

possessed 90 horned cattle, 21 sheep, and 67 swine. This was the humble beginning of a settlement where cattle a few years later were numbered by thousands. At Chignecto and Mines there were vast acres of marsh lands capable of supporting great herds, and the people who went to these new settlements speedily became rich. The progress of Chignecto was checked for a time by the expeditions from Massachusetts under Col. Church; but the prosperity of Mines encountered no such drawback, and it speedily became the most wealthy and populous settlement in Acadia.

The transfer of Acadia to Great Britain in 1710 did not at all affect the progress of the Acadian settlements. A census taken in 1714 shows that the population of Mines had risen to 878, a number almost as great as that of Port Royal, which had 895 inhabitants. The settlers of Mines were spreading themselves over the land and had established new colonies on many of the rivers flowing into the Basin of Minas, the Pizequid, the Gaspereaux, the Canards and other streams. The Port Royal colony was also more populous than it ever had been before; and, although a few families had left it, the bulk of the inhabitants continued to cling to the soil on which their fathers had lived so long. They were in the possession of some of the best soil in North America; they were in the enjoyment of peace, and they had therefore no inducement to seek their fortunes in another land which might not prove so congenial as that in which they were living. During the next forty years all the Acadian settlements grew rapidly, and in 1755, it is estimated that the Acadians numbered about 10,000 persons, a prodigious increase to take place in so short a period of time.

The Acadians were a people who lived very much by themselves, and therefore they acquired characteristics which were the outgrowth of their peculiar conditions. They were a very religious people, and were greatly under the influence of their clergy, whose power over them was felt in every relation of life. When this power was exercised in the interests of morality and religion it was a most wholesome influence and of the utmost benefit, but when it was used for political purposes it became a source of danger and led to the utter ruin of a people who might have remained always happy and prosperous.

Among the Acadians it was the custom to marry young, and as a consequence their families were usually large. Land was so abundant that a young man could not do better than take to himself a wife and