

WHAT CAUSED THE DEPORTATION OF THE ACADIANS?

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It seems safe to observe that all historical analyses require documentary evidence to satisfy the critical spirit of the present age. In such analyses, the imaginative faculty is not permitted to enjoy the scope which was once accorded it, and the writer who overlooks this incurs grave responsibilities. An author, however, is not to be held to too severe account for missing evidence. He may use due diligence in seeking it, and yet miss valuable matter to which access is difficult, or unknown to him; nay, it happens, that one's very familiarity with a subject sometimes renders him oblivious to an important detail close at hand; hence one should be chary in ascribing lapses of this sort to wilful oversight.

Again, it seems safe to observe, that in estimating the moral contents of an act of the past, we should take into account the difference between the standards then and now employed, as well as the social conditions and political exigencies of the time.

These reflections have been prompted by a late severe arraignment of certain historical workers, one of whom is no less than the late Francis Parkman of happy memory, who in treating of the Acadians, is accused not only of wilfully misrepresenting and distorting facts, but of maliciously suppressing evidence in their favor, in order to strengthen the case of his English forebears.¹ Little did the author of "Evangeline" realize, when he penned that

¹ *Vide Acadia, New York, Home Book Company; Montreal, John Lovell & Son.*

admirable poem, that he was creating history ; and yet very many persons, probably a majority of our people, take their history of the Acadians from that poetic fiction, just as a considerable number of people take their theology from the "Paradise Lost." Such persons will be likely to listen approvingly to a writer who is in accord with them, and disapprovingly to one who presents the other side of the case ; and yet, there is another side.

To approximate a reasonable understanding of all that was involved in the deportation of the Acadians, we should go back to the year 1713, that memorable year in which, by the Treaty of Utrecht, Acadia was ceded to Great Britain. The cession of Acadia was but an incident in the great struggle between principles which had been in conflict for centuries, and which had drenched battle-fields with blood. The spirit of universal dominion has always been the inspiration of the Roman Church. When the Roman Empire changed her name to the Holy Roman Empire she did not change her spirit, but as ever demanded unquestioning obedience to her power. She it was who dominated the French court, directed statesmanship and shaped diplomacy ; and she it was who kept alive the fires of war in Europe and on this continent, that she might finally bring the nations to her foot-stool. Sometimes she won, sometimes she lost, but she never dreamed of giving up the contest. Rome was eternal ; monarchs, nations even, temporary. She had lost now, but the animosities, racial, religious, and irreconcilable, survived, smouldering but ready to break forth whenever conditions should become favorable. The vanquished government sullenly withdrew to Isle Royale, and there set up its imperium, while the victor took possession of its prize, which it was not long permitted to enjoy in peace.

England had succeeded in removing to a distance the governmental machinery by which France had exercised control of the ceded territory, but not of the instrumen-

talities through which Rome exercised power therein; and she, allied to France by a common interest,—the desire for dominion;—furnished an ever ready means to her ally to recoup herself as far as possible for her losses: There was peace between the two crowns, so far as ink and wax went, but no farther, for French emissaries at once began to foment trouble by inciting the savages to make war upon their English neighbors. These emissaries were Romish priests, whose pernicious efforts not only caused great suffering and loss of life to the pioneer settlers, English and French, but the final deportation of the Acadians, an act which has been held up to the world as one of unwarrantable and inexcusable cruelty. The criticism which this act has received, admitting it to have been cruel, is a distinct compliment to the English. "Those who enjoy a reputation for righteousness are alone criticised for failing to conform strictly to righteous standards. France has almost escaped censure for acts far exceeding in cruelty the deportation of the Acadians, although she did not have the warrant of necessity to offer in defence of her action, which England did.

In 1689 the French monarch gave his sanction to a plot, which, had it not been defeated by English brawn, would have shocked the world for all time. This plot, carefully formulated at Versailles, was to make an initial attack upon Albany, and having captured that place, to proceed down the Hudson with two war ships to attack New York and force its surrender. Once in possession of New York, the rooting out of the heretic English colonists would be feasible. Their homes were to be broken up, and they scattered abroad. Those who possessed wealth were to be imprisoned until they were willing to exchange it for liberty. Artisans were to be held as captives and forced to labor for their French masters. Subjects of Rome, of course, if any were found among the heretical colonists, were to be exempt from these hard conditions, and were to

be protected and fostered. This diabolical scheme, involving the destruction of an entire people, numbering according to statistics over seventeen thousand souls, was intrusted to Frontenac for execution, and we know how ardently he entered upon his task, and how signally he failed in its accomplishment, though he inflicted suffering and death upon many English colonists. The same pitiless spirit was exhibited in the laws against those who failed to bow in unquestioning obedience to Rome, which disrupted families, and sent men and women, "without form or figure of trial," to the galleys or prisons, where they quickly succumbed to the hardships to which they were subjected.

It was for the release by the French king of one hundred and thirty-nine galley-slaves, whose only offence was that their Christianity was not Roman, that Queen Anne, shortly after the signing the Treaty of Utrecht, in return for the favor which she had solicited, granted certain privileges to the Acadians within the territory which she had acquired. The indefensible attitude of the French toward Protestants must be fully recognized in order to interpret correctly the acts of the English in their dealings with the problems which they encountered after assuming rule in Acadia.

Nicholson, the English governor, had hardly settled his military family in the new territory, when Vaudreuil, the governor of New France, wrote to the French minister at Versailles, quoting from Father de la Chasse, a Romish missionary, that "temporal interest serves as a vehicle of faith" with the savages, and that a war between them and the English "is more favorable to us than peace"; hence "temporal interest" was to be directed to this end. This was the key-note to French policy, and from that moment, as well in peace as in war, no effort was spared to render the tenure of the English precarious; not only in Acadia, but elsewhere in America, by fomenting trouble between them and the savages, and by preventing the people in the ceded territory from rendering allegiance to the English crown.

When we consider the state of feeling which existed in France toward Protestants, who were regarded as beyond the pale of mercy, and with whom it was not deemed necessary to keep faith, we cease to wonder at the methods employed by French missionaries, reared in a school of intolerance, the intensity of which we can in this age hardly realize. By a law enacted in the reign of Louis XIV., two years after the date of the Treaty of Utrecht, a person not accepting in his last illness the Roman sacrament, was regarded as a relapsed person, whose body might be dragged through the streets on a hurdle and "consigned as the refuse of the earth to the filth of the common sewer," while his property was subject to confiscation by the State. The penalty for preaching Christianity unsanctioned by Rome was death, and the children of Protestant marriages were declared illegitimate. The men who were educated under such laws, and who believed them to be divinely sanctioned, could not be expected to hesitate in the performance of any act calculated to rid the land of heretics, and they did not do so. Their correspondence, in connection with that of the French government, fully reveals the part they played during the period of forty-two years, which constitutes the history of Acadia from the date of its cession to the English in April, 1713, to the beginning of the deportation of its inhabitants in August, 1755.

To understand the subject clearly, we should first take note of the fact, that by the terms of the Treaty the Acadians were to "have liberty to remove themselves within one year to any other place, as they shall think fit, with all their movable effects"; but that those who remained and became British subjects, were "to enjoy the free exercise of their religion according to the usage of the Church of Rome," but subject to British law. If they did not depart within the specified time, that is, before the close of August, 1714, they forfeited their right under the Treaty to depart. Were they prevented during this period

from departing? It would appear that they took steps immediately to ascertain what aid they would receive from the French government if they removed to Isle Royale, and that they were not satisfied with the terms offered; that the nature of the soil was such as to disincline them to leave their old homes. This caused delay. Finally, however, land was offered them on Prince Edward Island, which was more acceptable, and they applied for leave to remove there, to Lieutenant-Governor Vetch, who was in command at Port Royal during the absence of Nicholson, who was soon expected to return, and Vetch referred the matter to his superior's decision. Nicholson returned some weeks before the expiration of the year, and was met by agents of the French Government, who asked, as it was then too late in the season for the Acadians to establish themselves in the new territory, to extend the time of their removal a year longer, and to permit them to construct vessels for the transportation of their effects, and to receive the outfit they would require from France. Nicholson properly referred this proposal, as it involved a question of commercial privilege, to the queen, who died before receiving it, and the matter failed to be acted upon. It would appear that Nicholson, who was governor for four years, as well as his subordinates, viewed with alarm the entire abandonment of the country by the inhabitants, and that they were not disposed to aid them at all in the project; nay, that they were inclined to throw obstacles in the way of its accomplishment, as it would leave the country bare of producers, and render still more insecure their position in the country, unsatisfactory enough at the best.

That they did not exhibit a more self-sacrificing spirit, and without regard to their own welfare did not aid the emissaries of France in their efforts to get their credulous dependents out of the country, so that no suspicion of non-compliance with the exact spirit of the treaty on the part of any British officer could possibly be entertained by a

modern critic, is doubtless to be regretted; yet, when we consider the wily, treacherous and pitiless foes against whom the English were struggling, as well as the moral code existing at the time, we may well hesitate to judge them by the more finely adjusted standards of today.

The question of the removal of the Acadians by the terms of the treaty to French territory being practically settled, although some of them departed from time to time and joined their fellow-countrymen at Isle Royale and elsewhere, the question of their status under the English government is to be considered. To all intents and purposes, by not removing from the country within the period specified in the treaty for removal, no matter what influences prevailed to prevent them from so doing, they became the subjects of Great Britain and amenable to her laws; indeed, everything shows that they so regarded themselves, though they refused to take the regular oath of allegiance, except with the reservation that they should not be called upon to bear arms. We may regard them, therefore, as British subjects, in the sense that they were subject to her laws and entitled to her protection, and were bound in good faith not to aid or abet her enemies.

It would seem from the testimony which we possess, that they were a peaceable people, densely ignorant and superstitious, as the *habitans* of Canada are today, though we may properly infer much more so, as the latter have for a long time been more or less in contact with educational influences. They were precisely the kind of people to make the best Roman subjects, and were so regarded by their old rulers, who were bound to use them to the extent of their power against those under whose sway they had come. Their misfortune was in listening to the emissaries sent among them by their former masters, and refusing to win the confidence of the government under which they were living, by frankly taking the oath of allegiance to it.

As before said, although France and England were at peace, efforts to render the position of the English insecure were begun very soon after the cession of Acadia to them. On July 10th, 1715, the King wrote to Ramesay and Begon, that he heard with satisfaction of the work of the missionaries among the savages, and that "as it is important to preserve them in the interests of the King, his Majesty desires that the Sieurs de Ramesay and Begon should incite these missionaries to redouble their efforts to that end, and to enquire if it may not be proper to attract them by new benefits and destroy in the English all hope of drawing them to their interests."

On December 24, 1715, the French minister wrote to Beauharnois from Versailles, "Since I have learned, Sir, of the loss that you have made of Acadia, I think continually of the means whereby this important post may be recovered before the English are firmly established there." The intrigues of the missionaries resulted in inflaming the savages with hate of the heretic English, and on September 6th following, Vaudreuil had the satisfaction of writing to the French minister, that "the Abnakis, the past year, 1715, have taken from the English more than twenty fishing vessels," and that he had promised to build them a church. He also said that one of his principal efforts had been "to maintain peace with the savages and to hinder them as much as possible from going to the English to traffic." This could only be done by making them presents every year, and he hoped "that his majesty will be willing to send this year to Canada thirty thousand livres of presents for the savages, and to continue to send every year those that it is customary to give them." He suggested that "thirty thousand weight of powder, sixty thousand of lead and six hundred hunting guns" be sent. "The latter are known to the savages who want no others but those of Tulle." They use "from twenty to twenty-five thousand weight of powder annually." In his report

to the government the 14th of the following month he remarked that "the Abnakis, Micmacs and Malecites, and others in the missions of the Jesuit fathers, Ralé and Loyard, remain on the sea coast, but they declare that upon the slightest rupture, they will be on the side of the French." The correspondence of the period reveals unceasing efforts on the part of the French to influence the savages against the English.

On October 29th, 1720, Father Charlevoix sent a memoir to the Duke of Orleans explaining the situation of affairs which had been brought about between the savages and the English. Several savage chiefs appeared before Vaudreuil and enquired if he would openly help them against the English. "I will engage," said the wily Frenchman, "the other savage nations to assist you." At these words they replied, with a mocking laugh, "Know that we and all the nations of this great continent whenever we wish will unite to drive out all strangers, whoever they may be." Vaudreuil, surprised, and realizing that they must be appeased, exclaimed dramatically, "that rather than abandon them to the mercy of the English he would march himself to their relief." Continuing, Charlevoix complacently says, "Monsieur Vaudreuil affirms that he has a trusted man among the savages of Norridgewock, who is wholly devoted to him, and by whose means, he will make the others do all that he may wish. Those who know the savages better are convinced that he should not trust to this. Monsieur Begon, on the other hand, is of the opinion that it is necessary that some rattle brain of a savage should strike the English a blow that leads to war."

The efforts of the French to arouse the enmity of the savages against them soon became known to the English. Not only was the garrison which held Port Royal, the gateway of Acadia, constantly menaced by the savages, but the settlements in New England were scourged by them. The French supplied them with guns and ammuni-

tion, and instructed them that the land was theirs, and that they should drive out the English intruders. French officers disguised as savages led them in their reprisals upon the settlers. While Vaudeuil and his associates were writing polite letters to the English authorities, they were urging their emissaries to inflame the savages against them. On March 13, 1721, letters from Vaudreuil and Begon, addressed to Ralé, the French governor's "trusted man" at Norridgewock, having been captured by the English, Governor Shute addressed the Lords of Trade as follows:

"My Lords :

"In my Letter of the 13th December last to the Rt Honble Board, I tooke the liberty to hint to your Lordships that I had good reason to Suspect that Mons'r Vaudreuil, the Governor of Canada did Underhand stir up my Neighboring Indians to Maletreat His Majesty's liege Subjects.

"The Inclosed Letters will give plain Demonstration that my Suspicions were well Grounded. I have only sent your Lordships well attested Copys, not daring to send the originals, and run the risque of the Sea without direct Orders from home so to do.

"I shall take the liberty to remarke to Your Lordships, that these Letters were found in Mons'r Ralé's House, a ffrench Jesuite who constantly resides among my Neighboring Indians & is Useing his Utmost Indeavours to Engage them in a War against the English. . . . The Indians have lately killed some of our Cattle & threaten our Eastern Settlements, So that I am Under some Apprehension that a War will break out this Summer (which I will Indeavour if possible to prevent) Except some Measures be taken to oblige the ffrench Government at Canada to Act Strictly up to the Stipulations agreed to betwixt the Crowns of Great Brittain & France."

The following day he addressed a forcible and manly letter to Vaudreuil, informing him of the letters in his possession, and appealing to him to desist from his treacherous and cruel proceedings. He did not do this, however, and the result was an Indian war, with all its attendant cruel-

ties ; a war for which the emissaries of France, in the livery of Rome, were wholly responsible.

While the French were thus laboring to keep alive the fires of war between the savages and their English neighbors, they were not idle in Acadia. They fully realized the advantages which they possessed in having a people occupying English territory who were bound to them by ties of blood and sympathy. Every effort was made by the priests who were sent among these "neutrals," as they were called, to hold them to the interests of France, and to prevent them from becoming anything more than nominal subjects of Great Britain.

In 1715 Lieutenant-Governor Caulfield commanded in Acadia. As the time for the departure of the inhabitants, under the treaty, had expired, steps were taken to administer the oath of allegiance to those remaining, but without success. The inhabitants of Mines and Beaubassin flatly refused to take the oath, giving as an excuse that they "had made engagement to return under the rule of the King of France." At Port Royal, however, they offered to take an oath to maintain allegiance to Great Britain while they remained in the country, provided they should be permitted to depart at any time without hindrance.

At this time Père Gaulin was acting as missionary at Port Royal. Through his hands passed the presents to the savages, and by his advice the Acadians acted. He was intensely inimical to the English, and ready to do anything to cause them discomfort. He had, before the peace, which resulted in the cession of Acadia to the English, gathered a considerable body of men against them before Annapolis Royal, to which he laid unsuccessful siege. He was a man full of resources, and unscrupulous, if we may believe the French governor of Louisbourg, who rendered him substantial aid on that occasion. Such a man was bound to prevent the people, if possible, from becoming loyal subjects to a nation against whom he was hostile to the core.

He had taught the savages "*to assert their native rights*" to the ceded territory, and he was equally ready to teach the Acadian French to refuse to take the oath of allegiance to Great Britain, which it was necessary that they should take, if they expected to enjoy her confidence and protection. Five years after Lieutenant-Governor Caulfield's attempt to make them take this oath, General Phillips made another attempt, and we find Père Gaulin acting on the occasion as their spokesman. His majesty, he said, was very good to interest himself in their affairs, but that the proposal meant nothing less than a violation of their oath before Governor Nicholson, and that they wished to remain faithful to their word without changing anything, because if they modified its terms, it would expose them to the resentment and vengeance of the savages. This subterfuge, for it was nothing less, was understood by the English, as appears by the minutes of the Council, September 27th, 1720—

"That the French inhabitants do persist in refusing to take the oath of allegiance to the Crown of Great Britain, and look upon themselves as the indispensable liege subjects of France, by the engagement they have laid themselves under, and from which their Priests tell them they cannot be absolved. . . . That these inhabitants and the Indians are entirely influenced and guided by the Government of Cape Breton, and the missionary Priests residing among them."

This condition of affairs caused the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations to address a memorial to the King, in which they said that the Acadians, who have remained in the province since the cession, "are entirely in the French interest, and by their communication and intermarriages with the neighbouring Indians, have gained them to their party; whereby they are enabled upon any occasion to engage the said Indians in a war against your Majesty's subjects—that the little trade derived in this country at present is entirely in the hands of these French

inhabitants—For which reason, as well as many others, it is absolutely necessary for your Majesty's Service that these French inhabitants should be removed." This was in 1721, and is the key-note of the movement, which resulted in the deportation of this unhappy people more than thirty years later.

It is plain that this deportation was no hasty affair, and that it might have been averted at any time, had it not been for the cruel policy of the missionaries, which prevented the Acadians from taking the only step possible to avert it. One of the most active of these in the early history of the Acadians, was Père Gaulin; "that old, mischievous incendiary," as he was denominated by Lieutenant-Governor Doucett. In one of Doucett's reports to the Lords of Trade, he says that "a good deal of plunder" taken from the English in 1722, was in his chapel, "when he was there to say mass to the Indians." On another occasion, says Mascarene, he received the ransom of English soldiers captured by his savages, and it is recorded of him in memoranda of the French Council, that he was "a brave man and capable of organizing and even conducting" the savages "on an expedition." In the same document it is recommended that instead of "300 livres" which he was receiving, he "might be granted 500 livres on the Staff." In 1727, Louis XV., having received an erroneous report that Gaulin had advised the savages to make peace with the English, informed St. Ovide of the report, and ordered him to continue to "encourage hostilities." To this St. Ovide replied that "so far from M. Gaulin and the other missionaries having prevailed upon the Indians to do so, that they had, on the contrary, incurred the displeasure of the English for having incited the Indians to continue the war." Another of these missionaries was St. Poncey, who, if we may believe the report of Père Maillard to his superior, "adroitly intercepted" letters of the English Governor, which fact, he says, "has been reported to us by those

who were charged with the conveyance of these letters." Of Le Loutre, so much has already been written, that it is unnecessary to detail the career of this restless plotter of mischief, as it is of others who were engaged in the same business. A single instance of his cruelty we may be pardoned for quoting. Says Knox, who was his contemporary, "he left a most remarkable character behind him in Nova Scotia for inhumanity, insomuch that a sentinel who had been placed over him (and had formerly the misfortune, when in a regiment stationed in that country, of being his prisoner, and was miraculously preserved from being scalped alive, to which cruel fate he had been doomed by this same Priest, who marked him with a knife round the forehead and pole in order to strip off the entire scalp) and, recollecting his face, unfixed his bayonet, with an intent, as he undauntedly confessed, to put him to death, had he not been with the greatest difficulty prevented from executing what he called a just vengeance on him. The soldier's resentment was so great, and he appearing before the Commander-in-Chief so determined, that it was thought necessary to remove him to England, and exchange him into another corps."

These men continued their work incessantly during the long peace which existed between France and England from 1713 to 1744, when the two nations again came into conflict. Mascarene, who has been greatly extolled for his kind and wise government of Acadia, had been in command for a number of years, and so continued through the war, which terminated in 1748. It has been attempted to show that Mascarene always regarded the Acadians as loyal and obedient subjects of Great Britain. Such, however, was not the case. Early in his experience with them he says, "The French who, like any new conquered people, were glad to flatter themselves with the hope of recovering what they had lost, saw with a great deal of satisfaction our moat walls every day tumbling down, our hospitals filling with

sick soldiers,—and thought no doubt no less than to oblige us to relinquish the fort and to fall under their national government again. About this time they dispatch't almost unknown to us the 'priest' from Manis to Canada with an account as may be supposed of all this." Later, he says, after the garrison had sustained a loss, "The French after this changed their countenance at once, and of humble and in appearance obedient, turn'd haughty and imperious, and threaten'd no less than to take us by assault and put every one of us 'to the edge of the sword.'" And to show how he regarded the situation at the close of the war in 1748, when he retired from his office, the following extracts are made from his report :

"It has appeared very plain to all on this side, that if the French when at Lewisbourg, had carried their point and master'd this Province, the addition of strength they would have acquired in gaining four or five thousand French Inhabitants able to carry arms, join'd to the several Tribes of Indians, who to a man are all at their Devotion, and a Country able to supply them with Provisions, they would in less than a year have overrun the Governments of New England. Those from Canada have since the taking of Lewisbourg, made two or three attempts in expectation of ships and Troops from France, to carry on the same scheme in which they have been disappointed. The cessation of arms, and the Peace like to ensue will for the present put an end to their projects, but as they are to have Lewisbourg restored to them, a few years will put them in the same Posture they were at the beginning of the War, and if another occasion offers, they may renew their Projects, and by the experience they have had from their former miscarriages, they will take better measures to render them more successful. . . . From whence it appears how necessary it is to put this Province on a better Foot than it has been or is at present. One of the greatest inconveniences it labours under is in having a large number of Inhabitants, who cannot be reckon'd to be attach'd to the British Interest; and though they have been kept from joining the Enemy in Arms, it cannot be depended upon but that they may

do so at some other time. The difficulty of removing them has been represented in the Letter addressed to Governor Shirley the 7th Dec'r 1745, and which I had the honour to transmit to your Lordships, and to which I humbly refer. To counterballance the Deadweight of these French Inhabitants, a Number of British Familys might be settled on the Eastern Coast of this Peninsula."

Even the kind and benevolent Mascarene had considered the question of deportation ten years before it was begun, and when he had ended with them, had no confidence in their fidelity, although he had been able to keep them from open acts of disloyalty. He was evidently so well pleased with his success in this regard, that, whenever possible, he took occasion to report that they were submissive and peaceable. The correspondence of the period, French and English, reveals without a shadow of doubt how the French "Neutrals," so called, were regarded by both peoples, and it is idle to ignore their opinion. Vaudreuil on November 10, 1720, wrote "that the French at Port Royal were well disposed to throw off the yoke of the English," and we have seen how Mascarene regarded them.

Says Secretary Sherriff in March, 1745, "We are in Danger not only from Old France, but even from that our Neighbouring Province, if our Inhabitants are not removed."

Says Shirley May 10, 1746. "I am persuaded nothing has hinder'd the Acadians from taking up Arms against his Majesty's Garrison at Annapolis, but the Terror which the frequent Visits of the arm'd Vessels and Succours sent from this Place—struck 'em with."

Similar quotations might be almost indefinitely multiplied, but these are perhaps sufficient. The question is pressed, as though it established the status of the loyalty of the Acadians to Great Britain, why did they not join the French expeditions sent among them to expel the English? The answer is not far to seek; Shirley in fact

has answered it. They did not dare to. The French had abandoned them once to the English, and they distrusted their power to protect them, while they had a wholesome respect for English push and tenacity. Of the feeling among the conquered people against the English, Knox gives us a glimpse. He says, "Though the better sort of them generally behaved with tolerable decency, yet the poorer sort—being employed as servants and workmen—took frequent occasions (which, however, never passed unpunished) of being impertinent in displaying the fruits of the good education they had received, for, in driving a team of oxen, if an Officer or other British subject passed them on the street or road, they instantly called out to their cattle, by names of Luther, Calvin, Cronmer (meaning Cranmer) &c., and then laid most unmercifully on the poor beasts with their whips or clubs, as if they had in reality got those eminent men under their hands."

In 1748 the war between France and England, which had lasted for four years, came to a close, and a treaty was signed at Aix-la-Chapelle, by which Louisbourg and other territory captured by the English in the war were restored to France. This was a grave mistake on the part of England, and caused much irritation in New England, whose frontier settlements had grievously suffered from the savages, who had been instigated to make war upon them by French emissaries; indeed, the people of New England never forgave England for restoring to their inveterate enemy the strongly fortified city, considered almost impregnable, which had been forced to yield to the valor of their troops.

Acadia remained, as it had for thirty-six years, a province of Great Britain, but its boundaries were still sufficiently undefined to give rise to conflicting claims by both English and French. To offset the power of her rival, the seat of whose power was Louisbourg, England founded Halifax and planted there, in the summer of 1749, a colony of

about three thousand persons, well equipped in all that was necessary for the establishment of a stable government.

Governor Cornwallis, who had succeeded Mascarene, determined to exact from the Acadians the oath of allegiance which they had so long refused to take, and he immediately issued a proclamation commanding the people to appear within a given time and take the oath. This they refused to do, and declared that rather than take it they would leave the country. This reply greatly irritated Cornwallis, and he dismissed them with harsh words. From this time the secret hostility which had always existed between the English on the one hand and the Acadians and savages on the other, continued to increase, and frequently displayed itself in acts of violence. The Abbé Le Loutre, who has already been mentioned, proved to be a terrible foe to the English, and fomented trouble to the extent of his ability.

In 1752 Cornwallis was succeeded by General Hopson, who evidently exerted himself to establish peace among the discordant elements by which he was surrounded. The liberal policy of Hopson had its effect, and some of the Acadians who had left the country petitioned to be allowed to return, but stated in their petition that they could not take the oath of allegiance, alleging the old excuse that their refusal to do so was caused by fear of the savages. Just how far this excuse was really true is questionable; it certainly served its purpose for a time.

Unfortunately, perhaps, for the Acadians, Hopson's mild rule came to an end in 1753, and Lawrence, a man of a different type, succeeded to the government. Lawrence was an active, energetic man, a good soldier, and one who believed in obedience to authority. Alluding, just after his assumption of office, to the status before the courts of the Acadians, he says: "The French emissaries still continue to perplex them with difficulties about their taking

the oath of allegiance." He was determined, however, to bring the unsatisfactory relations which had so long existed between them and the government to an end. He was satisfied that the only way for England ever to hold her possessions securely was to colonize the country with her own people, and to make the French inhabitants take the oath of allegiance or displace them. He was a soldier, and fully realized the danger of sending these people to swell the ranks of the enemy. On August 1st, 1754, he wrote the Lords of Trade, setting forth the condition of affairs, and in this letter, speaking of the Acadians, declares it as his opinion, "that it would be much better, if they refuse the oath, that they were away." Can we wonder at this opinion? For more than forty years they had baffled the attempts of the English governors to make of them loyal subjects. The situation was one full of perplexities. War was likely to break out at any time between France and England, and here was a rapidly increasing population, which even if it were not an active ally of the enemy, would at least be, as Mascarene declared it to be, "a dead weight" to the government. At a council held at Halifax, July 3rd, 1755, the final test of loyalty was placed before the deputies who represented the Acadians. They were asked to show the proof of their fidelity to the government, which they had affirmed, by taking the oath of allegiance. This they declined to do. They were informed that for "Six Years past the same thing had been often proposed to them, and had been as often evaded under various frivolous pretences, that they had often been informed that some time or other it would be required of them and must be done, and that the Council did not doubt that they knew the Sentiments of the Inhabitants in general, and had fully considered and determined this point with regard to themselves before now, as they had already been indulged with six Years to form a Resolution.

thereon." Their request to return home and consult their constituents further on the subject was refused, and they were told that they must now finally decide whether they would or would not take the oath. They again refused, and were allowed until the next morning to form a final resolution. On the next morning they appeared before the Council, and upon their refusal to take the oath, were informed that they were no longer British subjects, and would be treated as subjects of France. Orders were given to direct the Acadians to send new deputies in their behalf with "regard to Taking the Oath, and that none of them should for the future be admitted to Take it after having once refused to." The deputies who had already refused to take the oath here relented and offered to take it, but were refused the privilege. In spite of this, on the 25th of July the new deputies appeared before the Council at Halifax, bringing the final answer of the inhabitants, that they refused to take the oath of allegiance, though they declared their fidelity to Great Britain. This final refusal decided their fate, and Lawrence, on the 11th of August, wrote to the other governors in America, detailing what he had done and proposed to do. In this letter he states that they had unanimously refused to take the oath, and he asks "if they wou'd presume to do this when there is a large Fleet of Ships of War in the Harbour and a considerable land force in the Province, what might not we expect from them when the approaching Winter deprives us of the former, and when the troops which are only hired from New England occasionally, and for a small time, have returned home? * * * As their numbers amount to near Seven thousand Persons, the driving them off with leave to go whither they pleased, wou'd have doubtless strengthened Canada with so Considerable a Number of Inhabitants, and as they have no cleared land to give them at present, such as were able to bear Arms must have been immediately employed in annoying this and the Neighbour-

ing Colonies. To prevent such an inconvenience it was judged as necessary, and the only practicable measure to divide them among the Colonies, where they may be of some use as most of them are healthy and strong People." This was the plan that was carried out. The governors of the Colonies, however, for the most part were not pleased with this arrangement, and refused to provide for their residence among them. This, of course, caused much suffering among them, and many of them wandered about, finding no settled place of abode. Many finally found their way back to their French kinsmen.

This dispersion of the Acadians has been characterized as an act of cruelty surpassing in atrocity anything ever done by the French, not excepting the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, or the wholesale burnings of Protestants. This is, of course, exaggeration. That it was an act of cruelty is admitted. The question is, was it necessary? The English were in a precarious position, face to face with a treacherous enemy, French and savage, with a subject population hostile to them at heart, and liable at any time from inactive lookers-on to become active enemies. The situation described cannot be questioned. It is possible that if they had not sent away the Acadians, they might have finally completed the conquest of the country, but this we have no right to affirm. It is certain that many of the wisest and most patriotic among them regarded the removal of the Acadians and the colonization of the country left vacant by them, as a necessity. It has even been asked if it would not have been better for England and the English race if the scheme of deportation had been extended.

The Acadians have been depicted by some writers as having been a people quite above the common passions of mankind; living "an idyllic life" of simplicity, purity and freedom from guile; loving and lovable. The truth is, that we shall find their counterpart in the French

habitans of today. In Vol. 284 of Nova Scotia Documents, under the title, "Observations on the Progress of Agriculture in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, with notices of Acadian manners and customs, in a project of Moses de la Dernier, Esq.," they are thus described :

"The former inhabitants, the Acadians who were settled before us on the different rivers which empty in the Bay of Fundy, had many difficulties to encounter—being ignorant of the nature and fertility of these valuable Marshes—but so soon as they acquired the knowledge of their great production of all sorts of Grain, and the facility of Obtaining Great Crops with little Labour, They gave up the cultivation of the upland to that degree as to make no use of their manure, and also chose to remove their barns and Hovels, rather than cart it away. They were so ignorant of the true principles of Husbandry that in the course of a century and a half they neither made cheese nor butter that was merchantable, and not having any knowledge of trade and commerce and no emulation or animation, but full of Bigotry and superstition, they disdained to avail themselves of Instructions which they might have had from Strangers, who settled from time to time among them—They did not labour more than half their time, the other half being chiefly taken up by their holidays."

This writer was much nearer them in point of time than we are; but that they are fairly represented by the *habitans* of today is declared by Joseph Guillaume Barthe, membre de l'Institut Canadien, in his remarkable book, "Le Canada Reconquis par la France." "In spite," he proudly says, "of two centuries of foreign domination and unheard of efforts put forth by the new possessors to assimilate the inhabitants of the conquered country, the French of Canada always preserve the same language of their fathers, the same religion; the same customs, the same kind of life." And he asks, "What more does one

want for the resemblance?" Here we have the key to the whole matter. From the beginning they have been taught by their priests to preserve their habits and customs, their traditions and folk-lore, and, above all, their language and fealty to France and to Rome. They have had constantly kept before their eyes the picture of a new epoch, with France the holy son of Rome crowned with the laurel of victory, and dispensing to them with a lavish hand the treasures of which they have been despoiled by the heretic usurper, who lies prone under the iron heel of the imperious victor. This vision is as bright today as it was to the poor Acadians in the time of Gaulin and St. Poney and Le Loutre. The *Ancien Régime* is to be again restored, and New France is to rule not only the domain of which England has despoiled her, but New England as well, and who knows how far beyond her bounds? This dream seems almost too wild for sane men to entertain, but it is entertained as a matter of faith; indeed, it has become a dogma and is tenaciously adhered to even by men regarded as wise.

Some time ago the papers of New Orleans gave a report of a lecture by a prominent lawyer of that city, delivered to a French association. In this lecture the bald declaration was made that the French people were to be restored to their ancient rights to this continent. The fecundity of the French people was dwelt upon, and attention was drawn to the increasing sterility of the Anglo-Saxons, which, it was stated, would in time give the French a numerical superiority. The enthusiastic speaker urged his hearers to maintain their ancient traditions, their habits and customs, and, above all, their language and religion. They were advised to keep their children out of the English schools, and to maintain schools of their own everywhere. Money, he said, was being liberally supplied by their kinsmen in France to maintain such schools, in which loyalty to French ideas must be

taught. They were admonished to maintain ever bright the fires of loyalty to France. He told them that in New England the good work of French colonization was spreading, and that in Louisiana the promise of future French domination was good. He advised his hearers not to permit their children to contract marriages with the English, but to keep themselves a separate people in every respect and to use the English language only when obliged to use it. These sentiments are only too common in Canada. At a recent meeting of the Royal Society of Canada at Montreal were several members of French extraction, but at the same time English subjects, as their ancestors for several generations had been. To the surprise of some of the American delegates, their papers were in the French language, although the audience was mostly English. The president, who was English, at the close of one of these papers, quietly but pleasantly remarked that the paper was interesting, but would have been more so if it had been in English. The rebuke was not sufficiently pointed, as many doubtless felt. Here were men who had been born and bred under the free and beneficent rule of England. To her broad and liberal institutions they owed a debt of gratitude which they could never repay, and yet they deliberately emphasized the fact that they were still French, and prided themselves in being so. We cannot understand this intense loyalty to a foreign power until we find its source in the religious teaching of these people. From the day of England's acquisition of the country they have been taught that her rule was to be temporary, and that Providence was at last to restore to France her ancient dominions. Rome, whom Cardinal Gibbons himself declares is ruled by "a bureau of administrators," and whom Victor Charbonel, in his late letter to the Pope relinquishing his clerical office, so fittingly denominates "an ecclesiastical organization, which uses religion for skillful administration, makes it a domineering power, a

means of social and intellectual oppression, a system of intolerance," has sedulously fostered this wild dream, in order to herself hold the people in subjection to her dictates. Barthe, whose book, "Canada Reconquered by France," has already been quoted, after rejoicing in the fact that the French under British rule have never changed, thus effervesces: "New Hebrews by the rivers of Babylon, they ardently aspire to return to that family from which they have been grievously separated by the exigencies of inexorable politics. Their only way of salvation in this terrible alternative, at least for the moment, is to solicit and obtain the patronage of the ancient metropolis, which, by diverting to them a part of its superfluous population, will enable them in a measure to counterbalance and live on the same footing of equality with the ever increasing English emigration, thus aiding them in repressing the American invasion. Later, Eternal Providence, who watches over the progress and liberty of all people orphaned or disinherited, and who when they have attained their majority, or the fullness of their strength, cries in their ears these all powerful words, 'arise and walk, because thou hast no more need of tutelage, and because thou also hast the right of sitting at the common feast,' later, we say, Eternal Providence will achieve for Canada complete emancipation." His closing words are equally remarkable, and we may add one more brief quotation. "Behold," he cries, "O France, our worth! Behold what we have done to remain faithful. For thee, it now is, to decide if we shall be punished for this fidelity by a complete abandonment; if we shall be disowned by thee, because Destiny has torn us from thy arms; if we shall be forgotten because misfortune has in some small degree altered our resemblance. Then wouldst thou be less generous than Joseph sold by his brethren, who recognized them in the day of his prosperity, and surely it is not we who have sold thee." Then follow certain "Pieces Justifi-

catives," or Proofs, showing what steps have been already taken to reconnect the bonds of sympathy with France. It is difficult for an American or an Englishman to believe that the author of this book is serious, yet he has been accepted by Frenchmen in Canada and France as voicing the advanced sentiments of Frenchmen on both continents; indeed, as prophetic of the future restoration to power of New France, more resplendent in glory than ever. As has been said, it is difficult for one in whose veins circulates the temperate blood of the Anglo-Saxon to take these utterances as serious; but this difficulty vanishes when we consider the character of some of the publications which are circulated among the French operatives in our New England factory towns and their kinsmen over the border.

Take but one of these publications of the better sort, *The Bethelam*, a monthly illustrated magazine, published in several languages and devoted to the interests of St. Anthony, who is its patron. In its columns are advertised certain "holy industries," some of which are the sale of rosaries, chaplets, crosier beads and "memorial lists of the poor souls in Purgatory," all of which are "enriched" with various indulgences.

The department devoted to correspondents is filled with responses from all parts of the Union, which are painful to read, as they indicate that the minds of the writers are as clouded with superstition as if they belonged to the middle ages instead of the Nineteenth Century.¹ This is only alluded to in order to refresh our memories respecting the kind of teaching which the Acadians received, and as a reminder of what their descendants a century and a half later are receiving, and it is unwise for a modern author

¹ Thus one man sends a gift because through the Saint's help he has been enabled to purchase a piece of property at a price desired, and another because he has sold his house at a good price. A woman contributes for the benefit of the Souls in Purgatory because the Saint has procured work for her husband and son, and others for various services rendered by the Saint.

to contend that the Acadians, ignorant and superstitious, and practised upon by such inventions as have been mentioned, were independent of their teachers, and followed untrammelled the dictates of their own judgments in refusing to become loyal English citizens.

When we consider the case of these poor people, of families forcibly removed from their homes, often separated, and compelled to wander in exile, suffering want, and always unwelcome guests, we may well shed tears of sympathy for them; and knowing their character, how simple and ignorant and stubborn they were, how firm their belief in the value of merit resulting from obedience to the teachings of their missionaries, we need not wonder that they went blindly on, through physical inconvenience and suffering, to attain a reward commensurate therewith; and this, it may be reasonably affirmed, and not English trickery and cruelty, as has been asserted, caused the deportation of the Acadians.

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