

THE ACADIANS OF MADAWASKA.

Sacred Heart Review.

A valuable addition to the Catholic annals of our country is contained in a pamphlet of sixty-six pages, "The Acadians of Madawaska," by the Rev. Charles W. Collins, chancellor of the diocese of Portland, Me. This pamphlet is No. 3 of the New England Catholic Historical Society Publications. It will, perhaps, be news to most of us to learn that descendants of the French Catholic Acadians, celebrated in Longfellow's well known poem of "Evangeline," are now living in New England. Father Collins writes:—

"If one examines on the map the vast and irregular outlines of the State of Maine, he will discern that its north-easterly boundary is formed in part by the river St. John flowing in a wide sweep from the mouth of the St. Francis River to a point three miles west of Grand Falls. In its progress along this curve, the river winds its way for the most part between high, wooded hills which give way where streams enter to alluvial plains, and, thrown back by the massive rock gorge at Grand Falls, it has spread out and formed in the course of time extensive intervals enriched by the periodical overflow.

This long, narrow valley is fringed on both sides of the St. John with a line of farms which extend almost continuously throughout the ninety miles of its length, and though the line gathers in some two or three places into the semblance of a town, it is ordinarily a thin, double line of habitation hemmed in behind by vast forests. On the Canadian side a lazy railroad creeps up the river for seventy miles or so, but on the American side there is no railroad above Van Buren, the least remote town of the valley, and this inroad is of very recent date. Not a bridge crosses the St. John throughout the long sweep of the river, and excepting in the towns mentioned the stores can almost be counted on the fingers. It is a country of rugged and picturesque scenery, small houses and huge barns, and little modern comfort, given over almost entirely to agriculture.

"The region takes its name, Madawaska, from a small river which flows into the St. John thirty miles above Grand Falls, and has been occupied since 1785 by Acadians, refugees from the expulsion of 1755, and their descendants. The character is definitely Acadian, and the people have preserved with little change, through the vicissitudes of time and trouble the antique tongue, quaint customs and peasant virtues of Acadia and old France."

Acadia was the first French colony in North America, established sixteen years before the Pilgrims landed in Plymouth; and though the first venture of the Frenchmen failed, "the germ of colonization survived," and a permanent colony was founded between 1632 and 1638. So singular was the history of this small but virile race that developed from the original stock that its annals read like a romance of strange adventure and moral strength; and since their exile particularly, as Father Collins writes:—

"The entire, little known history of the Acadians, posterior to the events of 1755, is a startling and pathetic verity, view it how you will, and evinces qualities of endurance, perseverance and faith in these illiterate peasants, inherent only in remarkable peoples, and almost lifts them to a place among the stories of the nations."

It was in 1755 that the English governor, Lawrence, made the first deportation of these simple and God-fearing men and women, evidently without sanction from the British government, and even against its will, to lands far distant from their homes. Estimates of that first deportation—to Boston, Pennsylvania, the Carolinas, Georgia—vary from 6,000 to 7,500 and even higher. And this was only the beginning of that strange dispersion and exile of which we advise our readers to get for themselves Father Collins' interesting and sad account. To-day, in Louisiana alone, their descendants number over 50,000.

One detachment, however, drifted into the so long debated region on the boundary line between New Brunswick and Maine, and with that little settlement this pamphlet is specially occupied. Mr. Jackson, in his geological report for the year 1836, as quoted by Father Collins, says of them:—

"Most of the settlers are descendants of the French neutrals or Acadians who were driven by British violence from their homes in Nova Scotia. The Acadians are a very peculiar people, remarkable for the simplicity of their manners and their fidelity to their employers."

... remarkably honest, industrious and respectful and are polite and hospitable to each other and to strangers ... a cheerful, contented and happy people, social in their intercourse and never pass each other without a kind salutation."

Of their present religious condition Father Collins writes that in the district commonly called Madawaska there are now nine churches, eight with resident priests, who attend likewise many missions without church edifices. The Marists conduct a college, with nine professors and 100 students. There are three religious schools under charge of Good Shepherd, Rosary and Franciscan Sisters. He remarks:—

"The Acadians were and are a profoundly religious people. ... Were their religion not of the most solid character, there would have resulted in long wanderings and life in the woods a great loss of faith and morality. In point of fact, the high standard of morality so characteristic of the Acadian in his native shores is equally characteristic of him to-day in Madawaska. ... For years this northern district was administered by priests from Canada who worked with zeal and devotion there. When circumstances permitted it, this condition was changed. The second bishop of Portland, Bishop Healy, paid great attention to these northern missions and established schools and religious facilities in them."

We have given special attention to this important pamphlet, because it seems to us an excellent example of the many monographs on Catholic history that might profitably be written for information of students especially, and of the reading public in general. Admirably printed, the many references to histories, documents, state records and authors are clearly indicated on the wide side-margins opposite the statements which they concern, so that the little pamphlet thereby furnishes sources of further research into contemporary history. It is printed at the press of Thomas A. Whalen and Co., Boston. Copies can be obtained by applying to the librarian of the society, Hon. John F. Cronan, 30 Court street.

WORSE THAN A PUZZLE PICTURE.

"Nebraska's Supreme Court," says the Monitor, has reversed itself by handing down a decision permitting Bible-reading in the public schools of that state, as long as it does not take the form of sectarian instruction. The next question for the Court to determine is when and how it doesn't take that form. That it will find a harder nut than the other."

SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR.

"During the past month," says the Rosary, "there was noticeable a wonderful activity among the Holy Name societies of this country. Everywhere unusual efforts were made to celebrate the feast of the Holy Name with fitting solemnity. We thank God for this, for we know how very special are the graces which follow in the wake of these demonstrations, and we need much help from heaven to stem the tide of blasphemy which is sweeping over the land."

"Whew!" exclaimed Nuwed, "what's the matter with this mince pie?" "Nothing," replied his wife, who was a white ribboner. "I followed your mother's recipe except where it called for brandy. I put root beer in instead."—Philadelphia Press.

Rousing of Mr. Rugby

A Story of Stress and Storm.

Thomas Weatherford Rugby stood on the very edge of the breakwater watching the schooner Lovely Mary beating into Gloucester harbor. Mrs. Rugby occupied a wicker rocking chair on the piazza of the Restful View, a hundred feet back from the wall that rose sheer above a narrow sandy beach. It was a clean drop of ten feet from the top of the wall, where Mr. Rugby balanced daintily on his toes, and Mrs. Rugby was viewing with increasing apprehension this new adventurous spirit in fat, placid Thomas Weatherford. Presently she called out to him in a voice that carried up and down the narrow beach and caused a general turning of heads and some impatient comment among the nurse maids sprawled in the sand:—

"Thomas," she cried, "you must be careful out there. Mr. Hollis (the men called the proprietor of Restful View 'Fussy' Hollis) said that yesterday a stone fell out of the wall up near the pond." Mr. Rugby stepped cautiously back to turn. His wife drew young Richard Rugby, aged ten, to her side, to wipe ten sticky fingers on her handkerchief, pull a flapping blue sailor blouse into place, kiss an unwilling mouth with vigor, and instruct a deaf young ear as follows:—

"Richard, you must not go down to Andy's any more without first coming and asking me if you can go. You know very well that black-jack candy makes you ill. Now, go right down and tell your father that Mr. Hollis says that Capt. Wicklin's boat can be hired for this afternoon, and that I want him to go over to the Laurel Tavern and ask—well, now, hurry, dear, and tell your father I want him."

Young Richard pulled away from an embrace that promised to become violent once more, and raced out to the lawn at the piazza end, where he began to yell frenzied commands to "Daw-rotheel!" to come up from the sand and play with him. Mrs. Rugby lifted a rustling mass of skirts and, touching an iron-gray lock into place at the back of her bare head, went dignifiedly down the piazza steps to deliver in person the message that the boy had not deigned to hear. Mr. Rugby, ruddy faced, with clean gray moustache and close-cut gray hair showing below the rim of a youthful Panama, stepped forward as jauntily as 250 pounds of hampering flesh would permit.

"I was just watching that fishing schooner, Sarah," began Mr. Rugby. "I see she's a two-master, and probably just getting in from the Banks. She's tacking in, and I reckon she'll make the dock pretty soon." Mr. Rugby's nautical lore was limited—extremely limited—for all his four long summers of watching the sleek, swift black boats sail in as the glory of crimsoning sunsets flooded the western piazza of the Restful View.

Mr. Rugby was told, with customary emphasis, to go straight to Capt. Wicklin and engage the Captain's staunch little boat, the Curlew, for an afternoon's sailing. Then he was to go to Laurel Tavern—the "swellest" of the group of hotels, which Mrs. Rugby would have patronized, only it was too noisy and distracting for the children—and insist upon getting Mr. and Mrs. McIntosh and "dear Harold" to join them. "And don't forget that Mildred is going with us. I think Dorothy and Richard had better stay and play with the Preston children. Now, hurry up, Thomas dear!" Mrs. Rugby came up the steps dignifiedly, smiling sweetly at the deaf old Mrs. Winters, who came up to shout a question, "Where was Mr. Rugby off to just now, moving so spry?"

Mrs. Rugby put her plump mouth close to Mrs. Winters' ear and shrilled: "We've invited the McIntoshes from Laurel Tavern to go sailing this afternoon—we've got Capt. Wicklin's boat!"

"Oh, yes! going sailing, are you?" roared Mrs. Winters. "Well, I shouldn't be surprised if the wind came up strong late in the afternoon," she added cheerfully.

In response to Mrs. Rugby's invitation Mrs. McIntosh said that both Harold and herself would be

charmed to join the sailing party, but that Mr. McIntosh must be excused, for it was too unsettling to a man of his age who had never been a good sailor.

Mr. Rugby thought it was unfortunate that he was to have no special companion on the sail, for he would be compelled either to listen with an assumption of interest to his wife and Mrs. McIntosh at their eternal chatter of marriages and dresses, or try and become interested in Capt. Wicklin, who had one long, familiar story about the part he took in a great naval battle of the civil war. Mr. Rugby had thrilled at the tale four years before—now he knew exactly when Capt. Wicklin would put the tiller under his arm to illustrate, with both hands free, the way he picked a sputtering bomb off the Mentor's deck, and heaved it overboard a quarter of a minute before it exploded.

But Mr. Rugby had a deep, full-fledged philosophy that precluded sustained worry. He followed Mrs. Rugby and the laughing Mildred to the boat, his arms loaded with wraps and cushions.

Harold cut into the middle of his greeting with, "Hello, Mil, we're in for it again. Get jolly well soaked, if I can read the weather." Mildred, putting out her hand to be assisted into the boat.

"Mildred!" rebuked Mrs. Rugby. She had heard her daughter's Bowers intonation. "Children grow up nowadays with such wild notions of language," complained the mother to Mrs. McIntosh.

The Curlew beat up the harbor, with Mildred and Harold gazing attentively over the bow, with Mrs. McIntosh and Mrs. Rugby well wrapped in the tiny pit, settling in direct discourse the destinies of the Preston children, and every eligible maid on Eastern Point. Not with words, but with approving nods and occasional flutters of parental caution to the noisy pair forward, they blessed the two young hearts.

It was Mrs. McIntosh's firm conviction that Mr. Rugby was "close" with his money, that he might have summered at Laurel Tavern just as well as at the Restful View, where the guests were well mixed. It made a sensation—no less—when a man brought his valet to the Restful View, early in the season, whereas at the Laurel Tavern—Mildred would surely bring money to dear Harold, who was so extravagant. Mrs. Rugby

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knew to a penny what the McIntoshes' weekly bill at the Tavern totalled.

Mrs. Rugby listened patiently to Capt. Wicklin's civil war story, heard the bomb hiss in the waters as it sank, read the thanks of Congress through the willing narrator's lips, and wished that the infernal northwest wind would not blow so keenly.

Off Norman's Woe, yielding with graceful reluctance to the combined persuasion of Mrs. McIntosh, Mrs. Rugby and Harold, Mildred recited "The Wreck of the Hesperus." "Do you know," commented Mrs. McIntosh, "they say Longfellow never saw the reef of Norman's Woe until long after he wrote that piece."

"It might have been high tide when Longfellow came down to see the Hesperus after she struck," ventured Mr. Rugby, with facetious intent. "Here at Gloucester the sea has a rise and fall of nine feet, and the reef, you see, is pretty well covered up half of the time."

"Thomas, how can you talk so!" Mrs. Rugby was familiar with the wit that attempted to cheapen the accomplishment of his family. Mildred's elocution had seemed so effective and appropriate just now. Mrs. McIntosh called Mrs. Rugby's attention to the "grand sweep" of the Magnolia shore coming into view, and Thomas Weatherford Rugby sighed. He settled back to pour his elementary, fatuous talk of fishermen and lighthouses and tides into Capt. Wicklin's ears, eliciting from the gray skipper occasional grunts. Then relapsed into silence, casting his weathery eye about the horizon of restless sea and far-wooded hills for a subject that might serve to win him a part in the general conversation.

It came—an innocent, scarcely discernable flash of lightning in the northwest. Instantly Mr. Rugby's memory reverted to one of Proprietor Hollis' most exciting sea tales, which began: "Along this northwest, you can begin to take in sail, for it's sure to blow a gale of wind in a mighty short time." And here was the Curlew scudding before the northwest breeze with topsail and two jibs, in addition to the mainsail billowing powerfully, Mr. Rugby called out:

"Captain, we're going to have a blow—better haul down the tops' and jibs."

"Did you get a report from the Weather Bureau?" inquired the Captain, with a sarcastic intonation.