

they fell victims to cold, starvation and disease, to the hostility of neighboring adventurers or to the tomahawk of the savage, to be finally either entirely destroyed or as a tattered remnant return to their old time homes.

Among those who so early as 1604 cast their lot in the western wilderness was a body of French people from Normandy, who chanced to fix their new homes in Acadia, the peninsula now known as Nova Scotia. This effort proved a failure, especially because of the inroads of settlers from the English colonies of Virginia, who claimed the peninsula by right of discovery, and whose people, led by a freebooter, in the end utterly destroyed the colony.

The French government had given the rugged realm its tropical name, but in the turmoil of the nations, the English obtained possession, and in 1621, with greater fitness, pronounced it to be Nova Scotia or New Scotland. But neither tropical nor frigid designation brought settled quietude to its borders. It became the shuttlecock of war and diplomacy. In due time the French became its master, to be overcome by their persistent enemy in 1654. Thirteen years later the French were in power, fickle fortune returning it to the English in 1714. Thus, experience had shown little certainty of tenure, and that the imperious Englishmen so deemed it is amply shown in the fact that the treaty by which it was secured to them contained the galling proviso that their new subjects, the Acadians or French citizens of Nova Scotia, might enjoy freedom of worship, they being Catholics while the English government was intensely Protestant, and still more, they were granted immunity from bearing arms, being thus permitted to enjoy the benefits of a government, and be by it protected, without raising a hand even in their own defense. This unprecedented favor may have partly risen from the fact that joining the