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THE SCENE OF 'EVANGELINE.'

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THERE is no event in the history of this continent which has come down to us clothed with more romantic interest than the expulsion of the French settlers in 1755 from the old Acadian country. A community, simple, happy, and prosperous, living under the patriarchal sway of their clergy, cherishing the legends and habits of rural life in the old world, given to the picturesque observances of their religion, are suddenly removed in a body from the fields which they are peacefully cultivating, on a charge of disaffection to the government to which they have become subject, their property confiscated, their families broken up, and the members thereof dispersed in strange lands, to spend the rest of their days in poverty and neglect. Upon this event, sad enough in its plain realities, the American poet has founded the most touching of his poems. Longfellow is the poet of the family and the fireside. He does not scale the loftier heights of passion, nor explore with subtlety the depths of feeling, but he moves with simplicity and sweetness on the levels

of thought where all can walk with him, and simply and sweetly has he told the sorrowful story of 'love in Acadie,' which has made that quiet countryside on the Bay of Fundy known wherever English poetry is read.

Let us for a moment recall the circumstances which led to the strange episode in colonial history out of which the story has sprung. Nova Scotia, or Acadie, was ceded by France to Great Britain at the treaty of Utrecht. With the transfer of territory there was, however, no transfer of the loyalty of the people. It is true they took the oath of allegiance to the King, but with the omission of the clause requiring military service. As military service would have entailed the necessity of bearing arms, not only against their Indian allies, but also their own countrymen, the Acadians steadfastly refused to take the oath without such a modification. Successive Governors gave up in despair the attempt to extort from them a more comprehensive form of submission. In course of time the Acadians began to consider themselves as holding a