to vent their democratic vindications and demands for Cabinet responsibility and the end of Tory rule in Toronto. In 1838, the situation had been misrepresented to the emigrants and their young imperial enthusiasm exploited by the Tories. Susanna Moodie pointed to a political manipulation of young colonists and less educated emigrants by the Tory clique, to have them rise to the defence of the colony:

The honest backwoodsmen, perfectly ignorant of the abuses that had led to the present position of things, regarded the rebels as a set of monsters, for whom no punishment was too severe, and they obeyed the call to arms with enthusiasm. The leader of the insurgents must have been astonished at the rapidity with which a large force was collected, as if by magic, to repel his designs. (RB, 413)

In fact the lyrics of her patriotic/imperialist songs, which Bentley mentioned in the "Advertisement" are presented to her readers in the "Outbreak" chapter. "A few specimens of these loyal staves", as Susanna Moodie described these early naïve poems, are nonetheless given "to amuse" her readers: "I must own that my British spirit was fairly aroused, and as I could not aid in subduing the enemies of my beloved country with my arm, I did what little I could to serve the good cause with my pen. (413)" If in 1838, Susanna had let out "this outpouring of a national enthusiasm, which I found impossible to restrain", in 1851, Susanna and John Dunbar Moodie wished to convey to their readers the fact
that their political support was now going to the Liberals, to the Reformers, to a "Canadian" party in fact, not to the Conservative/Tory imperialists, who had "squandered the resources of the colony – its lands – in building up the fortunes of a would-be aristocracy, who necessarily obstructed the progress of improvement, while the people were tantalised by the empty semblance of free government. (502)."

Susanna and John Dunbar Moodie's joint criticism of the Tory clique and of the support they had received from the British Colonial Office for so long, against the interest of the colony, is conveyed in different ways. John Dunbar was not subtle about it in his "Canadian Sketches", while Susanna uses a more tongue-in-cheek comment to demonstrate how foolish she and her husband had been to enrol in the support of the Tory clique in 1838. For instance, she suggests that Tory propaganda had led the young colonist she was then, to believe that an impending invasion of American rebels was threatening Canada. In fact, the lack of information in the backwoods or the gross misrepresentation of the political situation found in Tory papers, had left her family and friends in the dark about the Reformers' platform. Besides, her English Tory views had led her to believe that the worst rebel of all, William Lyon Mackenzie, whom rumours and the local Tory press had depicted as Republican, was in fact defending the interest of the colony and its lower-class emigrants against the upper-middle-class Tory clique and British interests. In January 1838, in "An address to the Freemen of Canada", she had declared: "Canadians! Will you join the band-/ The factious band – who dare oppose/ The regal power of that bless’d land/ From whence your boasted freedom flows? (413)"

In 1853, in Life in the Clearings, Susanna Moodie now openly blamed the Tories whose predominance in Canadian society was still felt in local government, in Belleville for instance, where she and her husband were deemed too reformist for the local "aristocracy":

The Tory party, who arrogated the whole loyalty of the colony to themselves, branded indiscriminately, the large body of Reformers as traitors and rebels. Every conscious and thinking man who wished to see a change for the better in the management of public affairs was confounded
with those discontented spirits who had raised the standard of revolt against the mother country… Their attempt was instigated by patriotism or selfishness – and probably it contained a mixture of both – had failed, and it was but just that they should feel the punishment due to their crime. (LC, 35)

Susanna Moodie wished she could now rewrite this moment in history. Had she been better informed, her "injured" husband and herself would not have believed the "moneyed" party, the "uneducated gentlemen" "posing as aristocrats" and they would not have joined the ranks of the British military on the Canadian front. Instead, they might have followed William Lyon Mackenzie and his "rebels" or at least they would have supported the Reform party:

The odious term of rebel, applied to some of the most loyal and honourable men in the province because they could not give up their honest views on the state of the colony, gave rise to bitter and resentful feelings, which were ready, on all public occasions, to burst into flame. (LC, 35)

After a decade and a half, Susanna Moodie had become quite the admirer of the Scottish "William Wallace" as she now depicted Mackenzie in the chapter "The Outbreak". She realized that the true enemies of Canada, the "foes" were in fact the Tories, those who had tried to arrest Mackenzie. In the "Outbreak", a chapter whose content remains quite moderate and less opinionated than her final moral admonition against English Grundys, or her views on colonial politics in *Life in the Clearings*, she used one of her former loyalist poems as an epigram for her patriotic pro-Canadian chapter.

Quoting two stanzas from a poem of her early "patriotic" poetry of 1838, "On Reading the Proclamation Delivered by William Lyon Mackenzie, on Navy Island", which appeared in the *Palladium* in January 1838, Susanna Moodie reversed the meaning she had assigned to the stanzas at the time - the condemnation of anarchists - by placing them out of their context. The new meaning she assigned to the stanzas now sounded very pro-Canadian. The stanzas are allegorical and serve as an intertextual comment on the "patriotic" moments of 1838. Here, the woman poet evokes epic battles and national heroes standing alone to defend their people against imperial foes. Susanna Moodie used this
extract from her long poem to reflect on her combined narratives of the self and of
the nation. She describes the imperialist Tories of 1838 as "a corrupted stream"
which "pour[s] through the land health-giving waters." While William Mackenzie
whose name is not evoked, is present under the traits of William Wallace "the
slave, who lures/ His wretched followers with the hope of gain", feeling in his
bosom "the immortal fire/ That bound a Wallace to his country's cause." The
British imperialists from the Colonial Office are depicted as "Rome's galling
yoke." (RB, 407)

As for her personal journey to freedom, it runs parallel to the freeing of
Canada from its imperialist Tory trammels. "Just at this period", Susanna Moodie
recalled that after the issuing of her patriotic poems she had received an offer to
publish short stories in The Literary Garland: "Such an application was like a
gleam of light springing up in the darkness; it seemed to promise the dawning of a
brighter day.(RB, 416)" Thus resuming her own intellectual pursuits, she was able
to pay the debts that her husband had incurred before leaving for Toronto.
Benedict Anderson suggests that if nationalism is the expression of "a radically
changed form of consciousness, should not awareness of that break, and the
necessary forgetting of the older consciousness create its own narrative?569"
Susanna Moodie seemed to completely change her mind about Canada at this
moment. The "outbreak" that her patriotic poetry provided, led to the rekindling of
her own life and spirit. Canada and its backwoods appeared welcoming and
comforting again as she regained her feminine freedoms: those of thinking and
writing: "I actually shed tears of joy over the first twenty-dollar bill I received
from Montreal. It was my own; I had earned it with my own hand; and it seemed
to my delighted fancy to form the nucleus out of which a future independence for
my family might arise." (RB, 417)

Susanna Moodie seemed to have freed herself from the old English social
constraints: she worked and earned some money by her own exertion, supporting

569 Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of
her family as any male breadwinner would. Adding this new lesson to her Evangelical tale of success after exertion and deprivation, she states:

But never was self-denial more fully rewarded; I felt happy in having contributed in the least to pay a just debt to kind and worthy people. You must become poor yourself before you can fully appreciate the good qualities of the poor – before you can sympathise with them, and fully recognise them as your brethren in the flesh. (RB, 423)

She introduces matriarchy as the key to freedom in the bush. Her own character becomes a sort of Victorian heroine in the Canadian woods where Susanna, like Catharine or Anna before her, is revealed to a fuller self, "this opened a new era in my existence. (RB, 417)". Here again one finds converging two "heroic narratives", that of the national hero William Lyon Mackenzie fighting to save the country from its Tory foes, and Susanna Moodie, the pioneer heroine saving her family from life disaster. From the national to the familial, Susanna Moodie also placed herself at the centre of this narrative of "nation-formation."

In his analysis of post-colonial literatures, Jean-Pierre Durix explains that in recent years, critics have tended to use the term "allegory" in connection with – or even as an alternative to – the epic literary texts in which the characters or situations are meant to represent more than their individual occurrence and to illustrate certain social, political or historical situations. Such texts have been called allegorical. Certain aspects of Roughing it in the Bush and particularly this central chapter "The Outbreak", which records the "awareness of a break" in the autobiographer's life and in the colony's life, can be described as an allegory of Canada, in which the female author fused her personal journey/narrative with the larger epic of the Canadian nation.

Susanna Moodie opened and concluded her first edition of Roughing It with Canadian patriotic poems: "Canada" (Canada, the blest- the free! With prophetic glance, I see/ Visions of thy future glory, Giving to the world's great

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story/ A page, with mighty meaning fraught,/ That asks a wider range of thought.), "Oh! Can you leave your native land, A Canadian Song", "Quebec" and a final poem "The Maple Tree". However these proto-nationalist "staves" were not included in the un-copyrighted American edition of Roughing It that circulated in the margins. The poems had been pruned from the text by publisher Putnam. Her Canadian readers were not able to read the "Maple Tree" for instance, which marks the glorious end of the narrative, and which counter-balances her gloomy remarks about the bush. These final stanzas also bore the subtitle of "A Canadian song". If the Canadian readers of the American version had been able to read Moodie's pro-Canadian lyric, I believe they would not have rejected Moodie's text as too English. But her Canadian reviewers did not have the opportunity to ponder over the following lines addressed to the young communities and the youth of Canada (489). They would have to wait until the release of the one and only Canadian edition in 1871:

Hurrah! For the sturdy maple-tree!  
Long may its green branch wave;  
In native strength sublime and free,  
Meet emblem for the brave.  
May the nation's peace  
With its growth increase,  
And its worth be widely spread;  
For it lifts not in vain  
To the sun and rain  
Its tall majestic head,  
May it grace our soil,  
And reward our toil,  
Till the nation's heart is dead.

The Moodies’ Canadian patriotism expressed to their English readers

In Roughing it in the Bush, Susanna Moodie's husband wrote a more technical chapter compared to his wife's narrative, which was unfortunately not included in the first edition. The chapter had been designed to provide an up-to-date version of the political and economic prospect of Canada in 1851, while the narrative had been a recollection of Canada, a decade before. While Susanna
Moodie admitted having written a "melancholy narrative" of her life in the backwoods, her husband’s chapter had been designed to correct the "somber hues" in which Canada had been represented by Susanna "observed fifteen or twenty years ago (RB, 492)." The task of this concluding chapter as well as that of the first chapters of *Life in the Clearings* was to convey to English readers "truthful impressions on the present state of a country, which is manifestly destined, at no remote period, to be one of the most prosperous in the world. (RB, 492)"

The word "country" is used throughout the final chapter in preference to the traditional vocabulary of "colony". Similarly in "Belleville", the opening chapter of *Life in the Clearings*, Susanna Moodie proudly reiterates her husband’s pride in the recent achievements of Canadians, in spite of the negative comments or doubts that some English people were circulating at home trying to denigrate colonial Canada:

> Be not discouraged, brave emigrant. Let Canada still remain the bright future in your mind, and hasten to convert your present day-dream into reality. The time is not far distant when she shall be the theme of many tongues, and the old nations of the world will speak of her progress with respect and admiration. Her infancy is past, she begins to feel her feet to know her own strength, and see her way clearly through the wilderness. (LC, 21)

The Moodies both wrote eulogies of the young country, now in charge of her own destiny, thanks to the granting of responsible government for the colonies and measures of free trade passed in 1849. Susanna Moodie heralds the birth of a new independent nation among the old nations of the world:

> Child as you may deem her, she has already battled bravely for her own rights and obtained the management of her own affairs. Her onward progress is certain. There is no *if* in her case. She possesses within her own territory all the elements of future prosperity, and *she must be great!* (LC, 21)

In *Roughing It*, Susanna Moodie’s parable-like lesson to her former English fellows, with its admonishing tones, was reinforced by the pro-Canada discourse held by her husband in his long conclusive chapter. In this last chapter,
John Dunbar centered his developments on the efforts of Canadian Reformers like himself to develop Canada into a country. His purpose was to convince his English readers that Canada was not a colony anymore, "she possesses all those advantages of climate, geological structure and position, which are essential to greatness and prosperity…To crown the whole, where can a country be pointed out which possesses such an extent of internal navigation? (RB, 493)" According to Dunbar Moodie, the colony had suffered for too many decades, since 1791 in fact, in the hands of a Tory clique formed by uneducated speculators promoting their "vested interest". Against all British principles of parliamentary monarchy and civil liberties, the Tories - the loyalists - had held office, supported and protected by the British Colonial Office. Their autocratic rule had slowed down the progress of the colonies.

Unhappily the natural progress of civilized communities in our colonies is too often obstructed by the ignorance of governments, and unwise or short-sighted legislation; and abundance of selfish men are always to be found in the colonies themselves, who, destitute of patriotism, greedily avail themselves of this ignorance, in order to promote their private interests at the expense of the community. Canada has been greatly retarded in its progress by such causes. (RB, 497)

Now Reformers, under the full English constitution that had been recently granted to the united colonies in 1849, could work for the interests of Canada. John Dunbar Moodie's conclusion is a piece of nationalist rhetoric speaking in the name of the Canadians, hard-working colonists who, like him, contributed to the development of the country. He described the new attributes of this new race of men, "new men" and women living in North America, to whom adversity of the wilderness had revealed faculties that "had lain dormant" at home:

The severity of the climate, and the incessant toil of clearing the land to enable the first settlers to procure the mere necessaries of life, have formed in its present inhabitants an indomitable energy of character, which whatever may be their faults, must be regarded as distinguishing attributes of the Canadians, in common with our neighbours of the United States. (RB, 493)
John Dunbar Moodie's discourse sounds "colonial" (i.e. colony-oriented) not "imperial" (i.e. metropolis-oriented). His text serves the promotion of the interests of Canada as a new nation, “when such improvement have been effected, the inhabitants may be said at once to take their proper place among civilized nations.(RB, 497) " John Moodie tries to keep up the flow of British capital to the colony which was necessary to develop infrastructures. For that purpose, he depicts the country as flourishing for investors, listing its economic and now political advantages. He compares its prospect to that of the US, putting forward the great potential trade with the great neighbour would represent for the young "country". Here Moodie was referring to the talks between United Canada and Washington, in order to establish the first reciprocity treaty signed in 1854. He deliberately titillated the jealousy of the British imperialist at home, suggesting that Canada would do better than the United States in the next decades if supported by the money and talent of British financiers, as new commercial opportunities would open to Canadians and daring investors if they turned to the American continent instead of the Old World.

From what has been said, the reader will perceive that the present condition of Canada generally is exceedingly prosperous, and when the resources of the country are fully developed by the railroads now in progress of construction, and by the influx of capital and population from Europe, no rational person can doubt it will ultimately be as prosperous and opulent as any country in the world, ancient or modern. (RB, 521)

John Dunbar Moodie's chapter was first published in Bentley's Miscellany in September and October 1851, and in the second edition of Roughing It. Therefore, with this long chapter, a large number of British readers were provided with a very important testimony to the development of the Canadian colonies and on the state of their affairs, immediately after the granting of "responsible government" and the repeal of the Navigation Acts in 1849. Moodie listed the results the new democratic measures were bringing to Canada, setting the former colony on the road to political and economic independence, particularly the system of local government, granted with the Act of Union in 1840. The Tories at
home had considered the granting of more responsible government to the colonies as a lenient and liberal measure that would lead to the loosening of the imperial tie between the colonies and the mother country. Moodie’s account was proving them right. Tories had also evoked the necessity of establishing an aristocracy in North America with the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and they had again toyed with the same idea in the 1840s. John Dunbar Moodie declared, with respect to the plan, that though the intention of the British government had been to grant responsible institutions to Canada so that “the people should enjoy all the privileges of their fellow-subjects in the mother country”, luckily the idea of establishing an upper house, a copy of the aristocratic principle of the English constitution had been abandoned. He declared that Canadians were happier without any aristocratic element in the colony. Echoing his wife’s comments, he believed that the government of the new country had to be purged of all the deficiencies and flaws of the mother country. John Dunbar made his liberal views on the form of government needed for the colonies quite clear to his British readers by quoting the hateful word of “republicanism” to make his point:

Had this plan been carried out [planting an aristocracy], Canada would have been a doomed country for centuries. [...] Be it for good or be it for evil, it is worse than useless to disguise the fact that the government of a modern colony, where every conquest is made from the forest by little at a time, must be essentially republican. (RB, 498)

The principles of Wakefield’s and Durham’s plan, which envisaged the setting up of autonomous replicas of the mother country overseas that would gradually be connected by sentiment and love for the mother country, were nicely illustrated by John Dunbar Moodie. With the Moodies’ testimony, it was obvious that “Englishness” and the English character would not hold in the margins, and John Dunbar Moodie criticized the past policies of the Colonial Office, which had neglected Canada and its colonists for too long, for that state of affairs. Speaking in the name of Canada and its valiant colonists Dunbar Moodie seems to write back to the Colonial Office:
Had the first settlement of Canada been conducted on sound and philosophical principles, much hardship and privation, as well as loss of capital in land speculations, would have been saved to its first settlers, and the country, improved and improving as it now is, would have presented a different aspect at the present time. With the best intentions, the British government may be justly accused of gross ignorance of the true principles of colonization [… ] (RB, 503)

He believed that the British government should have applied the Wakefield principle to the development of the colony in the selling of public land and to the rational extension of settlements to the West (RB, 507-508). Besides, the British government’s refusal to introduce local or municipal governments soon enough, or the introduction of responsible government to limit the local influence and nepotism of Tory oligarchs, had led the colonists to rebel and to turn to more republican institutions as models of democracy.

Nonetheless, the Canadians, as John Moodie described himself, with a new character and new North American values, a “new race”, still respected the attachment to the mother country, at least the first generation of settlers. While the prosperity of Canada should be promoted by hard-working middle-class families like his, John Dunbar Moodie ascertained that his wife and himself were good colonists upholding what can be defined as a form of "Britishness".

The British government now holds the best security for the continued loyalty of the people of Canada, in their increasing prosperity. To Great Britain they are bound by the strongest ties of duty and interest; and nothing but the basest ingratitude or absolute infatuation can ever tempt them to transfer their allegiance to another country. (RB, 522)

So as to temper his wife’s radical rejection of old English affectation and social sins, John Dunbar Moodie offered a few verses as a conclusion to the volume in which he rewrote the National Anthem "God Save the Queen" for Canadian people, transforming it into an imperial hymn. The second edition of Roughing It in the Bush was then opened by a long poem dedicated to the new nation, "Canada" by Susanna Moodie, and closed with "God Save the Queen"
rewritten for Canadians by John Dunbar Moodie, whose last stanza echoed his political message:

God save the Queen! Let patriots cry;
And palsied by the impious hand
Would guide the pen, or wield the brand,
Against our glorious Fatherland.
Let shouts of freemen rend the sky,
God save the Queen! – and Liberty! (RB, 524)

In 1852, Richard H. Bonnycastle published an up-dated version of his Canada in 1841 and Canada in 1846, adding a long chapter on the recent political and economic progress of the now united Canadian colonies. Bonnycastle’s accounts of the recent history of colonial Canada had been praised in Tory reviews ever since Henry Colburn had begun publishing this Royal Engineer’s expert views on the colony in which he had spent almost twenty years in various positions and outposts. In the introduction to Canada As It Was, Is and May Be, Bonnycastle presented his "Conservative views" and sentiments on Canada, which he destined to "every true patriot and loyal subject of Her Majesty the Queen."

He never directly attacked the Moodies’ liberal, at times republican, pro-Canada narrative, published by Henry Colburn’s former collaborator, now rival, Richard Bentley. Nonetheless, the loyal Conservative author underlines that his viewpoint might differ from some recent testimonies provided by some "English gentleman abroad" that might indicate some flinching loyalty towards England, among the British colonists. His work appears as a form of answer to the quite radical North American view proposed by John Dunbar Moodie:

The politics of an English gentleman abroad and those of a British officer, every where, are generally very different in their scope, embracing the whole British Empire, but resolvable into the limits of honour and respect for “The Queen, the laws and the Government.”, with a firm determination to support them... wherever the fame and glory of our Monarch and our country requires.

571 Richard H. Bonnycastle, Canada As It Was, Is and May Be, London, Henry Colburn, 1852, 2 volumes, preface, p.x.
572 Ibid, p. xi.
Bonnycastle’s testimony aimed at reassuring his British readers that Canada was progressing rapidly for the benefit of its British colonists, but more particularly for the benefit of England. Never departing from this imperial view, Bonnycastle provides an account of Canada’s progress by praising the development of its waterworks, under the command of the British Royal Engineers: "In short, Nature and the command of capital and genius has created for England, water roads through the heart of America, which almost realize the fair visions which caused the discovery of that continent…" Similarly, in true Conservative spirit, Bonnycastle believed the end of the Navigation Acts came too early for Canada, whose trading potential would not flourish without the support of Britain. He recommended the continuation of special trading relationships with the mother country, closing his final chapter with a series of recommendations for the good health and continuation of the British Empire in North America, whose future policies should be "to render Canada as important as she deserves to be". For Bonnycastle, "the value of the Canadas to Great Britain is therefore so obvious, that it is useless to insist upon it", asking his reader to look at the British colonies in Canada, "at the future destinies of this New India." Comparing Canada to a new commercial emporium for the mother country, Bonnycastle restated then his views on the English stamp which should be imprinted on Canada and its colonists, in order to prevent the spreading of hateful Republican principles among the loyal subjects and the numerous emigrants who reached Canada every year: "the only way of securing Canada is to make it essentially a British colony." Where John Dunbar Moodie was heralding the development of a country, Bonnycastle vindicated the necessity of maintaining the Canadas as colonies, under the leadership of aristocrats from England, the English Lieutenant Governors, whose understanding of self-government and responsible government

574 40,000 British emigrants/ year in the 1840s, according to Bonnycastle’s quoting of official statistics.
would prevent Canadians from erring towards other democratic institutions. In order to counteract the threat of annexation to the US, particularly felt in the early 1850s after the Pacific Northwest clashes over land between American colonists and Hudson’s Bay Company fur traders, Bonnycastle advised a strong supervision of the mother country over its colonies in Canada, which he christened "Transatlantic Britain": "The Queen has declared that her whole power shall uphold the connection with England, and therefore all that is wanted is firmness and impartiality in the making of that power felt." His Tory imperialist views clearly opposed the Moodies’ representation of their new country under a more liberal banner, under the control of colonists themselves. Bonnycastle was recentering decision-making in the Empire, in the metropolis, thus reacting against some colonists’ tendency to dream of more independence.

The future of Canada is bright, and the general polity of the colonial empire is now so clearly marked, that Canada will neither “be lost or given away,” and every friend of Britain looks anxiously to a permanently settled system of emigration thither, on a large and well-conducted scale; for as it must remain, and will be essentially a British province, the central dominion of English laws and English feeling in North America.575

Susanna Moodie’s Canadian feelings and Canadian pride

Bonnycastle was striving to represent Canada under imperial colours, dreaming of the day when Canada would become “the right arm of Great Britain” in North America, when, a year later, Susanna Moodie put forward in Life in the Clearings the immediate prospect of an improved reformed Canada, in which Canadians would take in hands their destiny and that of their nation, having rid the New World of the imposing model of Englishness.

Simon Gikandi in Maps of Englishness underlines how contestation of Englishness was present in post- and pre-colonial narratives. Contestation about the imposition of the "imperial project" began with a rejection of the English cultural values and English model of social organization, Gikandi suggests. Post-

575 Bonnycastle, op.cit., vol.2. p. 264. (all these quotes are from the last chapter.)
colonial narratives reveal "some of the significant ways in which the central moment of English cultural identity were driven by doubts and disputes about the parameters of the values that defined Englishness.\textsuperscript{576} Such doubts and disputes were numerous though muted in conquest colonies, but who would have thought that English settlers themselves did actually contest the "central moment of English cultural identity" within the white margins and that they would eventually publish their doubts about it in the imperial centre. Such was Susanna Moodie’s purpose with her daring denunciation of English imperial practices and of the inferiority of English moral values. Her text triggered numerous reactions among imperialists at home and abroad as we shall see in our second section.

After the publication of \textit{Roughing It}, Susanna Moodie complains that her husband and herself had been accused of "republicanism\textsuperscript{577}" by their detractors in Britain and in Tory Belleville. In fact, she and her husband had pointed to the "communal" Canadian values that were seen by them so superior to the English individualistic manners. Tocqueville too had been struck by this "communal" spirit, when he visited the US, identifying there the main difference between the Old and the New World\textsuperscript{578}. He actually devoted his fifth chapter to the description of the system of municipal governments and the manner in which individuals in the community seemed to get involved in the workings of local democracy. Among these better improved values, Susanna Moodie ranked the "liberty to choose the most profitable manner of acquiring wealth", the absence of "fear of ridicule and the loss of caste", "the amalgamation of classes", "no affecting airs of aristocratic superiority\textsuperscript{579}".

Her bitterness against the English middle-classes’ evil spirit and social prejudices, "the Mrs Grundys of society", pervaded her texts in 1852 and 1853. Her personal agenda was made clear in her introduction to the sequel to \textit{Roughing

\textsuperscript{577} Susanna Moodie, \textit{Life in the Clearings, op.cit.}, p. 331.
\textsuperscript{579} Quotes are from \textit{Roughing It} and from \textit{Life in the Clearings}. 
It. While in her first narrative, she had acted the part of the British emigrant in foreign Canadian backwoods, in *Life in the Clearings versus the Bush*, the authoress voluntarily presented herself as an expert on Canada, writing from and about the colony to the mother country. Susanna Moodie provided her metropolitan readers with a more up-to-date view of the Canadian society in 1853, as well as a more well rounded section on the advantages of living in Canada. In this second book, she repeated her attacks and criticisms against the social manners of England, particularly the lack of social freedom since "the comforts and luxuries" were "deemed indispensable to those moving in the middle classes at home." She clearly put forward the ideal conditions of life in Canada, "the conventional prejudices that shackle the movements of members of the higher classes in Britain are scarcely recognized in Canada, and a man is at liberty to choose the most profitable manner of acquiring wealth without the fear of ridicule or the loss of caste. (LC, 13)" Susanna Moodie, in her first chapters entitled "Belleville" and "Local Improvements – Sketches of Society", claimed that in Canada, freedom of spirit and freedom of enterprise now combined with the new freedom of government acquired by the practice of direct democracy in the municipal governments which admitted any male settler regardless of class or status. Municipal government granted in 1840 to Canadian communities was closer to the American system of direct democracy than to the Municipal Act recommendations voted in England in 1835. Republican American practices had clearly influenced the everyday life of the British settlers in Canada, as Moodie clearly expressed in *Life in the Clearings*:

The friendly relations which now exist between us and our enterprising, intelligent American neighbours, have doubtless done much to produce this amalgamation of classes [in Canada]. The gentleman no longer looks down with supercilious self-importance on the wealthy merchant, nor does the latter refuse to the imperious mechanic the respect due to him as a man. A more healthy state pervades Canadian society than existed here a few years ago, when party feeling ran high and the professional man and office holders visited exclusively among themselves, affecting airs of aristocratic superiority, which were perfectly absurd in a new country. (LC, 13)
In her contrastive remarks between England and Canada, central to "the more healthy state" that "pervade[d] Canadian society", Susanna Moodie stressed the absence of Toryism and of party feelings which had plagued Canadian politics and society in the 1830s and 40s, when the Colonial Office had refused to pay attention to the colonists' political demands. Given her admiration for William Lyon Mackenzie, she seemed to be suggesting that a spirit of reform had flowed in from America, as well as from the young enterprising settlers who had planted colonies in Canada. They too had been transformed and redeemed by the "communal" experience that prevents men from feeling "supercilious self-importance" or lacking respect towards his neighbour.

Harriet Martineau had already explained to her educated readers that in America, in the most advanced Republic (whose manners and habits she had observed closely for three years), meritocracy was a great sign of progress, which definitely placed the Americans above the Old World. Meritocracy, the English sociologist had stated in Society in America in 1838, "will prove an elevating force lifting men above the personal selfishness and mutual subservience which are the besetting perils of equals who unite to govern by their common will."

In "Canadian Sketches", John Dunbar Moodie voiced the merits of Canadian values such as direct democracy and meritocracy and Susanna Moodie confirmed his analysis in her 1853 sequel, as well as in her 1871 Canadian edition. In this passage, she gladly approves of the abandonment of British social conventions in Canada and compares that gain to other personal freedoms. Meritocracy and upward mobility are presented as the tenets of the Canadian Dream:

Men are allowed in this country a freedom enjoyed by few of the more polished countries in Europe; freedom in religion, politics and speech; freedom to select their own friends and to visit with whom they please, without consulting the Mrs. Grundys of society; and they can lead a more independent social life than in the mother country, because less restricted by the conventional prejudices that govern older communities. (RB, 531)

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580 Martineau, Society in America, London, Otley and Saunders, vol. 1, p.38
In fact, Canada was looking to its future and not, like the mother country, to its past. *Life in the Clearings* offered a feminine version of Mr Moodie's "Canadian Sketches", in which, though statistics were "not [her] forte", Mrs Moodie endeavoured to point out Canada's "increasing prosperity and commercial advantages." Besides, like Catharine Parr Traill in 1836, Susanna Moodie felt concerned with the new generations and the maintenance of Canada's reformed values. Her main campaign in favour of the new country concerned "free education", another American import. In Britain, free primary education would only be voted in 1871. Mrs. Moodie saw this major social reform in Canada as the last barrier to social progress and she devoted an entire chapter to this question in her 1853 *Life in the Clearings* entitled "Free Schools – Thoughts on Education." With free schools, Susanna Moodie wished to put an end to social determinism and class prejudices. She praised the opportunity offered by Canadian politics combined with free school as it furthered a meritocratic society.

There is no calculating the immense benefit which the colony will derive from the present liberal provision made for the education of the rising generation.[...] Under the present system, every idle ragged child in the streets, by washing his face and hands, and presenting himself to the free school of his ward, can receive the same benefit as the rest. What an inestimable blessing is this, and how greatly will this education of her population tend to increase the wealth and prosperity of the province! It is a certain means of a calling out and making available all the talent in the colony [...] (LC, 77)

For her Conservative upper-middle-class English readers, Mrs. Moodie provides the ultimate example of social democracy in Canada. She acknowledges the fact that she was trying to shock her prejudiced British readers when she admitted that sons of honest labourers could now become MPs in Canada: "As, thank be to God, genius never was confined to any class, the poor will be more benefited by this wise and munificent arrangement than the rich. (LC, 77)" This was still unthinkable in the Victorian Britain of classes and public schools.

Pursuing her Evangelical work already developed in *Roughing It*, Susanna Moodie used the first chapters of *Life in the Clearings* to demonstrate how the
spirit of the Christian Social Gospel was already at work among the Canadian communities. She did not depart from her admonishing and reformative tone when she addressed her British readers, trying to bring them Canadian solutions to cure them of their prejudiced views towards poverty or their strong individualism. Following her train of thought on free education for all, she concludes for the sake of British readers, plagued by rampant poverty and social evils, that refusing to pay for the development of free public schools would make their social problems more acute: "What a narrow prejudice is this – what miserable, short-sighted policy! The education of these neglected children by making them better citizens, will in the long run prove a great protection both to life and property. [...] The want of education and moral training is the only real barrier that exists between the different classes of men. Nature, reason and Christianity, recognize no other. (LC, 78)"

Her sermon-like style is used to put forward the supremacy of Canada in terms of moral superiority learnt in the practice of social Christianity, "the divine philosophy of virtue", inculcated to Canadians by their exertions in the bush and backwoods, where sharing and supporting each other across classes brought them closer into a tightly knit community, "where the soul of man is no rank, sex or colour." (LC, 79)

**Susanna Moodie's proto-nationalist discourse**

Susanna Moodie openly displayed the traits of the "social hybridity" which was already at work in the Canadian communities. Canadians combined the positive values of both worlds: they had received the democratic system inherited from the English constitution but their manners and habits were inspired by the Christian, meritocratic, North American values. In *How to Observe Morals and Manners*, Harriet Martineau had described what an ideal nation would be like. According to the sociologist, a society in which selfishness and self-promotion had disappeared, leaving room for dedication to the progress of the country and
the preservation of its moral worth, would necessarily form a new nation capable of superseding the old societies:

> When many individuals of a society attain that self-forgetfulness which is promoted by a high and free religious sentiment, but which is incompatible with either licentious or ascetic tendencies, the tone of manners in that society will be much raised. When, free from the grossness of self-indulgence, and from the constraints of self-denial, every one spontaneously thinks more of the neighbour than himself, the world will witness, at last, the perfection of manners.\(^{581}\)

Susanna Moodie presented her British readers with the various stages of the birth of a new nation. She adhered to the nation's new reformed values and declared to her British readers that "the homesickness that constantly preyed upon me in the Backwoods, has long ago yielded to the **deepest and most heartfelt interest in the rapidly increasing prosperity and greatness of the country of my adoption** – the great foster-mother of that portion of the human family, whose fatherland, however dear to them, is unable to supply them with bread.(LC, 12)"

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Moodie furthered her representation of Canada as morally superior to Britain, "I consider the state of society in more healthy condition than at home (LC, 60)."

Harmony reigned in the communities as well as within families, the epitome of the larger nation, since:

> No contradiction or rivalry is to be seen between Canadian brothers and sisters. They cling together through good and ill report, like the bundle of sticks in the fable, and I have seldom found a real Canadian ashamed of owning a poor relation. This to me is a beautiful feature in the Canadian character.(LC, 60)

After listing the traits defining the Canadian character, which she was proud of sharing, Susanna Moodie also suggested that the Canadians’ political "national" project was more progressive and advanced than that of the mother country. Economically, Canada was feeding the unwanted masses of Britain, playing the part of foster-mother. The unwanted masses could set to work away from **laissez-faire** and utilitarianism. Politically speaking, Canadians were taking

\(^{581}\) Martineau, *How to Observe Morals and Manners*, London, Charles Knight, 1836, p. 72
the English constitution granted to them in 1849 a step further, as all male settlers could take part in the building of the new nation. At the social level, meritocracy and education, as well as the Christian principles of solidarity, fraternity and benevolence, exemplified in Moodie’s sketches, fostered attachment among the new emigrants to these "national" values. Ernest Gellner described nationalism as born from "large centrally, educated, culturally homogeneous units.\textsuperscript{582}") Susanna and John Dunbar Moodie endeavoured to describe Canada as composed of these communal units like the city of Belleville, far more advanced and independent than British readers would imagine. Susanna Moodie did not see this new national prosperity owing anything to the mother country, but rather to the good government of local reformers and to Canadians’ capacity for self-improvement:

The colony [The Canadas] has greatly progressed under their administration [union government], and is now in a most prosperous and flourishing state. The municipal and district councils, free schools, and the improvement in public thoroughfares of the country, are owing to them, and have proved a great blessing to the community.

Susanna Moodie proudly signifies to her metropolitan readers, speaking in the name of her new country, that over the years, a young nation has developed:

The resources of the country are daily being opened up, and both at home and abroad Canada is rising in public estimation. […] As a woman, I cannot help rejoicing in the beneficial effects that these changes have wrought in the land of my adoption. The day of our commercial and national prosperity has dawned, and the rays of the sun already brighten the hill-tops. (LC, 59)

Thus, with her two volumes, Susanna Moodie declared Canada culturally, economically, politically and socially fit to stand on its feet.

Never yield up these solid advantages to become an humble dependent on the great republic. Wait patiently, loyally, lovingly, upon the illustrious parent from whom you sprang, and by whom you have been fostered into life and political importance; in the future of time, she [Britain] will proclaim your childhood past, and bid you stand up in your own strength, a free Canadian people. (LC, 38)

\textsuperscript{582} Ernest Gellner, \textit{Nations and Nationalisms}, op.cit., p. 35.
She repeatedly evoked "the acceptance of citizens\textsuperscript{583}" who adhered happily to these new circumstances in which emigration had placed them. Ernest Gellner considers such a communal acceptance as the cement that holds a nation together. Moodie invented and represented the missions of Canada to the British public, breaking down the stereotypes conveyed by earlier travel texts on Canada that presented the colony (not yet a country) as trammelled by the mother country. This personal narrative questioned the strength of the union between the colonies and the mother country. Susanna Moodie without being aware of it, encouraged a series of reflections at home on the nature of Englishness.

For the first time, the British public was exposed to the colonial viewpoint defended here by an English gentlewoman of letters, now clearly Canadian in her attachment, who used the distance from the mother country as a necessary and healthy reflection on the motherland. Homi Bhabha describes such a personal quest as an instance of "the complex strategies of identification and discursive address that function in the name of the "people" or "the nation" and make them the immanent subjects of a range of social and literary narratives.\textsuperscript{584} In her personal, literary and social narrative, Susanna Moodie seized hold of her new "national" identity: Britishness and Canadianness combined and superseded her Englishness and her "colonial" status.

These "identity" and "attachment" issues in the colonies were new and uneasy questions already touched upon by Lord Durham in his report of 1839. Threats to the stability of Englishness in Canada and fear of a lack of loyalty of the colonists towards the mother country, seemed to have been coming from the French in Lower Canada in 1837, not from English settlers themselves. Wakefield and Durham did not envisage that American Republicanism or the values of settlers’ community, might affect British middle-class settlers to the point of questioning English values and the imperial connection. Herman Merivale, quite convinced by Wakefield and Durham, had thought that national institutions would

\textsuperscript{583} Ernest Gellner, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 30
\textsuperscript{584} Homi K. Bhabha, \textit{The Location of Culture}, London and New York, Routledge, 1994, p. 148.
influence the national character once the full English constitution would have been implemented in Canada. In 1861, however, when revising his lectures on colonization for publication, Merivale observed that in Upper Canada particularly "the effect of the national institutions on the national character" had been slow, to a degree "which little suits the impatience of political theorists."

Susanna Moodie articulated her strong, newfound feelings towards Canada while stating at the same time a sentimental attachment for the British Empire of which she still felt part. In admiring the progress of civilization in Canada, she reminds her readers that this was the result of the participation of enterprising men and women like her family in the building of the Empire. Though not a settler anymore, she recognizes the ties between Canada and a sentimental representation of the Empire: "What a scene of fertility and beauty rises before my mental vision! My heart swells, and I feel proud that I belong to a race who, in every portion of the globe in which they have planted a colony, have proved themselves worthy to be the sires of a great nation."(LC, 55)

This was a new perspective that would open new doors for imperial theorists. English settlers were therefore bound to grow less fond of metropolitan manners and progressively the English national "sentiment" on which Wakefield was counting to establish a strong Empire, would give way to a different form of adhesion. Settlers, according to the Moodies, had spared no efforts for the glory of the Empire in which they lived and worked, but they would not strive to uphold English imperial interests in the new country in whose growth they had participated over the years. The official nationalism that Durham had planned to establish with the introduction of the full English constitution in the Canadian provinces, as well as the union of the two main colonies, had not fostered "Englishness". Susanna Moodie clearly demonstrated to politicians and imperial pundits that colonial theories produced by the centre could not hold in the margins. Nicholas Thomas in Colonialism's Culture analyses the gap between the

585 Merivale, op.cit, appendix to the original lectures for the 1861 edition, p. 657, and on Upper Canada, p. 653.
production of colonial theories in the metropolis and its implementation by settlers in the margins rightly noting that: "The messy practice of actual colonial space profoundly challenged imperial dreams and ideals, it was in the backwoods and the bush that the programs of pundits were transformed into hybrid local expressions."

Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper in their *Tensions of Empire, Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, have also underlined how the bourgeois living in the colonial margins challenged the bourgeois project produced in the metropolitan centre. Their remarks about late 19th-century texts written in India or Africa could also apply to Susanna Moodie's first "bourgeois" narrative of colony making and even Empire making. Stoler and Cooper suggest that "Visions of Empire were created and clarified out of metropolitan discourses as well as by those fashioned in the colonies themselves."

Susanna Moodie's personal testimony of her life in the margins of Empire provides the historian with an account of the intimate "sentiment" felt by an English settler towards her "land of adoption", as well as her ambivalent attachments towards the fatherland. National harmony, Englishness and Anglicization could not hold in the margins of the Empire. Susanna Moodie seems to shatter the dream of a harmonious, simple-minded, English Empire which Britain had dreamed of in the 1840s. Herman Merivale had been one of the dreamers when he expressed his "imaginary colonial empire" in 1841 to his Oxford students:

May we not figure to ourselves, scattered thick as stars over the surface of this earth, communities of citizens owning the name Britons, bound by allegiance to a British sovereign and uniting heart and hand in maintaining the supremacy of Britain on every shore which her unconquered flag can reach?

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586 Thomas, *Colonialism’s Culture*, op.cit., 112.
Twenty years later, what had happened to the dream of the metropolis? In 1861, in his revision of his 1839-41 *Lectures on Colonization and Colonies*, Herman Merivale underlined that the maintenance of a strongly connected British Empire for which he and other colonial reformers like Wakefield had worked hard twenty years before, was now far from being certain. Once again, the allegiance of the settlers towards the mother country was at stake. Merivale questioned the affirmations of Durham and Wakefield that English institutions would preserve Englishness in the colonies. He had been the first to mention, after reading testimonies like Traill's, and the Moodies’ most likely, that some independent settlers, and among them women, would develop a strong attachment for the new land quite rapidly. If he ever came across the Moodies’ testimony in 1852 and 1853, he must have received the confirmation that his perception on the subject of attachment and sentiment had been correct, stating: "There is always looming in the distance the phantom of colonial disaffection." Indeed in 1861, Merivale puts forward the current topic of debate among colonizers in England. Once again, the recent development in the Canadian colonies brought about by responsible government and its natural offshoot: demands for further independence, was a bone of contention among colonial theorists, colonial reformers and Tories. Susanna Moodie appears to herald the debate as early as 1852 as we shall see in the course of this chapter.

Herman Merivale, registering one of the popular questions on the value of maintaining an Empire for Britain, in 1861, suggested that if "the unity of the whole fabric" was considered a priority, the political connection between the mother country and its self-governed white colonies should be revised since all other connections had failed, cultural or otherwise. Mrs Jameson had already

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590 Merivale, *Ibid*, p. 519: “There is the fear lest the colonists should lose the wish to remain longer connected with a country which refuses to spend money on them. That the fear is unphilosophical statesmen will admit, and that colonial attachment will not be retained by this kind of tribute, if it were worth retaining at such cost. But though prepared to recognize colonial independence as the natural ultimate result of modern colonial policy, none of them wish to see the revolution commence in their own day.”
suggested a form of federation within the Canadian colonies and the mother country in 1838, Merivale now articulated it for his expert readers: "Why not substitute for the existing anomalous polity a system of federal union, under which the colony should be, for certain recognized purposes, the constitutional equal of the mother country?" 

_Mrs Moodie's "imagined" Bourgeois community for Canada_

In fact, the Moodies elaborated a "bourgeois" personal narrative of the Empire. Such a devoted demonstration of active participation in Empire building must have pleased Edward Gibbon Wakefield. Moodie conveyed the idea that the fate of "deserving" English bourgeois immigrants to the backwoods of Canada was shared by many, creating a community feeling and a common culture. In fact, the Moodies presented themselves as the epitome of the genteel immigrant settlers rising from rags to riches in the woods by dint of effort, but also thanks to their education and status. This trend had been started by Catharine Parr Traill and it continued with the narration of Susanna Moodie, creating the effect of a bourgeois diaspora in Canada. Susanna Moodie created an image of Canada, that of a bourgeois nation on the making, with a central project: upholding the Evangelical reforming mission, awaiting for further colonists sharing the same values, the same liberal views, the same community ideal and the same disappointment in the mother country’s new industrial conditions. The Australian colonies, with their former convicts, assisted emigrants and gold diggers, must have appeared so working-class in the 1850s, compared to Mrs Moodie’s Canada. Susanna Moodie expressed at length, her vision of the Bourgeois Dream that could be achieved in Canada. Eric Hobsbawn defines this dream as that of being "someone", "a person who counted as an individual", not because of his wealth but because of "his/her capacity to command other men, or otherwise to influence them."

\[592\] Eric Hobsbawn, *The Age of Capitalism, 1847-1878*, London, Abascus, p. 244
Moodie's "Canadian Sketches" clearly evoked the progressive grasp of local and colonial power by the Reformers, the middle-class professionals who had abandoned the Tory values of the Old World to favour the introduction of liberal policies in the North American world. They and their sons would soon command the new country. Susanna Moodie seconded him when she represented society in Belleville with her middle-class Canadian perspective: "The lady and gentleman in Canada are as distinctly marked as elsewhere. There is no mistaking the superiority that mental cultivation bestows; and their mingling in public with their less gifted neighbours, rather adds than takes from their claims to hold the first place. (LC, 59)"

The Moodies composed for their metropolitan readers the portrait of a national culture and values. "Is it not the expression in thought – form or art – form of the Spirit of a Race and of a Place?" asks P.R. Stephensen about white colonies. Stoler and Cooper also observed how contestation of the imperial project had come from the very people who had been appointed by the Colonial Office to implement the official program of colonization (in India or Africa for instance). Members of the colonial service or bourgeois settlers had been gradually empowered by their own situation in sole and full authority in the margins and had developed local alternatives to the imperial project. Soon, a local, colonial culture was developing in opposition to the imperial culture, a culture which Stoler and Cooper describe as developing "between programs that would bind the interests of specific groups to the colonial state [The Moodies'] and policies that would maintain a range of cultural distinctions designed to contain and curtail the aspirations of those to be ruled [Durham's imperial nationalism]."

The "acceptance of the group" in national literature or national text production requires the proof that a group exists and shares a homogenous vision

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594 Stoler and Cooper, Tensions of Empire, op.cit., p. 10.
of the new country. We have noted how Catharine Parr Traill's and Susanna Moodie's individual narrations echoed one another. Susanna Moodie regularly refers to the "backwoods" and mentions her own sister in her narration. Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It* also aims at narrating the story of the group, of other middle-class families like themselves and finally of the community in which they settled. In fact both female authors resort to the plural pronoun "we" to refer to their couples but also to their extended families in the woods, and to people of their own sort. Mary Jean Green, a specialist of Quebecois women's literature, has analyzed the collective narratives written by women from the end of the 19th century to the recent period, as "identitary projects". French Canadians had to assert their identity and national values against the all-pervasive English Canadian cultural and political values after 1840. Mary Jean Green describes how women writers were asked to contribute to the literary effort in order to forge and spread nationalist sentiments among their readers. By taking up these "identitary narratives" about English-speaking Canada, Traill and Moodie also continued to spread the impression in Britain that Canada was clearly the dominion of middle-class women as Anna Jameson had already suggested.

It also seems that these "national" or "society projects", however class-oriented, acquired a heavier significance when penned by female writers. Women's upholding of "national" ideals rang true to the ancient meaning of the word "nation". The term originated in "natio" which meant "something more ancient and nebulous: a local community, domicile, family, condition of belonging." Thus a woman's "pen alone" could evoke the destiny of her family, of her community, of her children in the new land, in short her "natio", in matriarchal tones. Susanna Moodie's attachment to her Canadian woods at the end of *Roughing It* is revealed to her metropolitan readers in the same motherly

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discourse as Catharine Parr Traill’s avowal she was "going native" for her Canadian born children:

My boy’s words were prophetic: that was the last night I ever spent in the bush – in the dear forest home which I had loved in spite of all the hardships which we had endured since we pitched our tent in the backwoods. It was the birthplace of my three boys, the school of high resolve and energetic action in which we had learned to meet calmly, and successfully to battle with the ills of life.(481)

British America was presented to the reading English public as more family-centered, and as a consequence more community-centered by women writers who felt "useful" in Canada. Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill clearly achieved this equation between "nation" and what I would describe as its maternal origins: "natio". In her "patriotic" (or "matriotic") narrative for instance, Susanna Moodie created for Canadian people the condition of belonging: a local community, a "domicile in the woods", and a family. She founded a sort of "national text".

Traill and Moodie's texts are "mirrors" of their own collective experience as colonists. As Paul Ricoeur explained in an aforementioned quotation, "the identity of individuals – or communities – is necessarily constituted through narratives, through the stories they tell about themselves." However, without the British metropolitan readers to validate their experience and their new status as Empire colonists, as Canadian settlers, Traill and Moodie's narratives would not have had the same impact in the margins. They would still have participated in spreading the "national" narrative within the community in the margins, but they would not have achieved the publicizing of the "national" cause against the metropolitan cause. Benedict Anderson notes that one form of nationalism needs to be pitted against another form of nationalism. These narratives under their individual shield were in fact collective ones, which asserted and posited and validated the experience, the morals and manners of a new community which until

597 Mary Jean Green, Women and Narrative Identity, op.cit., p. 3.
598 Paul Ricoeur, Time and Narrative, op.cit, p. 246.
then had lived in the margins of the Empire and in the margins of the middle-
class, metropolitan public knowledge. Paul Ricoeur explained that the narratives
were not necessarily the result of a "preconceived notion" of a community, but on
the contrary, the narratives forged the community and shaped its identity. This
was the result achieved by having their texts circulated in the metropolis.

**Susanna Moodie's contested text and the ensuing counter-narratives of Empire**

The reception of Susanna Moodie’s representations of Canada as an
independent and self-sufficient nation, whose progress was promoted by its hard-
working dedicated superior inhabitants, was somehow contested in the metropolis.
She was promoted as the Canadian expert of the moment by her publisher. Indeed,
Richard Bentley had "commissioned" a sequel to *Roughing It* in 1852 after the
release of the first edition. Susanna indicated to her readers in the introduction of
*Life in the Clearings* that she "had been repeatedly asked, since the publication of
*Roughing it in the Bush* to give an account of the present state of society. (LC,13)"
This second volume was a collection of short stories or essays on the views and
manners of the Canadians, whose first chapters resembled in style and form one of
Mrs Moodie’s early source of literary admiration (and imitation in her youth),
Mary Russell Mitford’s *The Village*.

In *Life in the Clearings*, Susanna Moodie wrote a very positive and
enthusiastic representation of "urban" Canadian life, focusing on her village
Belleville. She described the everyday life and doings of its inhabitants. Of
particular interest for her was the description of the manners and habits of the new
educated elite in Canada that she and her husband represented. Boasting about
their new status in Belleville, she dedicated her volume to "John Wedderburn
Dunbar Moodie, Esq., Sheriff of the County of Hastings, Upper Canada". In fact,
*Life in the Clearings* is composed of an introduction in which Susanna Moodie
praises Canada overtly, particularly Canadian social manners as we saw above,
followed by a series of personal views on schools and "free education", on typical Canadian "amusements" and usage, "camp meetings", "wearing mourning for the Dead" and on Canadian institutions: "lunatic asylum", "Provincial Agricultural Show", "Toronto", "Niagara."

But the interest of the public for Canada and for personal narratives seemed to have worn away. In the first chapter of *Life in the Clearings*, Susanna Moodie mentions having received a letter from a prominent English female author, whose name remains unknown, after the latter had read *Roughing It*. Apparently, some readers had enjoyed reading Mrs Moodie's struggle in the bush, but they were not interested in her peroration about the manners of the Canadians; this English lady was one of them:

> An English lady, writing to me not long ago, expressed her weariness of my long stories about the country of my adoption, in the following terms: - “Don’t fill your letters to me with descriptions of Canada. Who, in England, thinks anything of Canada!” (LC, 20)

In fact, the Canadian content of *Life in the Clearings*, particularly Moodie's less personal chapters on "the present state of the country" and its society, did not attract readers and the book did not sell well. One of the few reviewers who read Mrs Moodie's work had noted that the text would be "more suited to a colonial readership but not to a more experienced English one." It appeared that the development of the new country, Canada, and the rise to power of its bourgeois elite which Moodie describes, praising the involvement of its genteel families in the progress of the morals and manners, did not trigger off curiosity or interest any more among the metropolitan readers. That same year, Samuel Strickland, her brother, also published his narrative of twenty-seven years in the bush. The book did not sell particularly well but Strickland provided economic information and statistics on the state of the colony in 1852, which Susanna neglected. His volume fared better than the "amusing" sketches on the Canadian society provided by his sister. In November 1853, Susanna Moodie

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599 See chapter 5.
wrote to Richard Bentley, as she was concerned about the failure of her second book: "My brother's book is praised but doesn't sell either. The American press will do me justice, at any rate, where my name already ranks high as an author. Perhaps it would be better for me to publish in New York." The spectacle of the Empire in Canada did not amuse readers anymore. It was true that other international news took over with the heightening tensions in Crimea.

In *Life in the Clearings*, British readers must have perceived the development of new values or a new organization in the margins that challenged the original imperial plan and their own social organization at home. This was a process that Charles Wentworth Dilke would observe for the first time in his travels across British colonies former and present, in 1865. In his much acclaimed *Greater Britain, A Record of Travel in English Speaking Countries*, Dilke noted that colonization and exile naturally transformed English emigrants, at least on the surface. This was the most disappointing but reassuring phenomenon he put forward in his preface to his Tory English readers: “If I remarked that climate, soil, manners of life, that mixture with other peoples had modified the blood, I saw, too that in essentials the race was always one.”

The overall impression that the few reviews that were written on *Life in the Clearings* conveyed, as well as the cross-references to Moodie’s works found in travel texts, was that Canada and the Canadians were now perceived as "others", almost as foreigners whose every day life and routine in the under-developed margins, offered only small interest for metropolitan readers. Barnor Hesse in his introduction to *Un/settled Multiculturalisms, Diasporas, Entanglements, Transruptions*, notes about diaspora formations that they deeply unsettled the idea of self-contained, culturally inward-looking nationalist identity. Traill's and particularly Moodie's description of the new values and identity traits

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Feminine Experience in the Margins of Empire

of their colonial society could be read by their home readers as many potential threats to the inward-looking English identity. This can be seen in the "post-Moodie effect" on imperial narratives. This refers here to the impact of Susanna Moodie's non-fiction texts on some metropolitan authors like Isabella Bird or Amelia Murray, whose travel narratives about Canada were composed as a response to, or a counter-narrative of Moodie's text. Isabella Bird's high imperialist overtones tried to re-establish the supremacy of the imperial centre over the periphery, contrary to what Moodie had been putting forward in her two narratives. Amelia Murray thought little of Susanna Moodie and her Canadian life, but nonetheless desired to visit her when she travelled near Belleville in 1854. Her purpose was to see the author in her environment and she then belittled the famous Mrs M— whom she found simply "knitting by the fireside."

In producing imperial narratives to counterbalance the "colonial" narratives, these female authors re-established the hegemony of the production of knowledge by relocating it in the imperial centre. James Duncan and David Ley have described how travel writings can be used to erase, demote or promote imperial ideology as "discourses of meaning are implicated in struggles for power and dominance between humans". They have also analyzed how "theories of hegemony suggest that this occurs through a process of naturalizing specific discourses, suppressing others and thus legitimizing uneven distribution of powers."

It is always difficult to assess the impact a book had on the readers' minds. But at least one can judge the interest of the public for Susanna Moodie's work thanks to the numerous cross-references and quotes to Roughing it in the Bush, found in travel accounts or in British female emigrants' private papers. Indeed, there was hardly any text published in the following fifty years in which the female writer did not acknowledge or refer to Moodie's Canadian book. This did not necessarily imply that Moodie's texts were appreciated for what they were

603 Duncan, James and David Ley eds, Place, Culture and Representation, London, Routledge, 1993, p. 27.
worth, but at least they circulated among middle-class circles and they left some lasting representations about Canada on readers’ minds. For British gentlewomen concerned with Canada, either as a tentative emigration destination or as a travel destination, *Roughing It* served as a reference text. Discovering Canada from the mother country, when the female "armchair travellers" were still in the preparatory phase of their journey, implied reading Moodie's personal narrative, however obsolete and out-dated her description might be of the woods. Indeed, in 1853, Susanna Moodie had finally admitted to the readers of her sequel that *Roughing It* had been a picture of Canadian life, "as I found it twenty years ago, in the Backwoods."(9) But for those who had not read the sequel, like Amelia Murray, Mrs Moodie’s representation of her pioneer life was all she remembered from the authoress when she in turn visited Ontario:

Some of the charred black stumps too are always to be seen here and there standing up; at times they look like black points, or like gigantic figures among the trees. I sympathize now more than ever with poor Mrs Moodie. “Life in the Bush” must indeed be a hard life for any civilized woman to go through.604

In 1878, *Letters from Muskoka* by an emigrant lady published by Richard Bentley605 - recalling the fate of a destitute British lady in the bush in a series of letters home – opened with a reference to Mrs Moodie’s work whose lessons the female emigrant regretted not having paid heed to:

In laying before the public a sketch of our “Bush” experiences during the first year of our arrival in Muskoka, Ontario, Canada, I desire to state the reasons which prompted us to such an imprudent step in emigration, without even the moderate capital necessary for any who would start with the slightest chance of success.

As late as 1912, Lady Beatrice Pullen-Burry, an upper-class traveller, also found her way to Canada after having visited several other foreign places, such as Jamaica and Ethiopia. Her impressions after her several months’ travels through

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Canada were confined to a long volume published in London, entitled *From Halifax to Vancouver*. From the preface, the readers gathered that she had prepared her trip to "British America" (as she still described Canada) with the help of reference books on the subject. These included Catharine Parr Traill’s and Susanna Moodie's volumes. Even though she did not include any direct reference to these books, her readers cannot help noticing the cross-references to these early "colonial" texts. In chapter V, Susanna Moodie's book was implicitly referred to when, discussing positions offered to British women from the higher classes in Canada, Lady Pullen-Burry used the expression: "The class… which is unfitted from various reasons to rough it and to mix with the polyglot population of the West…" In another instance, Lady Pullen-Burry referred to a famous female author whom she had asked to meet in New Brunswick where the lady lived. Before the encounter, Pullen-Burry pondered on the important number of female authors who had written on and from Canada, over the past decades. Her imagination takes her back to the image of a gentlewoman author at her table, in her log cabin, in the backwoods. Similarly, Lady Pullen-Burry decided not to linger in Ontario which she merely crossed by train, judging the province lacked interest for her readers as it had been described so many times in “past books.”

The phrase "roughing it" or the verb "to rough it", as well as the expression "backwoods" and "bush" had become part of the female emigrants' everyday language and in the mind of Lady Pullen-Burry, the choice of "roughing it" in the Canadian bush should be restricted to lower or working-class women or to foreigners. With this phrase, the female author - one of the numerous British aristocrats who visited Canada after the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway from the safety of their first-class carriage -, commented on the lack of social prospects for the best classes in the Canadian provinces without having to develop her innuendo any further or to enter into any details about what "roughing

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606 Lady Beatrice Pullen-Burry, *From Halifax to Vancouver*, London, Mills and Boon's publishing house, 1912.
607 *Ibid*, p. 35. (my italics)
"rough it" meant. In 1912 British readers were still familiar with this expression. It summed up the amount of hardship and toil a middle-class emigrant had to go through before making any economic or social progress in the white colonies. To "rough it" meant that any genteel emigrant would have to stoop to work with her own hands and even till the land or clear a farm. Mrs Moodie had clearly warned the best classes against such a poor lot in the backwoods. But Mrs Moodie had also used her own hardship in Canada to appoint herself as a worthy member of the elite for the future country. After half a century, the expression conveyed different social stigmata. On the one hand, Lady Pullen-Burry's social prejudice deemed the lower classes able to "rough it", i.e. to slave hard on the prairies or in British Columbia, while the upper classes should not slave or pioneer anymore, in order to succeed in Canada. In fact, Lady Pullen-Burry like many upper and middle-class readers, had been influenced by Moodie's social representation of Canada. Susanna Moodie's message to her female middle-class emigrants seemed to have brought home to many women of that social caste, a strong message on Canada's social hierarchy and on Canada's social map. Moodie warned them that some fatal mistakes might be committed if they chose to migrate to Canada for the wrong reasons and to the wrong places. The representations of Canada that seemed to linger in the minds of British visitors to Canada as late as 1912, were that some parts of the country, like Ontario, particularly its urban centres, were designed for middle-class emigrants, while other "backwood" provinces were destined to be peopled by lesser emigrants. Priding herself on the circulation of her book and its popularity among middle-class migrants from England, Moodie declared in her introduction to the 1871 Canadian edition of *Roughing It in the Bush* that: "[...] the only circulation it [her book] ever had in the colony, was chiefly through the volumes that often formed a portion of their [the emigrants'] baggage." (RB, 528)
British female travellers' imperial narratives in the 1850s: observing the colonial "other"

In 1854, after reading Susanna Moodie's *Roughing it in the Bush*, two female travellers visited Canada and tried to observe and assess the actual state of society in the colonies. Amelia Murray, a former lady-in-waiting of the Queen and a good friend of Anna Jameson, left England on board the *Canada* for North America, in search of the new race of men and women, as if the Moodies’ message had been understood and required some verification on the spot:

[...] a means of knowing the condition and probable future of that race for whom a deep interest is felt by the British public, as well as by the writer of these pages, however different her convictions may be from the opinions commonly maintained.608

Aristocratic Amelia Murray clearly distinguished the American race with their lack of manners and style from the British settlers who even in the Bush retained their polite manners and civility. She nonetheless noted the new society’s organization, which, in the best circles, reminded her of "the freedom of a very large country-house in England."609 As for the Canadas, she observed the provinces were like "infants" making use of "a newly acquired power", - responsible government - under the aristocratic British supervision and benevolence of her friend and host, Lord Elgin, then Governor-General of Canada East and West. Though interested in the future of this "young nation", Amelia Murray tends to belittle and mock the efforts of the Canadians in making progress in politics or economics. Noticing a somehow "more positive individual liberty" in Canada, she refuses to attribute it to the Republican influence as the Moodies suggested in *Roughing It in the Bush*. According to Mrs Murray, only British institutions and British governance were the sources of these new liberties.610 Mrs Murray’s closing words before leaving Canada were addressed to her readers from a promontory where in the pure "King-of-all-I-survey" style, she declared

608 Amelia Murray, *op.cit.*, preface.
about the Niagara district: "What an Empire this will be when all its resources are
developed."\textsuperscript{611}

On the same boat as Amelia Murray’s, the \textit{Canada}\textsuperscript{612}, Isabella Bird crossed
the Atlantic with relatives and produced a personal narrative of her visits to
Americans and British settlers in Canada. In this pro-English, patriotic narrative,
in which she believes she might, as "an English writer" have been inclined "to
adopt too eulogistic a tone", Canada is represented as a "noble and loyal colony"
"in which British institutions are undergoing a Transatlantic trial, and where a free
people is protected by British laws."\textsuperscript{613} In 1856, Isabella Lucy Bird published \textit{The
Englishwoman in America} with John Murray, the celebrated publisher of great
close narratives and of the famous \textit{Handbooks}. Both shared Tory views on the
Empire; they envisaged it as a strong English Empire with its dependent colonies
and territories.\textsuperscript{614} A third interesting travel narrative was published in 1859 by Mrs
Isabella Trotter under the title \textit{First Impressions of the New World on Two
Travellers from the Old in the Autumn of 1858}. She had accompanied her
husband, a well-known Royal Engineer, on his tour of Canada and the US railway
construction sites. She too focuses on the manners of this New other World and of
its inhabitants, measuring progress or lack of it by constant comparisons with
Britain. Mrs Trotter is very conservative and conventional in her observations, as
she never deviates from the train routes or the tourist beaten paths, listing clichés
about Canada West, or reporting her husband’s remarks on the technical progress
of the colony. To this collection of travel narratives on Canada and America, one
must add another prominent work published in 1855, by Harriet Martineau, her

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{611} Ibid, p. 117.
\item \textsuperscript{612} Isabella Bird acknowledges the presence of Honorable Mrs Murray on board the boat, in her
diary but they hardly interacted as she found Mrs Murray too aristocratic.
\item \textsuperscript{613} Isabella Bird, \textit{The Englishwoman in America}, London, John Murray, 1856, prefatory remarks,
p.5. (EA in the following quotes.)
\item \textsuperscript{614} George Patson, \textit{At John Murray’s, Records of a Literary Circle, 1843-1892}, London, John
Murray, 1932, p.258-259.
\end{itemize}
History of England, in which she revised the history of the Canadian colonies in order to glorify Lord Durham’s contribution to the Empire\(^{615}\).

**Isabella Lucy Bird in Canada**

Isabella Lucy Bird, the first woman to be admitted to the Royal Geographic Society in 1898 after a lifetime of travels around the globe, began her travelwriting career with a trip to North America. Her interest for this part of the Empire had been aroused by the reading of Harriet Martineau's *Society in America* and *How to Observe Morals and Manners*, as well as by Susanna Moodie's two volumes on her life in Canada. She was quite curious to compare her own views with the so-called "national" progress of the colonies put forward by Mrs Moodie. In this endeavour, she was supported by her publisher, who was also interested in reading appraisals on the state of the British colonial world and more particularly to see if the "independent" mood to which Susanna Moodie's text referred really threatened the integrity of the white Empire in Canada.

At the time she wrote *The Englishwoman in America*, Isabella Bird was an unknown travel writer but it seems that her first trip to North America opened up new geographical and literary horizons for her, as she returned to the American Rocky Mountains\(^{616}\) in 1879 and completed her excursions through the world by visits to Japan, Persia, Kurdistan, Tibet and China in the following two decades. Before the end of the century, Isabella Bird-Bishop had become a well-read and well-known travel writer.

Amelia Murray’s *Letters from the United States, Cuba and Canada* and Isabella Bird’s *The Englishwoman in America* were the first travel accounts written on Canada by women since Anna Brownell Jameson had published her *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* with Otley and Saunders in 1838. While Mrs Murray paid tribute to her friend’s travel narratives, which she had

\(^{615}\) Harriet Martineau, *History of England, from the commencement of the XIX\(^{th}\) century to the Crimean War*, London, 1855, chapter XII.

\(^{616}\) Isabella Bird-Bishop, *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*, London, John Murray, 1879
read at Windsor, by entitling some of her letters on Canada, "Rambles", Isabella Bird's title did not refer to Canada where she spent a great part of her time abroad. Instead the title "America" only suggested that she felt a direct affiliation with Martineau's volumes *Society in America*, also published in 1838 by Otley and Saunders. The observations and information she provides on North America reflect the methodology proposed by Martineau to the readers of *How to Observe Morals and Manners*. Bird suggests that "Rambles" is not a sufficient title for travel narratives, standards are required. Besides, the reference to *America* in the title might also come from her publisher, John Murray, who suggested a new title to Isabella Bird before the book was published, as she explained to a friend. He was well aware that the attention of the British readers had now shifted to America where tensions had heightened around the tariff question and slavery, which were trying the American institutions.

Isabella Bird went to "America" - as she constantly refers to "North America" - in the summer of 1854 when she was 23. She travelled with friends and she published her travel account upon her return in 1856. In her disclaimer she justified the publishing of her text by mentioning that she had been "pressed by her friends" to do so. Her book was based on letters and on notes from her diary that she had completed regularly during her trip. In so doing she followed the advice provided by Martineau in *How to Observe Morals and Manners*. Proper travellers, whose intention was to serve the anthropological observation of "foreign nations" and to render a useful service to sociologists or anthropologists at home, needed to keep a daily record of their observations, as Martineau had said: "the experience of a large number of observers would in time yield materials from which a cautious philosopher might draw conclusions." By respecting Martineau's recommendations, Isabella Bird explained her method of observation and made her professionalism clear to her reader. She was not travelling for frivolous purposes. As we shall see, Bird felt "empowered" by the new mission

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with which Martineau had entrusted British women travellers. Their essential quality which men did not possess, resided in the observations of "morals and manners", that is to say of the "domestic state" of a foreign country. Martineau had told them that any minute detail might count: "It ought to be an animating thought to a traveller, that, even if it be not in his power to settle any one point respecting the morals and manners of an empire, he can infallibly aid in supplying means of approximation to truth."

The daughter of an English rector, Isabella Bird set out to discover the world as an English woman, which she admitted implied some "amount of prejudice (EA, 3)" at least when one landed in (British) America for the first time. At 23, she was a deeply religious blue stocking, from an upper-middle-class family who had friends in respectable, as well as aristocratic society at home. She brought with her letters of introduction to "the best society" in America as we infer from her introductory remarks, letters that her predecessors did not "usually possess (EA, 2)". The choice of the title *The Englishwoman in America* implied some amount of self-righteousness and anglo-centrism. The choice of the deictic "the" instead of "an" indicated that the authoress represented or incarnated the English woman, the role model embodying all the national characteristics. Even in America, the Englishwoman would retain her Englishness. The narrator puts herself forward as the central character of her work, bringing to the New World the values of England and the superiority and prejudice of her class, "which seems the birthright of every English person.(EA, 3)"

The absence of reference to Canada in her title, is striking as at least two thirds of the book is devoted to time spent in the British colonies (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Canada East and Canada West). Bird and her editor Murray chose to emphasize the word "America" in the title, however misleading this must have been, to commercialise the book as a sequel to *Society in America* by Harriet Martineau. Besides, a whole volume of travels on Canada

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620 Anna M. Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, op.cit., p. 36.
had already been the topic of Anna Brownell Jameson's *Winter Studies* recently reissued in 1854 under the title *Summer Rambles among the Red Men*, while Susanna Moodie's *Life in the Clearing* had not necessarily attracted many readers. Murray was a shrewd travel-writing publisher. His choice of the title might point to a form of lassitude of the readers for things pertaining to Canada in 1856. Isabella Bird, who was a great admirer of Harriet Martineau, bore in mind her elder's deprecatory remarks on Canada pronounced in *Retrospect of Western Travel* when at the great divide between America and Canada, the Niagara Falls, Harriet Martineau had only taken a quick look at Canada and stated:

> My eyes never rested on the Canada shore without my feeling how absurd it was that that poor country should belong to us, its poverty and hopeless inactivity contrasting so much, to our disgrace, with the prosperous activity of the opposite shore.621

Bird actually reminded her readers about Martineau’s impression when she came to the same point in her travels, leaving little hope for Canadians to shine in the shadow of their American neighbour.

Bird's prefatory remarks provided readers with some information on the purpose of her travels and on the representation she believed she had provided to them. In spite of the fact that she had spent several months visiting the Canadian colonies, she insisted in her "explanatory" remarks that with her work - which she described as "a personal narrative"622 - she had wanted to give her impressions on "the people of the United States", or on "the States". She only mentioned Canada on page 5 of her first chapter, relegating the colonial world behind American society, as her mentor Martineau had done twenty years before: "Of Canada, it is scarcely necessary to speak here." The word "necessary" could be indicative of the fact that so much having been said or written on the subject, she need make no further comment about the state of the colonies. Canada was lagging behind its

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622 Bird, *The Englishwoman in America*, London, John Murray, 1856, p.1 (further quotes taken from this first edition and referred to as EA.)
dynamic neighbour America, which itself did not quite measure up to its overpowering model and former mother country: Britain. In the volume, she did praise the colonies she visited for the worth they might bring to the Empire, but in her introduction this is somehow understated: "There are, doubtless, some English readers who will be interested in the brief notices which I have given of its people, its society, and its astonishing capabilities.(EA,5)" Canada was again relegated to the margins of America and to the periphery of England. This was the impression that the reader gathered from the prefatory comments. However, the ensuing chapters do not appear as clear-cut, since they contain a lot of English flag-waving.

**Harriet Martineau on how to observe the colonies: from theory to practice**

Isabella Bird wished to justify the publication of her personal narrative in North America, among the wealth of travel accounts on the United States published by gentlewomen. Isabella Bird explained that she used a professional method of observation that should improve on the poor quality of books published in England on the subject of North America (America and Canada), which she decries in her first chapter. 623 Bird regularly referred to Harriet Martineau's method of observation of foreign lands and particularly Martineau's grid, which listed all the necessary elements composing a foreign nation and its morals and manners. The name Martineau is never directly mentioned in the book but quotes from Martineau's works recur regularly. For instance one of the early impressions Isabella Bird felt upon travelling through Nova Scotia was captured in Martineau's famous sentence "I was a stranger in a strange land.(EA,32)" This also indicated that the colonial world was going to be surveyed as a foreign land, as if its inhabitants had manners and habits that were completely different from her own English ones. Martineau gave the gist of her observation method in this fundamental remark: "It appears to me that the Morals and Manners of a nation

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623 Bird, *ibid*, p.2, "the disposition which leads travellers to seize and dwell upon the ludicrous points which continually present themselves."
may be included in the following developments of inquiry – the Religion of the people, their prevalent Moral Notions, their Domestic State, their Idea of Liberty and their Progress, actual or in prospect.” In other words, Martineau had assigned to travellers, and, or so it seems, female travellers, the task of surveying the formation of “nations”. If any country, or in Bird's case any colony, measured up to the anglo-centric standards elaborated by Harriet Martineau, then the country might qualify as a "nation."

Deirdre David believes that Martineau often positioned herself as an observer, not as an analyst. Martineau admitted that she saw herself as holding an "auxiliary role" in sociology and history writing, in the introduction to her English History: "All that can be done with contemporary history is to collect and methodize the greatest amount of reliable facts, and distinct impressions to amass sound material for the veritable historian of a future day […]" Such a remark on her own "auxiliary usefulness" to male historians, explains the final warning the author had introduced in How to Observe Morals and Manners. Asking travellers to be satisfied with collecting without analysing was not necessarily a remark addressed to all women. By this warning she wanted to attack the Mrs Trollopes of the world as well as other unreliable and judgemental male travellers. With the manual of observation, How to Observe Morals and Manners, she provided her readers with a form of "semiotics of travel" according to D. David. Martineau provided women and men with the possibility of writing useful observations and of conveying reliable facts to the British public. Travellers, who, like her followed a method, could become useful amanuenses to experts at home. Deirdre David concludes that "on the stage of the 19th century intellectual history, she cast herself in a supporting part, one that served to highlight the star turns executed by her more luminous, and for the most part male, contemporaries. Nonetheless, Martineau provided intellectual women travelling across the world with useful

624 Martineau, How to Observe Morals and Manners, op.cit., p.65
missions: to take to the world stage, to observe "morals and manners", to satisfy the need for knowledge of the metropolis. Bird followed this pragmatic grid in all her works, which gained her the attention of the expert fellows of the Royal Geographic Society at the end of her career.

These feminine observations elaborated through constant comparisons with the metropolis’s standards, converged into the elaboration of a necessarily imperialist discourse about British North America. Isabella Strange Trotter ascribed the asset of women’s travel narratives to the all-encompassing views they offered of the domestic and public spheres in the New World as "many bachelors pass through the country and record their experience [describing] things very differently to what we do." Isabella Bird however, established most of her reports and observations on Canadian or American manners in stately homes. She also collected much "useful" information on the state of the colony from conversations with these "bourgeois" Canadians. Martineau recommended that travellers establish direct contact and hold conversations with the "natives" instead of reading previous travel texts or other statistical accounts on the state of the country visited. Isabella Bird did report conversations she had had with a few lower-class British emigrants, to comply with the "scientific" requirements of Martineau's method. In fact, with Martineau's observation grid, Bird could only convey the impressions of the bourgeois society, the designated upholders of "morals and values". What Bird was asked to observe by applying Martineau's method, was the manners in which the "Canadian" bourgeois lived. Were they still revering English values faithfully? If they did, if Englishness appeared blatantly preserved in the morals and manners of the Canadians, then could English Canada be considered on the safe road to becoming a nation? Or would all Canadians share Susanna Moodie's outrageous Republican ideas and disrespect for the mother country? Bird was to collect information that her readers would judge and analyze back home; such was her self-assigned mission.

627 Isabella Strange Trotter, First Impressions of the New World on two travellers from the Old, in the Autumn of 1858, London, Longman, Brown, Green, 1859, dedication, iii.
Martineau's methodical first step required the traveller, man or woman, to mention if the "strange land" observed was a colony or an independent nation as "it is a great consequence whether the nation is insular or continental, dependent or colonial.\textsuperscript{628}\textsuperscript{628} The morals and manners of colonies differed greatly from independent countries that had already grown out of the former mother country's moral grip. In 1836, when Martineau composed her systematic observation of foreign nations, she had based her observation of the colonial world on America and Canada:

Their morals [colonists'] are overruled by the mother-country – by the government and legislation she imposes, by the rulers she sends out, by the nature of the advantages she grants and the tribute she requires, by the population she pours in from home and by her own example.

She established that colonists, while they remained under the control of an imperial centre, were unable to liberate themselves from the imperial culture. In \textit{How to Observe}, she posited that the colonial context offered uninteresting observations, as the morals and manners found in colonies were a mere mimicking of those of the mother country: "the moral progression of a people can scarcely begin till they are independent.\textsuperscript{629}\textsuperscript{629}"

However, her remarks on the colonies and their lack of "independence" in morals and manners were balanced by additional remarks that featured in her \textit{antepenultim\textsuperscript{6} chapter which, according to Martineau's contemporary editor Michael Hill, had been added on to the original manuscript. During her return trip to England, Martineau had revised \textit{How to Observe Morals and Manners}, which she had first written on the way over to America in 1836. I believe that the colonial rebellions that were taking place in Canada at the time must have inspired some of her remarks. Her interest in nation building, as well as her close observation of the "progress" of the Americans from their former British manners into independent American manners, informed her comments on the imperial

\textsuperscript{628}Martineau, \textit{How to Observer}, op.cit., p. 200.
\textsuperscript{629}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 212.
connection between mother countries and colonies in general. Her chapter was aptly entitled "Progress."

General prejudice against the French Canadians also infected Harriet Martineau, who considered their rebellions as those of a conservative, traditional, backward-looking people resisting British progress: "Among a homogenous people, ancestral virtues flourish, but these carry with them ancestral faults as their shadow and there is a liability of a new fault being added, resistance to the spirit of improvement. Publishing her work a few months before the release of the Durham Report, she concluded on the necessity of assimilation through Union to the advantage of the "mongrel people". Her foresight on Empire building was quite remarkable as she suggested to establish a strong English Empire with a uniformity of morals and manners, before eventually considering the possibility of national emancipation: "If the chances of severity of ancient virtue are lessened in the case of a mongrel people, there is a counterbalancing advantage in the greater diversity of interests, enlargement of sympathy, and vigour of enterprise introduced by the close union of the descendants of different races."

Anticipating the progress of Canada from colony to nation, Martineau seemed to suggest that the bourgeois settlers like the Traills or the Moodies, might be the ones who would gradually transform the original English virtues into more "personal" or "national" ones ("infant virtues of their own"). Martineau's otherwise imperial stance seemed to anticipate the "natural" progress of colonies and the "natural" demands of the colonists for more autonomy and independence:

Accordingly, the colonies of a powerful country exhibits an exaggeration of the national faults, with only infant virtues of their own, which wait for freedom to grow to maturity, and among which an enlarged sympathy with the race is seldom found. This is a temper uncongenial with the confined, dependent and imitative society; the first strong symptoms of it are usually found in the persons of those whose mission is to lead the colony out of its minority into independence.

631 Martineau, *ibid*, p. 214.
632 Martineau, *ibid*, p. 200-201
Martineau's methodological liberal approach to Empire building served as a basis to Isabella Bird's (or Murray's) imperialist agenda. However, their ultimate views on the ideal Empire for Britain differed when in her *History of England*, Martineau applauded the progress brought to the infant colonies in Canada by Durham’s far-sighted liberal views on Empire building:

He [Lord Durham] did what he could to obviate to the colony the mischief done by friends and foes at home, and he did so much that he must be regarded as the originator of good government in the colonies. [...] By means of this celebrated report, free and large principles of colonial government are exhibited in action, and endowed with so communicable a character that they are none of our more thriving colonies that do not owe much of their prosperity to him.\(^{633}\)

**Bird’s representations of the British Empire in Canada**

Martineau's recommendations to travellers included necessary observations on the "domestic" state of the colony in which she also noted the observations of farms, fields and thriving villages. Step by step, Isabella Bird tackled these observations of the domestic domain, which in Martineau's epistemology included far more than the actual domestic sphere:

Having noted the aspect of the country, the observer's next business is to ascertain the condition of the inhabitants as to the supply of the Necessaries of life. He knows that nothing remains to be learned of the domestic morals of people who are plunged in hopeless poverty. There is no foundation for good morals among such.[...] Seeing in commerce the instrument by which all the inhabitants of the earth are in time to be brought into all good feelings, he will mark the progress made by the society he visits towards this end.\(^{634}\)

Bird developed her own comments on the progress of the British colonies along Martineau's lines, reviewing, as she travelled towards the interior of the country - riding along the "colonial" roads - the capacities for development of the local countryside. She used her visits to the interior communities, on the way to

\(^{633}\) Martineau, *History of England*, op.cit., volume IV, p. 144. There is no space for digression on the topic of Harriet Martineau and empire-building which will be the topic of another volume.

Canada West, to consider, with the eye of the "capitalist vanguard", the potential offered by unexploited lands in terms of agriculture for instance. For mercantile purposes, Isabella Bird and her publisher included a map of the US and Canada along with statistical tables on the economic progress of Canada, which, Bird mentioned, was an addition to the manuscript.

Indeed Isabella Bird often surveyed Canadian landscapes with the eye of a "rural" capitalist, finding attractive vistas that reminded her of the landscape at home, in the form of a tame and picturesque land, already domesticated and colonized by the white British settlers. Bird was not a supporter of free trade or heavy industrialism but she nonetheless believed in the virtues of industry and hard work for the preservation of "good" government. With the expert eye of a traditional landowner, nothing seemed to please her more than looking at peasants at work and fields being exploited.

But like the capitalist vanguard, she did not hesitate to qualify some parts of the countryside as lacking in pleasing views because it showed no sign of development. She at times indulged in a "capitalist" reverie of what the land would be like if and when more British settlers took over from the French Canadian or Nova Scotian peasantry:

While the interior of the country is so fertile, and it is susceptible of a high degree of improvement, it is scarcely fair in the Nova Scotians to account for their backwardness by pointing strangers to their sterile and iron-bound coast. But they are a moral, hardy and loyal people; none of our colonial fellow-subjects are more attached to the British crown or more ready to take up arms in its defence.
I was greatly pleased with much I heard and with the little I saw of the Nova-Scotians. (EA, 25)

Martineau's recommendations did not include any musing over the landscape, except when the scanning of the surrounding countryside might inform the traveller on the state of agriculture or economic opportunities. Bird applies these remarks to Nova Scotians: "There are very great natural advantages in the neighbourhood, lime, coal, slate and minerals being abundant, added to which
Halifax is the nearest port to Europe." (EA, 17) The concern of the British traveller was to survey the colonies in order to seek new prospects or opportunities for the mother country. Bird's mercantilism also reflected old-fashioned Tory policies about the exploitation of the Empire. Since the Nova Scotians did not display any talent for economic progress, the British entrepreneurs and upper-class investors would take advantage of what the colonial grounds had to offer, which might otherwise be wasted: "With the finest harbour in North America, with a country abounding in minerals and coasts swarming with fish, the Nova Scotians appear to have expunged the word progress from their dictionary. They talk largely about railroads which they seem as if they would never complete." (EA, 17)

As for cityscapes, she admired Halifax's "large commodious harbour" which could facilitate the means of transportation in the transatlantic trade with Britain. She also contemplated citadels or forts, "these formidable forts which protect the entrance and defend the largest naval depot which we possess in North America" (EA, 17). Here Isabella Bird contributed a Tory point of view to the current public debate in the metropolis. There, the possible removal of the troops garrisoned in the Canadian provinces had been debated in 1854, after consideration of the heavy cost of maintaining forts in Halifax, Kingston or Victoria. The Liberal Party had now committed the country to free trade since the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 and the repeal of the Navigation Acts in 1849 - the last Tory mercantile inheritance. Free trade according to A. Smith's doctrine also implied "peace". Lord Palmerston, the Whig/Liberal minister who had been directing British overseas policy since 1830, stated in a now famous quotation that free trade was "one of the great standing laws of nature", with "commerce leading civilisation in one hand, peace with the other." For the opposition party, dismantling the military protection would lead the Empire to be exposed to attacks and eventually the English nation would be weakened. It appears that John Murray oriented Bird's remarks towards such a conclusion. Bird agreed that Halifax's citadel was "heavily armed, and amply sufficient for every purpose of
To mid-19th century Conservative politicians, as had been the case for 18th century Tories, the connection between the wealth that Britain derived from her Empire and her status as a great military and naval power were essential. British communities across the world had to be protected by the mother country if the English nation with its high morals and values was to survive and conquer at home and abroad.

Isabella Bird's purpose (or Murray's?) was to draw a comparison between economics in the British colonies and in America. Clearly, she wished to see the colonies better exploited and developed either by bringing in new enterprising settlers or by looking to the Colonial Office to develop some new mercantile policies in order to take advantage of the colonial possessions. She clearly underlined the superiority of commerce, trade and industry in the neighbouring American harbours, in order to egg on the pride of her British readers and to awaken them to the damage caused by too liberal policies for the colonies, such as responsible government and free trade. Laziness and sloppiness seemed to incarnate the new colonial spirit that had resulted from the Liberal "imperial project" of the 1830s-1840s.

They [Nova Scotians] trust more to the House of Assemblies than to their own energies. Consequently their astute and enterprising neighbours, the Yankees, the acute speculators of Massachusetts and Connecticut, have seized upon the traffic which they have allowed to escape them and have diverted them to the thriving town of Portland in Maine. (EA, 18)

For Conservative politicians, influenced by old mercantile policies, the Empire should provide the food and raw materials that Britain needed. In return, Britain had to supply the Empire with capital, a migrant labour force and manufactured goods. Here Bird was very critical of the 1850s’ colonial policies. However, the Tories were in the opposition then, where they remained until 1866. Isabella Bird used her text as a political platform to develop the strong imperialist agenda of the upper-class and upper-middle-class families, more formerly
developed by Charles Dilke in his imperialist travel narrative *Greater Britain* in 1866.

Generally speaking, it can be observed that in the travel narratives following the publication of Anna Jameson’s and Susanna Moodie's texts, women visitors were less concerned with the description of the natural surroundings in Canada than by the description of the “economic” development of the country, as well as its politics. All of them attended at least one Parliamentary session. For them, they were visiting Canada to visit the Canadian “other”. For instance, Bird described the Nova Scotians as she had described Native Americans. They were "specimens" who "seemed temperate, sturdy and independent." (25) Amusing anecdotes abounded about these "natives of the country" (Nova Scotians). She also gave descriptions of the "colonial dinners", "an aggregate of dinner and tea", while the "colonial breakfasts" were "a curious complication of breakfast and dinner, combining I think the advantages of both." (33) The sympathy or empathy that Anna Brownell Jameson had displayed or shown in her travel narrative, when she had warmly described numerous great and good settlers she had met in Upper Canada, was now absent from the "cold", detached, imperial narrative produced by Isabella Bird. Twenty years on, it seems that as soon as the symptoms of "national formation" in Canada became perceptible in Mrs Murray or Ms Bird’s text for instance, the British female visitors established a distance between the Canadians who did not uphold English values and themselves. Anglocentrism and elitism ran through the post-Moodie travel narratives on Canada, in the 1850s. Such a distance enabled the upper-middle-class imperialist female writers to belittle or to look down on the progress of the former colonies and on some of its *petite bourgeoisie* whom they believed were not yet ready to challenge or to compete with the mother country.

*Isabella Bird, counter-writing Moodie's narrative*

In her introduction, Isabella Bird made several cross-references to Moodie's work noting particularly the overall impression of self-righteousness
with which some English authors wrote about the colonies while decrying England, "a country to which [the author] appears to feel it a disgrace to belong."

(12) Could Canada and its British settlers really supersede the mother country in terms of moral progress? Bird tried to verify the veracity of this statement while in Canada. In writing this book, she seemed to aim at re-establishing the imperial hegemony and the superiority of England over its colonies. Colonists should revere the mother country, not feel disgraced by their connection to it. In her narrative, life in Canada ought to be "colonial", even among the patrician Tory families she visited. Imbued with her so-called "English prejudice (EA, 3)", Bird came to North America with the certainty that the imperial centre was the source of enlightenment, progress and culture while Canada belonged to its margins. How could the margins ever hope or consider removing themselves from the imperial influence? Such had been the Moodies' patriotic message to their English readers. Bird investigated the state of morals and manners during her year-long visit in North America, to find out if Mrs Moodie’s sentiments, those of disgrace of belonging to England, were shared by other colonists. How well advanced was the "imperial project"? This was the question that led the young visitor onwards. However, her version of the "imperial project" was influenced by Toryism. She was not so much concerned with the liberal colony-centred project propounded by Wakefield. Her queries would lead her to investigate whether Englishness and a leading English elite were making ground in the colonies in order to bring economic assets to the metropolis and to preserve the imperial centre at the apex of the Empire. Such were the metropolis-centred observations that she hoped would bring her to conclude to the near triumph of high imperialism.

The "stranger in a strange land" impression that she felt when visiting Canada was only expressed after a week in Nova Scotia. This sentiment or posture had been recommended by Martineau. Feeling aloof, or remaining aloof, enabled the visitor to preserve his/her imperial gaze (her anglocentric position) in a foreign land. Such a posture facilitated a detached observation of morals and manners but also of the "domestic" state of the colonies.
Upon landing in Nova Scotia, Bird had felt she was disembarking in an English province. Her Englishness rejoiced when she "heard the well-known British bugle", saw "the familiar scarlet of our troops", "the voices which vociferated were English", "the physiognomies had the Anglo-Saxon cast and complexion." She summed up this first contact with the colonial world in the "western hemisphere" in one of her imperialistic remarks "I felt myself at home."(13) But, when the land and its surroundings had some English feel about them, she noticed that the inhabitants did not display any of the qualities of Englishness and she saw them as too far removed from the mother country to benefit from its aura and dynamism. About the "Nova Scotians" she stated - quoting from representations she had read while in England -, "I was disappointed to find the description of the lassitude and want of enterprise of the Nova Scotians given by Judge Haliburton so painfully true." (16) Her imperialist empathy for the poor state of the British colonies went to the mother country, not to the settlers whom she described as non-English. Her overtones resounded with feminine imperialism. Here Bird seemed to decry the settlers, as if they were foreigners.

In order to establish a comparison between the so-called society in Canada and that of the mother country, to demonstrate that England still dominated its colonies culturally, Isabella Bird carefully followed Harriet Martineau's observation grid. In a few practical chapters, in How to Observe Morals and Manners, Harriet Martineau had provided a portable questionnaire and a list of observations to be made in "foreign parts." Observing Morals and Manners thoroughly in Canada, Isabella Bird could only come to the conclusion that Canadian morals and manners, in spite of Mrs Moodie's enthusiastic account of them, were still underdeveloped and unrefined, like the colonial environment in which they were stagnating.

To oppose the idealistic representation of Canada "the blest, the free" provided by Mrs Moodie, Isabella Bird insisted on the shocking and disgusting state in which she found the population in the bush, as well as in small villages in Nova Scotia. The colony had been the most loyalist one out of the five provinces.
Here Bird picks an example used by Mrs Moodie in *Roughing It* to contradict her hopeful views on life in the Bush. Moodie had shown that alcohol, the lack of temperance, only affected poor gentlemen who had made the unwise choice of settling in the backwoods without having the necessary moral qualities to succeed there. For Bird, lack of temperance concerned many men, from all classes, as well as the natives whose drinking habits had been brought to Canada by early colonists, like the French and the Yankees. The so-called healthy communal environment and support of the bush described by Mrs Moodie, is described by Bird as a rough life based on rude competition between individuals, a struggle for life in the bush, bringing many settlers to their doom.

Bird continues to deride Moodie’s representations of life in Canadian communities. When it comes to evoking the "bourgeois" lifestyle in the bush or in the clearings, Isabella Bird only sees uncomfortable houses, smelling of "lard", as well as "dirty and unlighted streets" in Halifax. The so-called middle classes are just the sons of former labourers or storekeepers who have taken the opportunity to rise in social status and are now mimicking the fashionable manners of the true English upper middle class. As for the rare library rooms which she comes across - which in England were part of the lay-out of middle-class houses - they only exist in the stately homes of Halifax or Toronto where she notes that all the books come from England or worse are "pirated versions of English books." (23)

In most of her observations, she adopted a reassuring tone for her English readers. The observations of these colonial "others" were used as a "mirror" to relocate the imperial centre in England. They were not totally different from English people. Their pursuit of their bourgeois dream led them to imitate the manners of the good English society which they still envied and admired. Bird declares: "I speedily found that being from the 'old country' gave me a status in the eyes of the colonial ladies [...] Interrogations about England followed, and I was asked if I had seen the queen? (66)" Bird regularly referred to the better class of settlers as "British colonists", caring little about the lower classes and their Yankee manners, insisting on the mongrel composition of the populations in the
Canadian colonies. The colonists of the better classes did still look up to England. But the fact that the colonists could not measure up to the "Englishness" of the *Englishwoman* in America, was also made clear by Isabella Bird, hence her preference for the word "British" which seemed to indicate loyalty to England, while acknowledging the miscegenation of manners at work in the colonies. Simon Gikandi notes that such observations of the colonial other led, in the long run, to the revision of "Englishness" in the metropolis: "This other (the colonial) was a constitutive element in the invention of Britishness." However at this stage, Isabella Bird used her travel text and the "mirror effect", which distance with England provided, as a means of imperialist reassurance for her English readers. Gikandi analyses this type of narrative by suggesting: "it was in writing about it [the other] that the metropolis could be drawn into the sites of what it assumed to be colonial difference and turn into indispensable spaces of self-reflection.635"

In 1856, she rested her demonstration with a final comment that she aimed at her fellow English Tory imperialists from the upper middle class and the aristocracy. She comforted them in the belief that Canada was not gaining power or confidence. Free trade was not proving efficient. Canada still greatly depended on the financial and military support of the mother country. The settlers she had met there, specifically in Halifax or Toronto where she had stayed with prominent families, had stated their strong admiration and awe for the mother country. The British Empire was not losing stamina, no "nationalist" tendency was at work in the North American margins. Short remarks, like imperialist punctuations, dotted the original text, as if she needed to bring in some reassuring words to better counteract Moodie's last pro-Canada impressions on the mind of metropolitan readers. Typical of these terse remarks, the reader found for instance: "the heart of the exile is to his native land, until his latest breath!(EA, 214)"

The final words of this first imperialist narrative clearly dispelled Susanna Moodie's false impressions on "glorious" Canada conveyed by the gentlewoman author, one of the so-called "Elect" who was a mere non-Conformist in the eyes of

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her readers. Isabella Bird was a strong Tory at heart and her trip to North America further convinced her of the greatness and supremacy of England over her Empire.

Those were sacred feelings with which I landed upon the shores of England. Although there appeared little confidence in the present, and much of apprehension for the future, I loved her better when a shadow was upon her than in the palmy days of her peace and prosperity. I had seen in other lands much to admire, and much to imitate; but it must not be forgotten that England is the source from which those streams of liberty and enlightenment have flowed which have fertilized the Western Continent. Other lands may have their charms, ...but it is with pride and gladness that the wanderer sets foot again on British soil, thanking God for the religion and the liberty which have made this weather-beaten island in a northern sea to be the light and glory of the world (EA, 464).

**John Murray's Toryism and Bird's imperial narrative**

John Murray II, Bird's publisher, had partly established himself as the publisher of travel books and travel guides in the 1840s and 1850s. In 1856, there were five of Murray's portable handbooks available for visitors travelling to European countries. John Murray was immediately interested in Bird's manuscript. Both shared a strong Tory perspective on the imperial world. The Murrays, father and son, had been the publishers of *The Quarterly Review*, a prominent Tory review since 1810. John Murray senior had been a close friend of Walter Scott with whom he shared Unionist views636.

Murray began a regular correspondence with Isabella Bird upon her return to England. Their friendship was carried on as Murray’s son continued to support Bird’s writing and travelling career, publishing all her travel narratives after the death of his father637. Among the group of London publishers, John Murray had the reputation of being very involved in the shaping and editing of the books he selected for his catalogue, particularly travel books. Rumour had it that he had

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636 See George Paston, *At John Murray’s, op.cit.*, first chapters.
even dared ask Harriet Martineau to revise some of her sections of her *Travels to the Middle-East*, suggesting some alterations himself. Needless to say that Harriet Martineau did not publish with Murray House. John Murray was particularly well-known for his "meddling" in the publishing and editing processes, seeing every one of his books through the press and asking to read full manuscripts before signing any contract. He was not content with simply "puffing" the texts, but his self-described "egotism", - "his brain" – led him to take some part "in originality or even in writing them". John Wiston Croker was also employed by Murray as a reader and judging from the numerous opinionated remarks he sent to Murray, his word on a manuscript was decisive and his editing seemed to frequently amount to rewriting some sections. Royal Gettman notes that the publisher was all-powerful over the texts he selected, as his priority was the third strand of the triad "author, publisher, reader", the reader. Each published manuscript was selected for a market:

This side of the publishing was a business, the success of the firm rested upon "commodity" books rather than on famous authors. It meant estimating the taste of the readers, and then producing works to satisfy it or even foreseeing an opening for a certain type of books, for example travel guides on a specific unknown land or country.

Murray’s hovering presence in Bird's *The Englishwoman in America* was obvious in the additions of statistical tables on the economic state of the colonies, as well as in the choice of the title. "The notes from which this volume is taken were written in the lands of which it treats: they have been amplified and corrected in the genial atmosphere of an English home." This introductory remark refers to the editorial presence of John Murray who had "amplified" the original manuscript. To begin with he asked young Isabella Bird to change her title from *The Car and the Steamboat* to *The Englishwoman in America*. He wanted to

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639 Several notes on manuscripts found in John Murray's papers written by John W. Croker, Murray House Archives.
include her work in his "Home and Colonial Library Collection". She gave in with some reluctance to Murray's insistence\textsuperscript{641}. With such a title, Murray clearly established the anglocentric perspective the English visitor (and himself) had chosen to adopt. By the same token, Murray added another book to his "Home and Colonial Library Collection" whose volumes offered a positive and enthusiastic vision of a unified British Empire, as if the white colonial world was formed of mere commercial outposts. The Murray House catalogue described this collection launched in 1840 as "A series of works adapted for all circles and classes or readers, having been selected for their acknowledged interest and ability of the author." The books were sold at 3s. 6d. Murray's purpose was clearly to bring the Empire home to his readers who would gradually become familiar with the "British possessions". His well-known collection, listing numerous titles for which he employed many women travellers, served his marketing purposes. He was taking advantage of the spectacle of Empire. In 1846, Murray created a new periodical called \textit{A New Home and Colonial Monthly Periodical} in which extracts from the recently published books from the Empire featured\textsuperscript{642}.

In a twentieth-century re-edition of Isabella Bird' volume by Andrew Hill Clark\textsuperscript{643}, the contemporary editor was able to find the original diary used by Isabella Bird in which she confided her personal remarks during the trip. He was then able to compare her notes with the actual observations or comments she included in the published volume. Clark comes to the conclusion that her remarks had been edited and watered down by the publisher: "It is curious that, by and large, the journal appears rather more favourable to republican Americans, and rather less so to British Americans, than in the book; perhaps Mr Murray felt that it wouldn't sell as well in England without some internal shifting of ballast." According to Andrew Hill Clark, Murray had prompted Bird to alter some of her

\textsuperscript{641} Anna M. Stoddart, \textit{The Life of Isabella Lucy Bird}, London, John Murray, 1907, p. 112
\textsuperscript{642} John Murray's \textit{List of Published Books (1840-1880)} – Murray House (private) Archives – 50 Albermale Street, London. I wish to thank Victoria Murray for her precious help in sorting out great material for me.
\textsuperscript{643} Isabella Lucy Bird, \textit{The Englishwoman in America}, foreword and note by Andrew Hill Clark, (1856), Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1966.
pro-American remarks and to emphasize the sentimental attachment of the British Americans to the mother country. In so doing, Murray reinforced Bird's imperial discourse.

Andrew Hill Clark concluded after comparing some critical passages from the original manuscript to the published version, that Bird had either changed her mind on some of her early judgements about the superiority of America when she returned home, or that she had complied with the requirements of her publisher. Travel narratives written by women did not seem to represent a literary or geographic interest for publishers unless their narratives were commissioned or fashioned to convey a specific political agenda, that of the publisher.

So according to Andrew Hill Clark, Murray's over-imposed discourse formatted Bird's. Murray's concern was to propound the idea of a clear superiority of the British colonies over the American Republic. It was a clearly nationalistic flag-waving on the part of the editor. He also appreciated Bird's repetitive obsession in her description of the colonies, as the workshops of the "workshop of the world", i.e. as the productive margins serving the centre. Her high imperialism did not foresee independent nations in a loose imperial federation, but rather a future Empire in which British colonies should be maintained strongly within the realm, covering the cost of their military protection with an intensive production.

With Isabella Bird's narrative, it was obvious that the pendulum had shifted away from the margins. Books produced in the colonial periphery, like that of Susanna Moodie, were relegated there, while the imperial knowledge about the Empire was now in the hands of English visitors, mostly women, whose sympathy or empathy for the colonial living conditions or the "human factor" - the "exploratrices sociales" – was now giving way to discourses of female "capitalist vanguards." By 1856, Moodie had acquired the persistent reputation of writing fiction about Canada and her exaggerated reports about life in Canada had been exposed. British travellers could now openly mock and deride her representations. Metropolitan readers shifted their attention to reliable objective sources of information provided by upper-middle-class English visitors. Their travel
narratives in colonial Canada featured numerous comments on the state of infancy, politically and morally, in which she had found the colonies emphatically contradicted Moodie’s representation of a Canada on the road to progress and independence.

From the 1850s onwards, women's texts about Canada outnumbered the travel books written by men on the British market in the second half of the 19th century. All of them were written by upper-middle-class authors who displayed some high imperialism that opposed the liberal policies developed in Britain towards the colonies. The “infant-mother” metaphor, used by Thomas Paine in Common Sense in 1776 to serve his radical purpose, clearly appealed to English female travellers who used the metaphor to support their feminine and motherly empathy and imperialism towards the white colonies. In Amelia Murray’s or Isabella Bird’s texts, Canada appeared as “young”, “naïve”, unable to separate from the source of life and growth which the mother country represented. This sentimental chord being particularly sensitive in upper-middle-class women, they produced narratives that reflected their motherly attachment to the colonies and colonists, particularly of the better classes, hoping they would maintain the connection as long as possible. Unionist Tories like Bird and Murray were bothered by these tendencies towards Republican views.

Positioning herself as a benevolent outsider, trying to be indulgent towards the colonists, Amelia Murray, Queen Victoria’s former lady-in-waiting, insists: “Indeed I think our [colonial] relationship makes it more galling for a parent is always observant of the errors of her children.” Similarly, she asked to sit in the opening session of the Parliament, held in Quebec in 1854, in order to admire the ability of Lord Elgin in keeping an eye over the naïve and quarrellous Canadian MPs. Amelia Murray reminds her readers that these infant colonies would never have developed without the help of the mother country. She never departs from her Toryism while in Canada, rejoicing in the political progress the settlers would accomplish in the future, in the name of England:

It [a session] resembles the first attempts of an infant to exercise its legs – eager, awkward, and almost alarming, though necessary and salutary to gain habit, future strength, and experience, but as patience and temper are required from a good nurse when her child begins to walk alone; so even the calmness and placability of Lord Elgin is likely to be severely tried, by his wayward children here – they may even quarrel with their own bread and butter to begin with.\footnote{Amelia Murray, \textit{Letters, op.cit.}, p. 60.}

Further imperial responses to Moodie's narratives by genteel English tourists

Visitors who followed Isabella Bird and Amelia Murray to North America in the second half of the 19th century, whose narratives were published, belonged to the upper middle class or to the aristocracy. After the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1887, aristocrats would travelled to the Western provinces, particularly to the Rocky Mountains which became one of their favourite destinations, away from the tourist crowds. They clearly wished to curtail their visits to Ontario that was deemed dreary and good enough for middle-class tourists.\footnote{Lady Pullen-Burry, \textit{From Halifax to Vancouver, op.cit.}, and Somerset, Susan, Margaret McKinnon, St.Maur, Duchess, \textit{Impressions of a Tenderfoot during a Journey in Search of Sport in the Far West}, London, John Murray, 1890, and Emily Katherine Bates, \textit{A Year in the Great Republic}, London, Ward and Downey, 1887.} For the latter however, in the 1860s, visits to Canada were still limited to the Maritimes and the Eastern provinces. Couples could holiday in North America now that decent means of transportation (Cunard boats and trains) could be provided. They could visit the Canadian colonies or Dominion, to reunite with former acquaintances or to observe the colonial world with its quaint, "entertaining" or "amusing" inhabitants. The dozen travel texts on North America published between 1858 and 1871 and written by women, showed that all of them had been attracted to Canada after having read previous representations, either in Isabella Bird's or Amelia Murray's accounts or in Susanna Moodie's colonial narratives. The manner in which they discovered the New World and reported it to their female readers at home, revealed some imperial knowledge about the
Canadian colonies acquired in the reading of these books. British upper-middle-class visitors all appear to know a lot about the manners and the morals of the Canadians. Visiting the margins does not seem to provoke any specific excitement, triggered by discovery, in these female writers. They already seem "blase" or "ennuye" in Canada. Women travelled to Canada to check on and to verify, the information and representations circulating in the metropolis, the "spectacle of Empire" with which they had been entertained, through books. The only thrill experienced by the visitors seemed to happen when their itinerary took them to French Canada, where they felt transported to a foreign country. There they became real strangers "in a strange land." However, this sentiment was reinforced by the fact that they were on conquered land. In that part of the white colonial world, they could clearly see how "underdeveloped" that portion of the country was. There they felt their imperial power at its highest.

With Isabella Trotter's *First Impressions of the New World on Two Travellers from the Old, in the Autumn of 1858*, published in 1859, the tone and style of women's travel books on Canada changed. The light and detached tone Mrs Trotter used to describe her various excursions and her encounters with the Canadian "natives" set a new trend. Canada could now become a destination where British upper-middle-class women could both experience the thrill of feeling a "stranger in a strange land" in Quebec, while knowing they were also "at home" in their Empire in the English-speaking provinces. Trotter's first impressions of Canada comprised a series of letters home to her daughters, which could be described as a series of anecdotes written by an uninformed tourist.

However, Mrs Trotter also set a trend that was taken up by at least 5 other women authors after 1867: the narrative of the married couple's visit to the New World. In the very first travel narratives to North America - written by Frances Wright and Anna Jameson - single women had experienced the freedom of travelling alone (without chaperons) and subsequently had produced texts that echoed this freedom of expression. Untrammelled by gender boundaries in the

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647 Quotes taken from Mrs Trotter, *First Impressions of the New World, op.cit.*
Canadian colonies, where no spheres limited their movements they had nonetheless been able to interact with the wilderness in a sensuous way, as well as to talk to men and women about the "domestic" state of affairs in Canada, which included political, moral and social issues.

In the 1850s and 1860s, Canada, at least in its urban centres, had now adopted a Victorian model of social organization. The public sphere was now occupied by a new class of political leaders and women had been removed to the private sphere. The only difference between life in England and in Canada in the patrician homes, was the gathering together of men and women after dinner for evenings of entertainment, instead of going to separate rooms. This point was first underlined by Susanna Moodie in *Life in the Clearings*, then observed by Amelia Murray and Isabella Bird in 1854. Indeed in England, in the 1850s, men and women often went to separate rooms to spend the rest of the evening with different occupations and interests. This habit only changed in the late 1860s. While Bird and Murray had also been free to interact with the population, for British female visitors travelling with their husbands, as was the case of Mrs Trotter, the possibility or the opportunity to interact freely with the population, with members of both sexes, to compare view points, to put forward personal opinions on the colonial world, were limited. The "new" British female travel writers behaved "properly" and let their husband lead the way and the conversations. Women merely reported the "interesting conversations" that their husband had with so and so, or recorded their husband's views on such and such a point. In Isabella Trotter's account, Mr Trotter's presence dominates the narrative: "Papa said", "Papa had a very interesting conversation with…", "Papa went to see…" This series of texts, written by authors who called themselves Mrs -- mostly consisted in a listing of tourists' anecdotes. The personal involvement of these women in their narrative was often limited to the amusing remarks on Canadian women with whom they talked and which reflected their anglocentrism. Their textual production presented "tame" views of Canada written by "domestic" authors.
In *First Impressions of the New World on Two Travellers from the Old*, Mrs Trotter, the wife of a renowned English engineer, reminded her readers of the imperial progress brought about by mechanical features that English engineering or English genius had brought to the Canadians. Her Tory perspective on the colonial world is made clear from the start. While visiting the Victoria Bridge in Montreal, she insisted upon the fact that it was being built with plans devised by Stephenson, like the Grand Trunk Railway whose locomotive had also been invented by Stephenson. The steel construction, as well as the steel steamboats that would soon sail on the St Lawrence, were the result of a fit of genius of Isambard K. Brunel. During her visit to Montreal, Isabella Trotter reminded her readers that the Canadian Grand Trunk or the Victoria Bridge were after all built "on English soil", with funds "almost all raised in England" (EA, 71). Clearly the British visitors' purpose was to verify that Canada was unable to stand on its own feet without the help, supervision (the Victoria Bridge construction was supervised by an English engineer, her husband's friend) or without the genius of the mother country.

Using the railroads left no time to the modern tourists to visit Canadian villages, as time schedules were quite tight between places of interest, "we changed trains at Hamilton and remained there nearly an hour" (EA, 61). Amelia Murray had earlier displayed this impatience in getting to places quickly, instead of discovering the country, when she complained about the slow completion of the railway line between Quebec and Montreal. The train would have saved her "another stupid night on the boat." The interaction with the countryside or with the people thus became very limited and British visitors could only observe the "spectacle" of the colonial landscape from the safety of their car. "The railroad ran along the shore of Lake Ontario. It was difficult to believe that the immense expanse of water was not salt." Verbs such as "it appeared to be", "it seemed to be", "it was said to be" indicate that the traveller took no time to explore or observe life in Canada outside of the urban centres which she and her husband had in mind to visit.
The Trotters stopped at Toronto for two days only. During that time they visited "some friends". They stayed at a hotel, an "enormous one", on a wide street with "good shops", but when this "was said", Isabella Trotter explained, "there is little more to add about it, for it looks otherwise forlorn, and altogether the town is the least inviting one we have yet seen in our travels." (EA, 63) In the next page, she quoted Anna Jameson's anecdote concerning the building of the town over drained swamps. Toronto's actual state of underdevelopment was attributed to its colonial status. Isabella Trotter, again referring to Jameson’s chapter on Toronto in 1838, explained to her correspondent that in the past, uneducated Canadians had defied the English rule and the Anglophile elite – the Tory families of the 1830s - to copy their Republican neighbours. Furthering her imperialist comments, which she had clearly picked in the course of her visit to one of these Tory families, she declared that the new MPs, presented as "unrefined", to whom responsible government had been granted by the Liberals in Britain, were not educated enough to promote the progress of the colony whose fate they now held in their hands: "Toronto is a most melancholy-looking place. It has suffered in the "crisis", and the consequence is that wide streets seem to have begun but never finished, giving the town a very disastrous look."(EA, 63)

While it was now admitted in England that the rebellions in Upper Canada had been caused by a lack of responsible government and odious Tory patronage, Mrs Trotter does not seem to have any idea of what she is talking about. She simply seems to parrot conversations she picked at the Trotters' Tory friends. They are referred to as the prominent Mr and Mrs M—648. Opulence, wealth and stately patrician mansions characterized the houses visited by these English tourists. Isabella's acquaintance displayed magnificent pieces of jewellery. The main centre of attraction in Toronto in 1858 was the building of the "New University." The Trotters admired the typical Gothic style of architecture, a "medieval import from England" commented Isabella, indicating where the seat of

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648 John A. Macdonald was the Conservative leader of the colonial Parliament in 1858. He and his wife could be the M—s.
high-culture and intellect, at the heart of the colonies, would draw its inspiration from. Influenced by their Tory friends, the Trotters were convinced that the university was built on the land that had once belonged to the Church of England, "the university arises out of the misappropriation (by secularising them) of the clergy reserves." The president of the college was the brother of a famous English preacher in London and the "good library" already counted "rich works on natural history and English topography." What this indicated to Isabella Trotter's English readers was the preservation of Englishness among the elite in Canada, among the loyalist First Families. The petty bourgeoisie found among the British colonists in the backwoods or in smaller communities in the bush were not of interest to them. For the Trotters, "as Papa said…", an "English Establishment" in Toronto, though "colonial" in some manners, guaranteed the maintenance of the province within the Empire. If such a traditional English elite was ruling the colonial world in Canada, instead of some unrefined MPs, then they would be the repository of the "national character" that the Tories cherished. Although the impression conveyed by Mrs Moodie about Canada was that of a mobile colonial society, Isabella Trotter sent praise to those who represented immobility, tradition and the past.

In Toronto, the Trotters met the local "colonial elite" such as the Mayor, the president of the University and Sir Allan McNab at a dinner party, which "in all respects was as well appointed as if it had taken place in London." (65) In the evening the party gathered around the piano and English songs were sung such as "Where the bee sucks" sung by Mrs W. "Papa encored it", Mrs Trotter told her children, "and he was quite delighted at hearing so favourite a song so well sung." Thus English folklore was well maintained too in the colonies, at least among the highest circles.

As for others living in Canada, Canadians or Americans, since Mrs Trotter sometimes confused one group for another, they were "amusing" and "entertaining". On the boat to Montreal, she encountered an American couple, in fact they were Canadians but their vernacular (as a few of their expressions were "borrowed from the American language") misled the Trotters into mixing up their
national identity. Since the scenery was rather "uninteresting" according to the British visitor, with the exception of a few "pretty villages" in the distance, Mrs Trotter much preferred listening to the “mindless babble” of the ladies on board. She used the word "ladies" but immediately certified that they only belonged to the middle classes, but to the North American category of middle classes, which meant for Mrs Trotter that they were mere storekeepers. Consequently middle-class ladies in North America, she concluded, had no intelligent conversation. They were mere "specimens of Yankee vulgarity."

Trotter established a sort of guidebook of places that had to be seen and visited by future English female visitors as if she were blazing some domestic trails for them. Her observations on the progress of the country did not occupy her mind, with the exception of a few remarks expressed by her husband. Instead, she devoted time to the description of quaint places. The new itinerary to "see or do Canada in a few days" led the visitors from the Niagara Falls to Toronto, then Kingston and the Thousand Islands. In Kingston, they stopped at the penitentiary. They then travelled to Montreal where they took an open carriage tour around Mont Royal, visited the construction site of the Victoria Bridge, observed the life of nuns and went to a Catholic mass, to get the feeling of travelling "in a foreign country." Then along the St Lawrence to Quebec, female visitors could admire the quaint houses all lined up as "in a street." At Quebec City, the citadel, the statue of General Wolfe upon the plains of Abraham and the Montmorenci Falls formed the core of the visit. The visit to Quebec gave the British visitors a taste of the exotic as they could observe "specimens" of French Canadians whom they would rarely patronize, as the English visitors would necessarily stay with the prominent English families of the city. On the road to Montmorenci, British visitors would traditionally stop at one of the log huts on the road to observe the harmless French peasants who, for the most part would just mumble a few words to the visitor. Such should now be the route and the routine of the British tourist when undertaking an imperial visit to the Canadian margins of the Empire, satisfied to
find that Canada had retained its British features, contrary to what Mrs Moodie’s anti-English comments had pronosticated.

*In Roughing it in the Bush*, Susanna Moodie had deliberately conflated her personal narrative into an enlarged narrative, that of the new community in which she lived. One of her intentions had been to publicize her "colonial" participation in Empire building. To lend emphasis to her own sacrifice, she compared it to that of a large group of devoted men and women who had left the comfort of their childhood land to establish colonial communities in the woods. So as to convey this narrative of imperial duty to the imperial centre, she appointed herself spokesperson of the Canadian communities. In her conclusions, she suggested that these communities were now autonomous enough to be able to select their own members, instead of accepting the unwanted populations sent by the mother country. In fact, she peremptorily declared that upper-middle-class English families were un-"desirable" settlers. The future of Canada belonged to non-Anglican, liberal bourgeois citizens, capable of running the new nation without the supervision of the mother country.

Communal action had become a feature of her personal narrative. She relates a tale of this diaspora and the manner in which the communities were organized around new social principles. Clearly, Moodie implied that her text was an instance of a collective movement, "writing back" to the centre of the Empire. She suggested that her opinion was supported by many members of the community around her. The use of the collective "we", which in her narrative referred to her own family or to other families like hers, led the readers at times to confuse the author's personal comments with those of the Canadian community at large. As David Carr notes about such collective narratives, "the formulation and reformulation" of the author might tend to "be constitutive of the group and its
common undertakings." Such a story can be told by an individual "on behalf of the we, using the ‘we’ as the subject not only of action and experience but of narration itself. But such a story "must be shared", and must be believed and accepted by the participants themselves says David Carr, if not the "myth of origin or foundation", here the sacrifice of deserving elect bourgeois families to build Canada, can be contested and decried.

The Moodies had offered in Roughing It in the Bush and in Life in the Clearings their personal "bourgeois" version of the Canadian community and subjectively represented its culture and society as homogenous. But in Canada, in the margins, where the text should have been praised by the majority of the educated readers who in 1852 shared Moodie's Liberal views, was not well received. We know that the uncopyrighted version of the book which circulated in the margins, also changed the initial message of Mrs Moodie. Her nationalist or patriotic poems had been edited out, along with Mr Moodie's final positive assessment on the future of Canada within the Empire. Such had been the fate of the second important colonial book published by a woman in the metropolis.

Moodie's representation of Canada was contested by middle-class Canadians themselves. Their main reproach addressed to the female author concerned her final depiction of Canada, the "prison in the woods", and the manner in which she peremptorily addressed future emigrants, warning them against leaving England. Reviewers challenged Mrs Moodie's self-appointed authority as the "bard" of the Canadian settlers. Other authors like the female writer of Canada, Why We Like It, Why We Live In It challenged Mrs Moodie's narrative. The tension and the bitterness of the Canadian reviews of Roughing It, as well as the mocking tone used by the pamphlet-like narrative, Canada Why We Like It, revealed clashes between the different "story lines" produced by the margins, depicting the involvement of the community in soul searching, as well as

649 David Carr, Time, Narrative and History, op.cit. , p. 156.
national identity searching. These were "rival accounts" which David Carr describes as pertaining to the building of modern nation-states.650

In 1861, Mrs Coppleston, the Anglo-Irish (Canadian) author of Canada Why We Like It published a short response to Susanna Moodie which she published in Britain, at the heart of the metropolis, to counterbalance the effects of Roughing It. Mrs Coppleston was the archetype of the Anglican, Tory, Unionist, Anglo-Irish settler. Her narrative began as a personal response to Susanna Moodie, but the collective "we" to which she resorted in the title and in the first pages enlarged the author's remarks into a larger story-line, a more Conservative imperialist one, written in the margins. She mocked Moodie's self-appointed role as a spokesperson for the Canadian colonists, denounced her anti-Englishness and reestablished the strong imperial connection that she said existed between Canada and the mother country. Susanna Moodie's name is not directly mentioned by Mrs Coppleston but humorous cross-references to Moodie's dogmatic representation of Canada, in Roughing It or Life in the Clearings, are easily discernible.

The aim of the authoress of these pages is not to describe her adopted country's magnificent scenery, to enlarge upon its glorious prospects, or to hold Canada up to view as an El Dorado; nor on the other hand to picture the hardships of the pioneer in her backwoods, or the gaiety and freedom of life in her thickly-settled frontier...651.

Instead Mrs Coppleston offered to the British readers a Canadian narrative of strong attachment to the mother country and to its political, social and economic values, as well as a show of Canadian love for Englishness. Her purpose was to deny Moodie's affirmations, according to which Canada was on the road to cultural and moral emancipation. She also wished to deter English readers from believing that Canadians bore grudges against the mother country. Quite the contrary she stated that the Canadian colonies could not survive without looking up to the high culture and refinement of the metropolis. She evoked the

651 Mrs Coppleston, Canada Why We Like It, Why We Live in It, London, Parker, Son and Bourn, 1861, p.1.
way Canadians cherished the imperial connection: "Canada has many redeeming features. Her British Constitution ensures perfect security to life and property… Her weekly English mail, and eleven day's voyage, the minimum perhaps of a voyage to any other colony…" Mrs Coppleston's book was published by an obscure publishing house in London, affiliated to an Anglican press specialised in religious texts. In the conclusion of this short brochure-like text, which served to attract emigrants, Mrs Coppleston specifically criticized Susanna Moodie's depiction of Canada under sombre hues. Moodie had tried to deter middle-class emigrants from going to Canada, suggesting that these restrictions had emanated from the settlers themselves. Mrs Coppleston certified to English readers and to future emigrants, that there was no need to be "worthy" or "deserving" to settle in Canada where every one was welcome to share English morals and manners.

We feel week after week, as each successive mail brings us tidings from home bearing the dates, as it were but of yesterday, how much nearer she is to England, than any other colony; and we believe that, with all her faults and failings, the British emigrant may "go farther" and "fare worse".

Mrs Coppleston's imperial narrative, though produced in the margins, also reflected the Conservative opinions of the self-appointed urban elite. Her purpose was to attract settlers to Canada, to develop the colonies economically and thus serve the interests of the English elite and that of the mother country. I believe that her pamphlet-narrative was also circulated in Ireland where her husband's uncle was the Archbishop of Dublin. Anglo-Irish landlords had to be convinced that more emigrants could be sent to Canada where they would serve the new imperial project at the same time as they freed Ireland from rampant pauperism. In Ontario, Irish emigrants would quickly be anglicised.

For the first time, the margins were contesting narratives produced in the margins, and this debate was held at the very heart of the Empire. It was perceived as a further show feeding the spectacle of Empire. It reflected dissensions within the colonial communities and enabled imperialists to reconsider their imperial
policies, particularly the cultural connection between the white margins and the centre. Tory imperialist views had been challenged by Durham and Wakefield, as well as by women's personal narratives. They had placed the "human factor" at the heart of the imperial project. But the metropolitans could now see the results of such a policy. The settlers had managed to challenge the imperial project and could easily boast of a growing patriotism in the margins. Tighter control over the "human factor" had to be developed in order to keep the settlers faithful and loyal to Englishness and to England. It is my belief that the shift in imperial policies towards Canada, developed around 1867, was triggered off by reactions against personal narratives like Susanna Moodie's and Catharine Parr Traill's. This shift towards stronger imperial Tory policies among the middle-class public when it came to Empire building, was also echoed by upper-middle-class visitors in their imperialist stand against Canada, published by Tory publishing houses. New imperial views were at stake after 1867 during Disraeli's ministry. These views shaped the "new" British "imperial project", that of the late-Victorian era. Isabella Bird, Mrs Trotter and Mrs Coppleston had already heralded the need for high imperialism, out of maternal or feminine concern for England’s welfare and that of its colonies.

Around the time of the voting of the British North America Act, which created the Dominion of Canada in 1867 out of five colonies, Tory visitors seemed to have provided enough confident narratives about Loyal Canada for the British Tories to hardly debate the vote of the Act as long as military protection was preserved in the Dominion. Besides, in 1867, the public was mostly concerned with the passing of the second Reform Bill at home. Canada and the union of its provinces was not of much interest, as threats of secession and American annexation were not evoked anymore. Ms Bird and Mrs Trotter, with the complicity of their publishers, had brought "high imperialism" to the knowledge of the educated public with their entertaining accounts of Canada. Using travel narratives as political platforms for the Tory views enabled publishers like Murray to campaign in order to change the public’s perspective on
the Liberal government’s colonial policies and to win it over to more Conservative views.

Reluctant Tories had also been won over by the fact that the US would find a British competitor on North American ground. They all seemed to conclude that however politically autonomous they were, domestically, the elite would still turn to England as a source of refinement and morals. The local government, particularly in Upper Canada, was in the hands of Conservative ministers who would uphold British identity and imperial links. The British North America Act was then voted on July 1, 1867. It created self-governing colonies working within a confederation ruled by a government based in Ottawa. The five Canadian colonies remained within the Empire, and as such they accepted British control over their relations with foreign countries.

In 1867, after having taken pride of place for at least three decades in the public and private spheres of the metropolis, Canada did not seem to appeal to the general public any more. Canada once again seemed to disappear in the shadow of the United States where the slow reconstruction of the post-bellum patrician South made the news in Britain. This becomes clear when reading Dilke’s well-praised narrative of his tour of the Empire, published in 1868 after two years spent travelling in the white colonies and in America. Charles Wentworth Dilke in Greater Britain, a Record of Travel in English-Speaking Countries, first aimed at reassuring the reading public, now won over to patriotic pride for their Empire. From his tour of the Empire, where Tory Dilke “followed England round the world”, he discovered that “everywhere, he [I] was in English-speaking and in English-governed lands.” Nonetheless, Canada, which Dilke visited in 1867, appears to be somehow undermined or neglected by the imperialist pundit. If Dilke came home satisfied with what he had seen in the white colonies,

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653 Frances Elizabeth Owen Monck, My Canadian Leaves, an account of a visit to Canada in 1864-65, London, Richard Bentley, 1891. (The book was composed thirty years after the visit and the moral distance now established between colonials and metropolitans at the end of the century, when Britain was at the height of its imperial age, is reflected here.)
654 Dilke, Greater Britain, op.cit., preface.
particularly Australia, where the English race was well established and thriving, further "destined to overspread", in North America Dilke mostly focused on the Americans rather than on the Canadians to praise the "grandeur of our race." Resurrecting the Anglo-Saxon myth, Dilke affirms that "through America, England is speaking to the world", resorting to the concept of "Greater Britain" to include Britain’s lost colonies in the imperial realm. On the other hand, Dilke was greatly disappointed in the economic progress of the Dominion of Canada which, he feels, was deliberately using the mother country to draw benefits and financial support in trade and military protection, without providing anything in return. This report even leads Dilke to consider abandoning Canada:

In all history there is nothing stranger than the narrowness of mind that has led us to see in Canada a piece of England, and in America a hostile country. There are more sons of British subjects in America than in Canada, by far and the American looks upon the old country with a pride that cannot be shared by a man who looks to her to pay his soldiers! The independence of Canada would put an immediate end to much of the American jealousy of Great Britain – a consideration which in itself should outweigh any claim to protection which the Canadians can have.655

While in America, Dilke found the English element at work in the institutions and in literature, whereas in Canada, the so-called loyalty of the Canadians only hid dishonesty and vested interest. Canada was falling out of grace with the British gods. Englishness had not survived in this "dreary and cold land", where Dilke surprisingly declared: "we are no more fellow countrymen of the Canadians than of the Americans of the North or West.656 " Seen from the metropolis and its influent circles, the former "jewel" of Queen Victoria’s Empire had now clearly receded into the margins of the British Empire where it would remain until the First World War.

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655 Dilke, Greater Britain, op.cit., p. 55.
656 Ibid, p.55.
CONCLUSION

In 1862 and 1863, two boats, the Tynemouth and the Robert Lowe left the shores of England for British Columbia, Canada. On board the ships were eighty white English women whose emigration had been assisted by the combined activity of English feminists, missionary agencies, as well as British Columbia's upper-middle-class pioneer elite. The preparations for the emigration scheme had been publicized through debates and articles published in the London Times and the English Woman's Journal. This scheme serves as a perfect conclusion to what this book has tried to illustrate.

This book has investigated the representations of Canada produced by middle-class women at home and in the margins. The circulation of these women's texts at the heart of the British Empire, in the metropolis, in the "bourgeois" public sphere, during the first three decades of Victoria's reign, promoted Canada to the forefront of imperial discourses and the English imperial project. The analysis of several non-fictional texts on Canada, written by women and published during that time period, shows that there was clearly a female way of representing the white Empire. Their views often clashed depending on where the texts were produced, either in the margins or in the metropolis, thus showing that middle-class women conceived "their" Empire in different ways, but at least they expressed a clear opinion on what it should be like. Reading about Canada quickly led the metropolitan public to perceive the colonial space as both familiar and intimate. Representing Canada had also enabled female authors to irrupt into the public sphere where colonial policies were debated. Writing about Canada had also entitled female authors to publish autobiographical texts, to elaborate political comments and to imagine national or imperial projects. Thus, on the one hand, gentlewomen travellers were opening the way for a future involvement of

metropolitan middle-class female readers in the conception and building of their Empire. On the other hand, the reading public became acquainted with the colonial world and the colonial experiment thanks to the personal narratives of women pioneers. Through women's writing, Canada became a "domestic" concern for metropolitan readers. Canada's problems were the Empire's problems between 1821 and 1867. From the 1830s onwards, at home, men, imperial pundits, colonial theorists and travellers, had written at length about the imperial project, choosing Canada as a ground for experiment. In personal narratives and travel texts written by women, readers discovered the "human factor" in the experiment, to quote Herman Merivale, particularly the involvement of middle-class British women in the building of Canadian communities abroad. There, women were shining in the bush, while at home they were more and more confined to their fireside. Canada seemed to open new perspectives for educated women. In 1862, a group of feminists, inspired by the reading of many of the women's texts studied here, formed an imperial project of their own and promoted the emigration of middle-class, educated women to Canada.

White middle-class educated women for the Empire in Canada

In London, a small group of upper-middle-class women had come together in 1857, in order to forge their own pressure group and to create a woman's periodical in which the feminist argument would be heard. The initiative had come from two Unitarian women, Barbara Bodichon, whose family was closely acquainted with Anna Jameson and Harriet Martineau and Bessie Rayner Parks, whose cousin, Mary Moody, emigrated to British Columbia, Canada in 1858. The two young women's first step had been the writing of a petition to reform the legal position of married women. Among the prominent women who signed it were Anna Jameson, Harriet Martineau and Elizabeth Gaskell. The petition was presented to Parliament on March 14, 1856. Then the following year the young women founded the English Woman's Journal and established its headquarters in
Langham Place. The place and its activists rapidly acquired the nickname of "the ladies of Langham Place". Langham Place became the forefront of attempts to secure a better standard of education for middle-class girls under the leadership of Emily Davies and Frances Power Cobbe, who went on to establish Girton college in December 1858. Another group of women campaigned, with the Society for the Promotion of Employment for Women, for the opening of a wide variety of occupations for women: from governesses to law copyists or typists, thus offering training to young women in the printing of the journal.

It was this desire to expand middle-class women's possibilities that led these feminists to reflect on the possibility of emigration to Canada. Throughout 1858 and 1859, their mouthpiece, The English Woman's Journal, carried a series of stories promoting emigration to British settler colonies as a useful option for both individual women and for the promotion of the woman question. However, a few governesses returning from Australia had written to the Journal and to The Times to complain about the manners in which the colonial society in Australia, mostly formed of convicts and ruffians they said, had roughly welcomed the arrival of a handful of educated genteel women, contrary to what the editors of the Journal had said. In January 1859, in The Times, following the publication of two letters signed "a disappointed governess", James Garrett, an English rector whose brother was living in Victoria, British Columbia, wrote back to the governesses and suggested they should emigrate to Canada. There was no need to search the globe for colonial realms for women much longer.

Canada became the obvious choice for everyone, particularly for Barbara Bodichon, Emily Davis and Maria Rye. Each of them immediately echoed the English rector's letter in The Times columns and in the Journal, providing information about emigration to Canada. Their articles teemed with representations of the colonies that had been circulated in the pages of Catharine

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Parr Traill's *The Canadian Settler's Guide* released in 1854, in Susanna Moodie's *Roughing it in the Bush* and *Life in the Clearings*, also published in 1852-53, as well as in their mentor's personal narrative about Canada, Anna Jameson's *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*. Jameson often patronized the Langham Place headquarters and she received the young activists at her home.

In articles published in 1859 and 1860, Maria Rye argued to *The Times'* readers that assisting educated middle-class women's emigration to Canada would be a means of solving the problem of unemployment for women of that status and quality in England. By this she meant that opposition to educated women's work, which existed in England, would be removed in Canada where their talent would be needed and where they would be useful to growing communities. Besides, work would procure them more personal freedom in the form of an income, as educated women working for a living was the norm in colonial communities which were less prejudiced about it than English people. She exploited colonial sentiments and utilized the prevailing politics of imperialism, the Wakefield system, to argue for the expansion of white women's roles and possibilities in emigration. It seems that instead of challenging the gendered rhetoric of work and conventions in England, Maria Rye advocated emigration to Canada. There, women's education and their genteel moral values, as well as their great contribution to colony building, would be recognized and praised.

Bessie Parks' cousin, Mary Moody, the wife of the man commanding the Royal Engineers in British Columbia, provided the "ladies of Langham place" with information on the state of the colony. The setting up of the last "Crown colony" of the Empire had been much debated in the general press, and particularly in *The Times* in 1848-49, in a first and rare show of popular involvement in the building of a colonial enterprise. The Wakefield system had been chosen over other plans. The Hudson's Bay Company, a private company,

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had been entrusted with the recruitment of settlers from the "best classes" and with land sales at a "reasonable price." The description of the Pacific North-West settlements had given rise to much interesting debate among the general public whose interest had been kept quite high by numerous entertaining exotic reports on the state of the colony published in England in the 1850s. In 1858, British Columbia was officially created. That same year, the two Canadian colonies of the Pacific North West (Vancouver Island and British Columbia) were the site of a gold rush that placed them in the eye of the public interest at home once again.

Besides, contrary to the other colonies possessed by Britain on the North American continent, Vancouver Island and its mainland British Columbia had a large population of natives who had not been removed to reservations. On the West coast, white women's missions in Empire building were extending beyond the tasks assigned to them by Wakefield in _terra nullius_ territories. Among the authors of the numerous pamphlets and personal narratives about British Columbia, all written by men, some Anglican ministers pursued their missionary activities once at home by promoting the emigration of white settlers to British Columbia in _The Times_. Coincidentally, two series of letters were published in the newspaper at the same time. The first series advocated the emigration of educated white women to Canada. The second series alerted readers to the need for white English women in British Columbia.

The two groups of interest came together through Bessie Parks' acquaintances in Victoria and New Westminster (BC). In 1862, the ladies of Langham Place joined the advocates of the Anglican Columbia Mission. The Columbia Emigration Society was founded under the supervision of the Lord Mayor of London, and with the financial support of Lady Burdett-Coutts with moral support coming from her close friend, Charles Dickens. These upper-middle-class, evangelical Anglicans, and the Langham feminists, most of them Unitarians, all shared the same viewpoints and the same "imperial knowledge" about Canada acquired by the same means: the reading of periodicals, narratives and travel books. Each group expressed its ideas about the Empire and women's
roles in it. It was a fine example of what Antoinette Burton dubs the "imperial public sphere":

That imagined and contested space where unseen communities were drawn together through a shared public spectacle that transcended boundaries of Home and Away precisely because it brought colonial "domestic" matters directly to the sightline of metropolitan readers.660

It is precisely in such public debates attended by "at least 200 people of both sexes", subsequently related in the London press and in two colonial newspapers in British Columbia661, that Canada loomed large in the metropolis.

Canada at the centre of the imperial public sphere

As this book has argued, knowledge of the white Empire, here Canada, that was a part of "the imperial public sphere" – illustrated by the case of the Columbia Emigration Society - had been fashioned by women's personal narratives or travel books, as well as by the promotion made around the Wakefield system in the press. In the 1850s and 1860s, Canada had become a real "domestic" subject, a common topic of conversation, a familiar imperial project about which everyone had something to say.

In the 1820s, there had been no imperial project for the so-called British Empire. This had been particularly obvious in North America. In England, public debates over the lack of concern of the successive Tory governments for the preservation of the white Empire had been rekindled by travellers' appalling accounts of Canada. One of these important travel writings had been written by Frances Wright, an outspoken Scottish pre-feminist, whose representation of the Canadian colonies had shocked her readers and more particularly one colonial theorist, Edward Gibbon Wakefield. Such had been the very first contribution to the imperial debate by an upper-middle-class female in Views of Society and

Manners in America, in a Series of Letters from that Country to a friend in England during the Years 1818, 1819, 1820. From the distance of the North American margins, in America, F. Wright devoted a long chapter to "poor" Canada, which she repeatedly and bitterly compared to the prosperity of America. Using the "mirror effect", she had written a scathing report on the state of neglect in which she had found the two central Canadian colonies. She had strongly blamed English Tory governments and their imperial policies. She suggested revising the old colonial system which was still applied in Canada.

In these early decades of the 19th century, Wright's text and her conclusions had been at the source of the new, modern "imperial project" for the white colonies, which was going to shape the Empire in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Her representation of Canada had greatly influenced Edward Gibbon Wakefield who elaborated his famous "systematic colonization plan" (The Wakefield system) with Wright's remarks in mind. In several volumes, Wakefield fashioned a liberal imperial project that was aimed at the middle-class public and at bourgeois emigrants. Frances Wright's contribution to the making of the British Empire in Canada was important as she and Wakefield prompted a public debate on the question of Empire building.

Frances Wright's representation of colonial Canada had been unconventional, as the female author held anti-imperial views and prognosticated on the future of the Empire in North America. Nonetheless, this first account of Canada betrayed a freedom of tone, and a "female" approach that had hardly existed before in print. Besides, this first instance of a woman's imperial discourse in Britain combined her feminine aestheticization of Canada with her political agenda. Wright’s travel narrative differed from more mundane touristy late 18th-century narratives by women travelling along Europe’s beaten tracks. Her utilitarian agenda prompted her to suggest a series of potential reforms for colonial Canada, in order to improve its status and to remove it from the great shadow of the United States.
Less than two decades later, the British public discovered the first instance of a woman's personal narrative written in the margins of the British Empire with Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada*, published in London in 1836. The woman author held the very interesting and rare status of a gentlewoman emigrant in Canada. She had launched into a counter-narrative of male travellers' representations of British America, which she considered had been promoting false ideas and conveying erroneous views about the colonial world. She openly attacked the numerous so-called male emigrants' accounts about the New World published in London, which she believed paid lip service to the Colonial Office against the interest of the colonies. Her book was a direct challenge to British men's published misrepresentations and false conceptions about Canada. She challenged men's authorial authority, as well as their imperial authority in the production of knowledge about the margins. She stated her own colonial version was more "true" than male versions as she was writing from the margins where she had experienced the hardship of pioneer life.

With her personal narrative, which was analysed in chapter two as a colonial autobiography, Traill had crossed the boundaries of private/public confessions. Her marginal position, in Canada, enabled her to convey new intimate feelings about the colonies. She publicized the fate of British emigrants who were making a life in the Canadian margins for the progress of the Empire. She explained the essential contributions of educated middle-class women to the daily development of new communities in the backwoods. As a woman she felt empowered in Canada. Such was the gist of her colonial contribution to the debate over Empire building. Her text was also the first instance of this "in-betweeness" felt by generations of emigrants. In 1836, Traill as a mother and as a gentlewoman living in the margins, questioned her "sense of belonging" to England as she tried to represent the new affinities she felt with the New World. Her work was exceptional at the time among early Victorian non-fiction texts. For the first time, a female author shared her "domestic" intimacy with Canada with the metropolitan readers. With her "woman's pen alone" she presented new
"domesticated" and "tame" views of the colonial world, rendering it familiar to middle-class women readers at home.

Traill's first Canadian personal narrative also contributed to the public debate on Canada and to the imperial project in the British metropolis. Traill's book influenced Wakefield's systematic emigration plan, leading him to build his well-known *Art of Colonization* around the central contribution of upper-middle-class white women. Traill's text also influenced the woman's question as she forecast success for educated, intelligent middle-class women, like herself, who would easily make of Canada their own empire. She had particularly impressed Anna Jameson in 1838 on that point.

However, the "imperial public sphere" was also shaped by the publishers of these narratives. Many of them tended to format these women's texts, particularly if they had been written in the margins, to match their own imperial agenda. In December 1836, Charles Knight had selected Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada*, as part of the new Society for the Propagation of Useful Knowledge series. His liberal, not to say radical views, on Empire had been those of Lord Brougham, the Society Founder. Charles Knight had transformed the personal narrative that Traill had destined for middle-class readers, particularly of her own sex, into an emigration pamphlet for the working-class. The book and Traill's message nonetheless reached English gentlewomen who were considering Canada as a possible emigration destination. Selling Canada abroad having also become a necessity for some emigrant writers, the original manuscript was also circulated in different versions, particularly as a *Female Emigrant's Guide* published in 1854.

Publishers and reviewers partly forged the popularity of these women's representations of Canada in the metropolis. A woman of letters like Anna Jameson used her travel account about Canada, the first text entirely devoted to the colonies written by a woman, *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, to break ground for women essay writers in England. There she published in November 1838 her personal narrative of a year-long visit to Upper Canada. She
too contributed to the representation of Canada as a large domestic sphere. She clearly relished the upholding of political opinions about the colonial world and anticipated the manner in which reviewers would apprehend her opinionated contribution on the Empire. In her preface, she challenged the ethical norms of essay writing for women. She felt empowered by her knowledge about the colonies at a time when the readers at home were greatly concerned by the first colonial rebellions that were taking place in the Canadas. She used this knowledge to break ground for further female essay writers. Writing about the margins, discussing their political situation, provided her with the necessary authority to be recognized as an important travel writer in her times.

Having thus anticipated the reception of her work, and having carefully balanced her imperial discourse with a more feminine discourse, Anna Brownell Jameson was well noted by reviewers. However they did not acknowledge her contribution to the imperial debate even though her text was edited several times in the next decade. Her representations of Canada had a considerable influence both on the public and the private spheres. In the public sphere, she anticipated the results of the Durham Report, providing essential information on the Tory oligarchy that ruled over Upper Canada, as well as interesting remarks on the urgent need for a federation of colonies. As for the private sphere in England, Jameson's text was well received by the several circles of women writers and feminists she patronized. She corresponded with Elizabeth Gaskell and Harriet Martineau, who were both interested in emigration and colonization, as well as the woman question. She also actively supported the cause of women in higher education, advocated by Emily Davies and Barbara Bodichon in the 1850s, and she participated in the creation of the Langham Place feminist society, contributing pieces to the English Woman's Journal. From the observations she had made in the margins of Empire, she concluded that educated intelligent middle-class women like Catharine Parr Traill, whom she had read in 1837 would shine in Canada. Her Canadian text contributed to the debate on the woman question in Britain and on the role of women in the nation.
Her contribution to the imperial project and the imperial public sphere was thus manifold. From having lived in urban and rural colonial communities for a year, she had provided views on the "morals and manners" of the English settlers. However, in doing so, she went further than any male travellers before her who only disserted on colonial politics without taking the time to examine or share the "domestic" practices of local politics. In her travel book/essay she denounced the lack of reforms in the British colonial world and the subsequent stagnation of Canada. This formed the gist of her colonial concern, which she voiced for metropolitan readers. She advised her readers, men and women, to join the liberal campaign that was beginning to form behind the Wakefield "imperial project." Everyone ought to be concerned, she suggested, with bringing progress and liberal reforms to the New World. Besides, young intelligent women who did not see marriage as their ultimate goal in life ought to be considering Canada as a great alternative to a narrow-minded and sterile life at home. She conveyed the idea that Canada was a woman's world, designed to become a "dominion of women" associating the bush with freedom and independence for women. Her representation influenced Elizabeth Gaskell when she wrote Mary Barton. Feminist activists, particularly Barbara (Leigh) Bodichon, Emily (Rayner) Parks and Maria S. Rye imagined an emigration scheme to Canada, which they represented as a place of woman's empowerment.

Less than twenty years later, further representations of Canada as a woman's empire were circulated in the personal narrative written by Susanna Moodie. With Roughing It in the Bush and its sequel Life in the Clearings, published in 1852 and 1854 with a prominent publisher, Susanna Moodie brought new social perspectives on life for women in the margins of Empire. There resided her essential contribution to the imperial debate, as well as her contribution to the woman question, which in the metropolis, was beginning to integrate the imperial dimension. Susanna Moodie provided striking representations of Canada that long resounded in the "imperial public sphere" and
that greatly contributed to the "spectacle of Empire", to borrow from Burton’s analysis.

In the same way as she contributed to feeding the "spectacle of Empire", Susanna Moodie was also the victim of the "Canada" or "imperial" mania that saw many publishers rushing to buy and to publish indiscriminately personal narratives and emigration brochures that did not reflect the same views on the "imperial project." Susanna Moodie's original message in *Roughing It in the Bush* was greatly conditioned by this competitive publishing world and its constraints.

Moodie's personal agenda supported the cause of Canada against the "imperial project." Her purpose was to "write back home" to the metropolis from the margins where she felt her family had been outcast or discarded. For that purpose she drew radical comparisons between the decaying mother country and the growing prosperous reformed Canadas. In this famous narrative, which encompassed self-reflections on class, gender and colony building, Susanna Moodie put across to her metropolitan readers a very personal admonition addressed to the new elite, the upper middle classes. In using the example of the Canadian communities as redeemed societies, free of social prejudice, she held a mirror up to the mother country, and particularly to the many "struggling" genteel families who suffered from the criticism of the elite who were mostly Anglican, non-Evangelical, Tory families, mimicking the aristocrats. They were advised to emigrate to the new urban communities of Canada where they would uphold a new Christian Social Gospel. The liberty of tone, the self-righteousness which shocked many readers, particularly from the upper middle class, as well as the anti-imperial, even anti-English views she held, gave further food for thought to the young feminists who felt that there was no prospect left for many struggling, non-conformist, educated, jobless, middle-class women, living in genteel poverty. English society did not appear as progressive for women as Canadian communities, where they were needed and where their talents were welcome. In spite of the many criticisms and bad reviews that Moodie’s books received in the metropolis, for having depicted Canada as an attractive place for emigrants who
were unhappy at home, her message was heard and repeated. In 1878, an emigrant lady, publishing her *Letters from Muskoka* with Richard Bentley, furthered Moodie’s message to future emigrants. She deterred poor genteel families from going to the Bush, a mistake she had made, like the Moodies, while flourishing Canadian villages should bring them comfort, opportunities and happiness. She equally encouraged hard-working working-class families to come to Canada where they would find prosperity for themselves and their children away from competitive and class-ridden England.

Following a pattern set up by Catharine Parr Traill’s first “colonial autobiography”, Susanna Moodie combined the personal example of her own journey as a migrant in Canada with a larger-than-life moral and spiritual sermon based on her own painful experience as an "exile" (or cast-off emigrant) on the road to personal progress and happiness in Canada. Writing from the margins enabled her to criticize British society at home, from the distance provided by her colonial perspective. Such was the gist of her "colonial" contribution to the imperial debate: a moral lesson sent home. In comparing England to Canada, she imagined a new community and the beginning of a new identity based on early Christian principles. Susanna Moodie provided a mirror to the mother country and to its middle-class readers in which to look at its social flaws and moral evils. The representation of Canada she powerfully conveyed was that of a new haven for untravelled and decent middle-class families, a true evangelical alternative to the English social ethos.

In *Roughing it in the Bush*, Susanna Moodie clearly challenged the metropolitan productions of "imperial culture" and the centrifugal force that necessarily kept the margins gravitating around or towards the centre. Instead she offered a new narrative of community building in the colonies, which reflected a new culture of Empire, and heralded the birth of independent nations in the white Dominions.

However, the "spectacle of Empire", like the games in the Roman circus, could please or displease the imperial spectators. Readers and reviewers could be
cruel particularly when the text they disliked originated from the margins of their refined world. Moodie's text was considered by some readers as "colonial." Her idealization of Canada, a regenerated Christian England in the margins, which she reserved for Evangelical (non-Anglican, non-Conservative) middle-class emigrants, did not always fare well in Britain among the Tory imperialists whose new "imperial project" had been brewing in the shadows of Liberal governments at home. The imperial public sphere, after the publication of Moodie's controversial text, was agitated by interesting debates carried out in imperial narratives produced in the margins or in the metropolis. Representations about the poor state of progress of life and culture in the Canadian margins were exposed by women travellers from the Tory upper middle class. Their reports from Canada, published by Tory publishers like John Murray, supported the Tory political agenda of these writers.

Their observations on Canada contradicted the liberal imperial project of Wakefield and Durham. Such travel narratives as Isabella Bird's *An Englishwoman in America*, published in 1856 or *First Impressions of the New World by Two Travellers from the Old in 1858*, by Mrs Isabella Trotter, showed that the times were changing both in Canada and in England. Their representations marked a shift towards a more conservative outlook on the colonies. These women believed that a Tory elite ought to control the colonial possessions on the spot, instead of the petty *bourgeoisie* encountered in Moodie's narratives.

Similarly, these female travellers (and their publishers) suggested that Englishness in morals, manners and politics ought to be implemented and preserved by the local elite whose eyes would turn to the metropolis for financial support and cultural comfort. A counter-narrative about "true" life in the margins for British loyalist settlers also circulated in 1861, at the time of the great debate on middle-class female emigration to British Columbia. Mrs Edward Coppleston published her short pamphlet-like personal narrative *Canada, Why We Like It, Why We Live in It*, in order to ridicule Moodie's assertion that former English
settlers were quickly growing native in Canada and sharing liberal views with their North American neighbours. Mrs Coppleston was a prominent Anglo-Irish settler in Canada, affiliated to the Orange Order. In this contribution to the public debate on colonial loyalty of British settlers in Canada, thus answering Mrs Moodie, Mrs Coppleston was speaking up in the name of the majority of the people in the margins, she said. To the metropolitan readers, she confirmed the loyalty of a large number of the settlers living in Canada and defended a strong imperial connection with England. These instances of Conservative maternal imperialism formed a contribution to the public debate as they voiced the political views of the Tory party whose time in office started in 1866. Women had helped build sound colonies in Canada in the first stage of the liberal imperial project. In the second stage of Empire building in Canada, independent-minded women were giving way to female writers who tended to pay lip service to a more conservative patriarchal imperial project. The public sphere and the growth of professional colonial politics were gaining ground in "domestic" Canada. Politics, trade and commerce would take pride of place in the imperial public sphere, overshadowing the "human factor" principle that presided over Empire building in the first half of the 19th century.

**British Columbia (Canada) and the new imperial project**

The analysis of the minutes of the three yearly meetings of the Columbia Emigration Society held in London from April 1862 onwards, reveals that at that time many British men and women still shared Wakefield's ideas on the participation of white English women to Empire building. The Evangelical Anglicans and the feminists who attended the meetings believed that the women's presence in the colony would foster good manners and good moral values, encourage church-going practices and provide models of moral and decent behaviour to the native women or to the half-breed in British Columbia.

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However the two groups, the missionaries and the feminists, quickly disagreed on the class status these emigrants should hold. The missionaries believed that British Columbia had no need for educated "bourgeois" women as, an elite formed of first families, Anglican and Tory, was already established in Victoria. However, the Langham Place women were seeking decent outlets for single, educated, middle-class women while bearing in mind their feminist agenda. As Jameson had advocated in Winter Studies, hard work would be the lot of young educated women but at least they would escape the matrimony market at home. Maria Rye clearly stated that genteel women who wished to emigrate to Canada must "fully understand that they go for work for independence, not to marry and be idle". With that purpose in mind, the feminist group had created the Female Middle-Class Emigration Society in 1861. They firmly believed that many young women would happily seek new abodes in Canada.

But, the representatives of the British Columbia Anglican elite were seeking hard-working wives for their working-class settlers. Colonel Moody, Mary Moody's husband through whom Maria Rye obtained further information, answered her queries concerning the emigration of 20 educated gentlewomen on the first boat to BC: "I am sorry to say the opening for educated women here is at present very slender. Household work is what is demanded. Our wives, the ladies of the colony, from the highest to the humblest, have to labour in the kitchen, the nursery and the washhouse." Rye published this extract from Colonel Moody's letter in one of her contributions to The Times. As for the local press, upon finding out that some "bourgeois" women were about to set sail for Victoria, Amor de Cosmos, a leading local journalist, complained that the colony would accept the assisted migrants only if they were able to work like pioneer women. Susanna Moodie's image and narrative seemed to hover above the debates both in the colony and at home. One article stated that:

We never knew a man with matrimony in his eyes who expressed any affection for "bluestockings"! The women we want in this and other

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663 The Times, "Female Middle Class Emigration", 28 July 1862.
colonies are women prepared to rough it as well as ourselves, women who, while acting as domestic servants, the class we particularly lack, will possess all the fair graces of womanhood and the virtues which will make them an ornament to their sex, at once model servants as well as model wives.664

In such declarations from the margins on the category of women they wanted, the London ladies received the message that English settlers would from then on proceed to select their own emigrants, particularly their women settlers. The margins were clearly rejecting the attempts of "bourgeois" feminists at using their colony as an experiment for their own liberal, not to say radical, imperial project. They also seemed to suggest that no Mrs Moodie and her likes were considered as desirable or suitable emigrants. While Colonel Moody wrote to Maria Rye, his wife Mary Moody had kept up a close correspondence with her cousin Bessie Parkes. She shared the First Families' conservative views about Susanna Moodie's narrative.

Moodie had popularised the expression "roughing it" in her title. It was used in the quote above by the journalist as a tongue-in-cheek message to indicate to readers that they knew what "roughing it" really meant while Mrs Moodie's "bluestocking" romance of pioneer life was just a lie and a show for metropolitan readers. Mrs Moodie's book seemed to have been so widely known to British readers that letter writers could use the phrase as an innuendo or a joke in the 1850s and 1860s. In British Columbia for instance, Mary Moody, in her letters home, played with the idea that like her famous namesake she was on her way to "rough it" in Canada665. But the expression was used as a private joke between herself and her sister or her cousin as she knew her social position in British Canada as well as her financial conditions would bear no common point with the romance Susanna Moodie fashioned after her life in exile, as a social outcast of England.

664 “Hope for Educated Women!”, British Colonist, 1 July 1862 (my italics).
665 Similarly Harriet Martineau, in typical Unitarian fashion, also adopted the expression to “rough it” when she thought she was becoming to accustom to luxury in her mode of living. Harriet Martineau, Autobiography, (1877), London, Virago Press, 1983, volume 2, p. 85.
Indeed, Mrs Moody was far from sharing her famous counterpart's social fate. Contrary to Susanna Moodie, the wife of John Dunbar Moodie, one of the "scions of great families,…accustomed to command [and]…not adapted to the hard toil of the woodman's life" who "had been doubtful of supporting his family in comfort at home" and who chose emigration, Mary Moody was the wife of an officer appointed at the head of the Royal Engineers of British Columbia in 1858. The appointment was meant to be for a short period of time and the family expected to reside in the new capital city of British Columbia, on the mainland, in quite a commanding position, socially and politically. These conditions set the Moodys apart from the other middle-class families who had to emigrate to the Pacific colonies for financial reasons. On board the boat heading to Victoria, Mrs Moody had written home and described the so-called "first class" passengers who were making their first and final journey to Canada. She qualified a gentlewoman, Mrs Gosset as follows: "rather uppish, a fine lady not fitted for roughing it!", while referring to another one as "she might shine in the bush"

Both comments are very sarcastic and they reflect the representation of Canadian life that Mrs Moody gathered from Susanna Moodie's work. The colonial fate of "roughing it" seemed to be reserved only for social outcasts. Out of social superiority, Mrs Moody seems to imply that some ladies from the upper middle class should not settle in the backwoods of Canada, let alone emigrate, while other middle-class women, less refined or from an already impoverished family, were "good enough" for Canada. This sort of comment leads me to believe that Susanna Moodie's *Roughing it*, with its powerful class discourse on Canada and particularly on Canada West, greatly influenced the representations of the British public. Instead of promoting Canada West as a wonderful place for "deserving" Christian middle-class families, in the late 1850s and 1860s, prospective genteel emigrants gathered that the "old" Canadian colonies were

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666 Susanna Moodie, *Roughing It in the Bush*, op.cit. p.526
667 Mary Moody to her sister December 6, 1858, Moody Papers, Public Archives of British Columbia.
reserved for socially demised families of Britain. Moodie's narrative had reinforced the stigma attached to emigration in the minds of her educated readers at home.

Mrs Sarah Crease, later Lady Crease, a prominent, genteel pioneer who had settled in Victoria in 1851, also wanted to let the English feminists know that the first generation of upper-middle-class English gentlewomen were already in control of the colonial communities; they did not wish to see any further competition coming from the metropolis. Sarah Crease, the wife of the Attorney-General, wrote to the feminists of Langham Place, "I regret that I cannot give you any hopes of being able to benefit educated women by sending them out here."

Anna Jameson's representation of colonial Canada as the ideal place to send educated, intelligent, middle-class women, in order to achieve the "independence" that was refused them at home, was not shared by the female inhabitants of the margins. They too had accomplished the Bourgeois Dream which Susanna Moodie had promised them or almost. What these "first families" of British Columbia - thanks to colonial appointments or connections - lacked was the comfort of servants and maids. This would clearly complete the paraphernalia of the bourgeois household at home and abroad. Obtaining maids and helps would erase all the distinctions between English society in the margins and proper English society at home. The "colonial" stigmas that Susanna Moodie had brought them by fostering social prejudices among her metropolitan readers against the bourgeoisie living in the colonies would then be removed.

This conflict between the imperial project and the colonial project, as devised by women on both sides, provides an interesting example of colonial tensions between the bourgeois project of the metropolis, and that of the margins. In 1862, Maria Rye had to abandon the idea of sending her educated, metropolitan governesses to British Columbia, as the margins showed clear resistance to her "blue stocking" feminist project. Female independence in the margins, which had

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been represented by Catharine Parr Traill, Susanna Moodie or Anna Jameson, was put in check. The feminist intentions of the metropolis's imperial project was subverted by the dominant interest of the margins. The press had served as a means of exchanging the bourgeois viewpoints and positions on both sides of the world.

In the margins, settlers were now wrestling the control over the development of their own colonial communities away from the imperial centre. Susanna Moodie had already formulated that wish in 1852. In the 1860s, from Eastern and Western Canada women settlers were now acting on it. In 1866, Jane Porter a middle-class Canadian lady, a former English settler now living in Montreal, travelled through Canada East and Canada West to assess the extent of the soon-to-be national territory of Canada. In the wake of the creation of the first Dominion on July 1, 1867, and in the wake of the opening of the West (as the purchase of the North West territories from the Hudson's Bay Company was part and parcel of the new national federal project), Jane Porter published the first travel narrative written by a Canadian woman and designed for other Canadian women. *A Six Week's Tour in Western Canada* was published in Montreal and dedicated to "the ladies of Canada". Time had passed, Canadians could now be proud of their own achievement. Ms Porter praised the local effort of the settlers at every step of her journey. By offering this narrative about Canada to readers of the margins, Ms Porter began to challenge the monopoly women travellers from the metropolis had held so far over the production of imperial knowledge. She was displacing the centre of the Canadian settlers' world to the heart of the new Dominion, away from the Old World where it used to be.

This volume has also reviewed the different imaginary responses that English women developed when they experienced a prolonged exposure to the Canadian wilderness in the first half of the 19th century. Each woman's account

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Maria Rye did not abandon Canada as an emigration alternative to life in England when in the 1870s, she focused on the assisted emigration of pauper children to Ontario.
revealed the magical or secret powers that the Canadian woods or the forests exercised on their female self. The first English women settlers could not resist the transformation of their English self into a more native self. Once they had undergone the rituals of the native land, which consisted in abandoning their social prejudices and their English manners, they could then contribute to the elaboration of a cohesive society with its own native traits and identity, particularly communal Christian values of solidarity and charity whose meaning seemed to have been lost in Britain. In 1878, in *Letters from Muskoka*, an emigrant lady passed on to her British readers the hard lessons she had learnt from the Bush in Ontario, which had led to her transformation from lady emigrant to Canadian resident. She confirmed how quickly British habits of independence and haughtiness could be broken by exposure to the hardship of a day’s work in the bush as well as to the acceptance of Christian Canadian habits and values, "a willing offering from those who for their Saviour’s sake acknowledge a common brotherhood with every suffering member of the great human family.\(^670\)

At the turn of the 19th century, after the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1887, the Canadian wilderness still powerfully attracted and fascinated some transatlantic “pilgrims”: female aristocrats who dreamed of the freedom that Canada could procure, not in the tame provinces on the East coast, but in the still wild Canadian West. Women like Lady Pullen-Bury\(^671\) or the Duchess of St Maur\(^672\), published their travel and adventure narratives of wild Canada in Britain, while Mrs Humphry Ward romanticized the freedom of Canada for her aristocratic heroine in her *Canadian Born* in 1910\(^673\). These female visitors sought the Canadian wilderness's powerful rituals in order to experience a deep transformation of their constrained metropolitan self. Their wealth meant they

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\(^671\) Lady Beatrice Pullen-Bury, *From Halifax to Vancouver*, London, Mills and Boon’s publishing house, 1912.


could afford it. For a few weeks, as "women tenderfoot", i.e. "a woman passing for a cowboy" - a form of sexual "in-betweenness" - they could cross the borders of conventions and transgress gendered and sexual codes in the Canadian "last frontier", where the wilderness and rugged nature had forced them to don men's attire, to abandon riding on a side saddle and to adopt men's attitudes, being the only women in the camps. In all these cases, and across the 19th century, Canada was constructed and imagined by many English women, settlers or visitors, as a great textual site for the exploration of "otherness", which they conceived as the inverted image of their constrained, English female self.

The West that these women projected and constructed for their female readers resembled a mythical fantasy world for English women where they could experience a life of adventure in a world of male camaraderie, where they too could put their endurance and their emotions to the test. The Canadian West was seen, at least for the time that their vacation lasted, as a man's world that could be shared by fearless, independent women. These personal adventure narratives must have been read with alacrity and excitement by young, upper-class women at home, dreaming of journeys to freedom, both physically and socially. This is perceptible in later representations of Canada found in the travel book written by Lady Mary Bosanquet, *Canada Ride. Across Canada on Horseback*, for instance. In 1924, this young upper-class lady, who dreamed of leaving suffocating London for places where women could be alone with just their horse for company, published her enthusiastic woman's experience of British Columbia, in London. It became a best seller translated in five languages and published well into the 1940s. The myth of Canada and women’s empowerment forged in the first decades of the 19th century, seemed to linger in British women’s imagination in the early 20th century.

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674 I developed the erotic and fantasy charge that women found in the promiscuity of men (Red Indians and cowboy guides) in the West, in "Rites of Passage in Transatlantic Journeys", in Charlotte Sturgess ed., *The Politics and Poetics of Passage in Canadian and Australian Culture and Fiction*, Canadensis Series, Nantes, Presses du CRINI, 2007.

In *From the Margins of Empire*, I have assessed the various representations of Canada that British women offered metropolitan readers between 1821 and 1867. Each personal narrative about the white colonies included personal and political elements that led some British feminists to believe that Canada could become the Dominion of middle-class, educated women. I have drawn some conclusions on the contribution of these non-fiction narratives and their female authors to the imperial discourse and to Empire building. From the margins of Empire, the female emigrants have shown that to attend to the feminine realm in Canada was to embrace the politics of the wider community and that of nation building. They clearly elaborated on the relation between gender and identity in the colonial world, which formed the basis of a national ethos in Canada.

This study revealed a form of obsession with class, particularly in the middle classes whose homogeneity in England was quite controversial. The debate on class and social hierarchy was furthered in the margins. These written contributions from the margins, as well as the counter-narratives produced by female travellers from the metropolis, were very instructive about the manner in which people on both sides of the Atlantic conceived their Empire. Reflections on the debate of the emergence of a new Victorian culture at home as propounded by the middle-classes, as well as glimpses of the history and process of the white Dominions' social and political evolution in the margins, seen through women's eyes, hopefully form an interesting contribution to the history of the British Empire in the first part of the 19th century, probably the most neglected period in imperial historiography.
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