

assistance, if not at the suggestion, of the Massachusetts authorities. When Gov. Lawrence transmitted to the king's ministers, by the slow conveyance of that day, his plans for the removal of the French inhabitants, he was promptly forbidden to put them into execution. This merciful inhibition, however, came too late. Without authority, in the days of Argall and Poutrincourt, the long series of the English colonial expeditions against the Acadians began; without due sanction, Lawrence and Shirley brought about its fearful close; and the lovely land of Evangeline must ever bear the shadow of the wrong, though there is good reason to believe that the English residents of the province were as innocent of complicity in the matter, and as quick to show their disapproval, as were the home authorities who forbade it.

Readers of "Evangeline," some of whom know little else of the history of Nova Scotia, have learned from it (with the misunderstanding as to the attitude of the British government, which I have here attempted to correct,) the pathetic story of the removal of the Acadians from their homes, that they might be scattered and lost among the English colonists. The story of the return of the exiles, many of whom did at length get back to their native land, is not so widely known. The following extracts are taken from an account of the overland journey given by Richard in his "Acadia," quoting from Rameau¹:

When peace was concluded in 1763, out of about 6,500 Acadians who had been deported, there remained a little more than one-half. Often had they in vain begged the authorities to allow them to leave the place of their exile; but after the peace their homeward rush was resistless. Divers groups made for Canada, where they settled. . . .

Those who had not been able to join this exodus met together three years later, in the spring of 1766, at Boston, with the intention of wending their way back to their lost and lamented Acadia. There then remained in foreign lands only a small minority, riveted to the spot by infirmity or extreme want.

The heroic caravan which formed in Boston, and determined to cross the forest wilderness of Maine on its return to Acadia, was made up of about eight hundred persons. . . . No one will ever know all that these unfortunate people, forsaken and forgotten by everybody, suffered as they hewed their way through the wilderness; the many years gone by have long since stifled the echoes of their sighs in the forest, which itself has disappeared; all

¹ Pp. 142-144 of Calnek's "History of Annapolis," in which there is a very full discussion of the whole subject by the editor, Judge Savary.