

## SUFFERINGS OF EXILED ACADIANS.

"How many died on the way, children, women and even men! How many breathed their last, overpowered by weariness, suffering from hunger, sitting down to be forgotten forever in some wild path, without priest, without consolation, without friends! The last agony of death was embittered, for these innocent victims, by all the anguish of regret and neglect.

"While this sorrowful caravan advanced, some indeed were found whose failing strength refused to carry them any further; however, all did not succumb, and one after another a few groups remained along the road to form the nuclei of future colonies. It was thus that, on the banks of the River St. John, several families fixed their abode amid the ruins of the settlements formerly occupied by the French in this district, where, in the ancient fief of Jemseg (of which La Tour had been the owner) and in that Ekoupag, some few Acadian families still dwelt.

"When the column of exiles, thinned out by the fatigues of the journey, reached the banks of the Petitcodiac, they had been four months on the road. There, at length, they could taste a few moments of repose and consolation; the first to come out at the foot of the wooded mountain-range along this river met there some men, half hunters, half husbandmen, who spoke their language, and among whom they were not slow to recognize fellow-countrymen and relatives. This was the remnant of the former inhabitants of Memramcook, Chipody and the Isthmus of Shediac. Buildings and clearings were already to be seen along the river bank, when the band of captives returning from the United States joined them at the close of the summer of 1766."

"How touching must have been the meeting, after a separation of eleven years, of these beings whose hearts were wrung by a common calamity. Here at least the wayfarers could rest for a moment in peace after their excessive fatigues, without any risk of rebuff or ill-will from indifferent or hostile strangers; the friends they had just found again were themselves very poor, but their welcome was cordial and sympathetic.

"Unfortunately, after this first burst of joy, they had to suffer a great heaviness of heart. They had cherished the hope that, away on the other side of the Bay of Fundy, at Beausejour, Beaubassin, Grand Pre, Port Royal, they would find once more their lands and perhaps