

instinctive French predilections, required only a threat from the commandant of the French forces to lead many to cast their fortunes with them. Not knowing what was really involved, believing their all to be in peril at the hands of political freebooters, they accepted the only apparent chance for self-preservation. Rendered desperate by the gloomy outlook, some 300 joined the troops in the fort, the many, being undecided to the last moment what was to do, finally hid their families in the woods and fought the invader from any cover they could find. Heroic but a mistaken purpose, idle effort; the hand of fate was upon them, they struggled against destiny.

The fort surrendered after feeble resistance, and the misguided Acadians were at the mercy of the English who, having granted them neutrality, now found them traitors.

With mock generosity they were pardoned this grave offence, but there awaited them a doom no less grievous. It was at this doom that every sentiment of humanity and common decency revolts, stamping the perpetrators as men worthy the brand of Cain. No claim of precedent, no plea of national policy, can be made to hide the infamy of the act at which the hearts of all good men revolt. Precedent does not palliate wanton torture, physical or mental, more than it excuses the savage for burning his victim at the stake. The course pursued had not even the manly quality of fair, open dealing, but consisted in a series of schemes, in every one of which a trap was secreted, to the end that in whichever way they might, the intended victims must come at last to the same condition. The purpose was perfectly hidden until the fatal line was passed.

Having been forgiven for joining hands with the enemy in the recent contest at the fort of Beausejours, their hearts were sufficiently softened by the unexpected clemency, to