

religious confreres, whose aim seems not to have been the welfare of the French peasants so much as to render annoyance to the British Rulers. Previously, in 1750, the French agents had enticed away about "7,000 Acadians from comfortable homes, to become outcasts and wanderers in the wilderness, exposed for years to all the hardships of savage life." And yet this was double the number the English expelled from Minas and Annapolis.

In return for this kindness and leniency on the part of the English, the Acadians, allowed to remain on their lands for forty years without taking the oath, were embarrassing the English and giving aid to the French, to the utmost extent of their ability. They aided the Indians in attacks on the English forts at Annapolis and elsewhere. During the war they carried their produce to the French instead of the English, and conveyed to them all the information they could obtain concerning the English forces, intended operations, and garrisons. With hostile French in New Brunswick, and equally hostile and more treacherous French in their midst, the English colonists were anything but secure. As a necessary precaution they were ordered to give up their guns. This they did, but sent deputies to Halifax with a memorial asking the restoration of their guns and exemption from the oath of allegiance. The deputies were met with a demand to take the oath or submit to the alternative of being removed from their homes, as a measure essential to the safety of the English in Acadia, and given plenty of time for consideration. After a month's deliberation they refused to take the oath, fully aware of the consequences that must follow. The situation then seems to have been simply this: "The English were masters of Acadia." The French Acadians refused to swear fealty to their conquerors, who had treated them kindly, and allowed them to retain their lands, religion and rights. They also aided the enemies of the English, thus making themselves enemies. They had either to be put to death or expatriated; and the latter al-

ternative was chosen. The punishment involved their wives and children which is the most deplorable circumstance in connection with the whole affair. "The sad feature of the expulsion of the Acadians is that it brought sorrow and misfortune upon their wives and children, who certainly had not been guilty of any political offence; but that is a feature not peculiar to their case. Almost every man whose crimes bring him within the grasp of justice, has innocent relations who suffer for his faults. Yet I have never heard that urged as a reason why the guilty should go unpunished." The work of removing and distributing them among the New England colonies, was executed with as much gentleness as possible, where no opposition was offered, as at Minas and Grand Pre; but considerable opposition was encountered near the border and around the Petitecodiac River. Somewhat over three thousand were thus driven from their native land to:

"Wander from city to city,  
From the cold lakes of the north to sultry Southern Savannahs,"

of whom, however a large number eventually returned and settled again in the country of their fathers.

That so large a number of simple country peasants should be thus torn from the scenes to which they had been accustomed, from the land which they and their forefathers had, in their rude, homely fashion, cultivated, where in peace and content they might have tended their flocks, had they but disregarded the allurements of those who had not their true interests at heart, is a melancholy thing; but the hand of war is inexorable, and having chosen their line of action advisedly, but it seem to us under a strange infatuation they were compelled to suffer the consequences, terrible though they were. And yet we cannot but feel the deepest pity for them when we think that:

"Far asunder, on separate coasts the Acadians  
landed,  
Scattered like flakes of snow, when the wind from  
the Northeast  
Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the  
Banks of Newfoundland."