

THE ACADIAN PEOPLE.

BY JAMES HANNAY.

There are now upwards of one hundred thousand persons of French origin in the Maritime Provinces, the great majority of whom are known as "Acadians" because they are the descendants of the French settlers who were brought out to this country when it was a colony of France and was called "Acadia." The first settlement of Acadia took place in 1604, under de Monts and Champlain, but the place selected, St. Croix Island, proving unsuitable, the little French colony was removed to Port Royal in the spring of 1605. The colonists consisted of farmers and artisans, men well suited to the business they had in hand, but the colony was finally broken up by an English expedition from Virginia, under Argal, in 1613. There does not appear to have been any further attempt by the French to establish a settlement at Port Royal for about twenty years. In the meantime, Sir William Alexander had obtained from James I. of England, a grant of the country, and had established a colony of Scotchmen at Port Royal. This colony was, in its turn, broken up when Acadia was restored to France under the terms of the treaty of Saint Germain-en-Laye, made in 1632. Some of these Scotch colonists, however, remained in Acadia and mingled with the French settlers who were brought out after the country was restored to France.

It does not appear that any of the French of Champlain's colony remained in Acadia, although one or two of them went to Quebec. The origin of the Acadians therefore dates from the year of 1633, when Isaac de Razilly brought out a number of French settlers to La Have. Between that year and 1638, de Razilly and his lieutenant, Charnisay, brought out some sixty families of colonists, most of whom appear to have remained in Acadia. These people were all workers, mainly farmers and fishermen, with a few artisans, such as blacksmiths, carpenters and coopers, who were necessary to do the little work of the colony. At first they were settled at La Have, but a few years later most of them were removed to Port Royal, the name then given to the region about Annapolis, which must be regarded as the mother settlement of Acadia.

The French colonists who settled Acadia, came from Rochelle, Saintonge and Poitou, on the west coast of France, a tract of country