

Benedict, and by his side the sturdy village smith. There, too, was Michael the fiddler with a gay heart, and a bright waistcoat, and a face glowing like a living coal when the ashes are blown from the embers. There he sat, and sang gaily to the sound of his fiddle, and beat time to the music with his wooden shoes. Old and young joined in the merriment. But

"Fair'est of all the maids, was Evangeline, Benedict's daughter!
And noblest of all the youth's, was Gabriel, son of the blacksmith!"

But over this bright morning sky a dark cloud soon swept, and wrapped all hearts in gloom. The bell in the church tower rings out a loud summons, and along the meadows rolled the sound of the drums. The church was soon filled with men, who flocked thither to hear the tidings. The women and maidens followed, and waited among the graves, and hung the tombstones with garlands of autumn leaves. A strong guard from the ships marched proudly up, and closed and strongly guarded every entrance. Their Commander then read out the Governor's command, by which they were informed that they were prisoners, that all they possessed was forfeited, and that they were to be carried into distant Colonies by the ships now at anchor in the Basin. Stunned by this dreadful news, all stood in speechless wonder; but only for a moment. All eyes were turned to Basil the smith, for "he was a mighty man in the village, and honored of all men." He rose, and with arms raised to Heaven, loudly denounced the treacherous cruelty of the conquerors, and called upon his Acadian brothers to strike down their oppressors. But just at this crisis the church door opened, and the aged priest of the village entered, and with serious mein ascended the steps of the altar. He raised calmly his reverend hand, and with a single gesture awed into silence that clamorous throng. He counselled peaceful submission, and warned them against desecrating the sacred courts with human blood. Then came a flood of grief, as a full sense of their misfortune dawned upon them. All knees were bent to God, and the priest's voice seemed never before so fervent and deep. The village chapel was now their prison, and several weary days elapsed before they were allowed to pass its threshold, and behold their wives and children, and their homes, and the green acres of the Grand Pré for the last time. Great indeed was the grief of the village when the news spread that their fathers and brothers were imprisoned, and must remain so till all things were in readiness for embarking on their unknown journey. The women and children were to assemble first, and taking as much of their household goods as they could carry, were to assemble at the mouth of the Gaspereau river. Then came the roll of the drum, and soon the long and solemn procession issued from the village chapel. About halfway to the shore Evangeline waited in silence for the approach of Gabriel. She clasped his hands, looked up into his face, pale with emotion, and whispered, "Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we love one another, nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever changes may happen!" As the procession moved on, her aged father drew near. What a change had these sad days of imprisonment wrought! The glow had gone from his cheek, and the fire from his eye, and he leaned heavily on his staff. She clasped his neck and embraced him, and they proceeded together to the Gaspereau' mouth. There the greatest sorrow and confusion reigned. The boats went quickly to and fro between the shore and the ships, but night came down upon the land and the sea before half the task was finished. Evangeline and her father were among those left on the open beach, and during the long hours of darkness she sat beside him, and vainly strove to rouse him from the deep swoon into which he had fallen. He seemed unconscious of what was passing around him, and soon it could be seen that the end was rapidly approaching. The sorrow and suffering of the poor Acadians during that night, were increased by the sight of their burning houses in the village of Grand Pré. The scene, as described by the poet, is extremely touch-