

A PASTORAL LETTER
OF THE BISHOP OF QUEBEC TO THE CATHOLICS OF
NOVA SCOTIA.

JOSEPH-OCTAVIUS PLESSIS,
*by the mercy of God and by the favour of the Holy
See, Bishop of Quebec, &c. &c. To our dear brethren
the Catholic Clergy and Laity of Nova Scotia, Greet-
ing and Blessing in our LORD.*

THE PROVINCE you live in, OUR DEAR BRETHREN, formerly known by the name of Acadia and belonging to the French dominions in North America, happened to be a part of the Diocese of Quebec at the date of its erection in 1674 by the Pope CLEMENT X. The first European settlers of Acadia, a French and Catholic Colony, chiefly holding that part of the Province where now lay the King's County and the Counties of Hauts and Annapolis, were distinguished by their faith, their simplicity and purity of manners. Having been conquered by the British at the beginning of the last century and finally ceded to Great Britain by the treaty of Utrecht in 1713, they were happy enough to preserve their Religion among a nation who had not the advantage of knowing it. But their very simplicity misled them; for although treated by their conquerors with an unexampled mildness and regard, they foolishly persuaded themselves that their Religion could not be secure under a Protestant Government. Hence arose their unlawful connexions with the French still then in possession of Canada, which caused in 1755 the forfeiture of all their lands and their general deportation to the English American Colonies.

With the former settlers the Catholic Religion was banished from Acadia; at least it was confined to the Miamak Indians, untill a small number of its ancient inhabitants having been, at last, allowed to come again to their native soil and emigrations from Canada as well as from Scotland and Ireland having taken place, the Bishops of Quebec had a new opportunity of exerting their sollicitude in behalf of that part of their Diocese. Since the year 1784, there has been among you an uninterrupted succession of Catholic Clergy appointed to lead you in the way of salvation. Little satisfied of providing by subordinate pastors to your spiritual necessities, our immediate predecessor undertook to pay you a personal visit and performed it in 1803 with a deal of consolation which could only be exceeded by that we experienced when, at our turn, we visited your churches in 1812 and 1815. We were ravished with joy by witnessing in several places of your Province, people eagerly listening to the word of God and sincerely devoted to the Catholic faith. We found in the new Acadians of Torbay, Chezet-Cook, St. Mary's bay and Argyle, precious and well impressed footsteps of the good character of their ancestors. We felt an inexpressible delight at seeing the simplicity of the Irish of Prospect and the eagerness of those of Halifax to assist at the church, to receive the sacraments, to procure their children an early knowledge of the tenets and morals of our blessed Religion. The Highlanders of Meragomish, St. Margaret and Antigonish rendered themselves remarkable by the unprecedented affection shewn to their Clergy. We are informed of the zeal which led those of St. Margaret, in the spring of 1816, to repair to Halifax, take thence the body of the late Revd. Alex. Macdonell and carry it over a road of above a hundred miles to their own ground. We heard likewise of the degree of respect and obedience shewn to the Revd. Mr. Gaulin during his short stay at Antigonish. The Canadians of Tracadie did not appear so strongly affectionate towards their Pastors. But there is every reason to hope that the exertions of the Revd. Mr. Manseau to reclaim them, shall not have been unprofitable. What will we say of the
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