

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