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A Plague of Mice.

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TO the early settlers on the Island of St. John, the field mice were the cause of much suffering and anxiety. Their inroads on the cultivated fields meant destruction to the crops, and this again meant starvation to the settler. The time of their coming was undefined, and in consequence always feared; the result of their visitation was always the same, hunger and destitution. It is not therefore to be wondered at, if the settler, while entrusting his cleared land with seed, should feel some ominous misgivings, lest his labors might turn out to be not the means of feeding him and his, but a preparation for pasturing vermin.

Between the years 1720 and 1738, three invasions of great severity took place. The invasion of the latter year may be outlined in order to convey to my readers some idea of the miseries inflicted by such inroads.

For ten years the mice had confined themselves to their forest haunts, multiplying in their abodes with their wonted prolificacy. In the summer of 1738, however, the enormously increased population had exhausted in all their vicinities the means of subsistence. The manner in which these famished creatures swarmed from the woods and rushed upon the cultivated lands resembled more the action of some savage tribes carrying out some preconcerted scheme of vengeance, than the doings of irrational animals. Every field of grain from Three Rivers (Georgetown) to Malpeque, was made desolate by their ravages,