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A NEW HISTORY OF ACADIA.*

By J. A. J. McKenna.

Mr. Edouard Richard set himself no easy task when he determined to give the world the whole truth concerning the deportation of his ancestors from their happy homes in l'Acadie. Those who planned the dispersion first had the archives of the Acadians carried off; and, still fearful of the verdict of history, they or their descendants must have done away with colonial records which militated against themselves, for many papers have disappeared from the archives at Halifax. The report on the most effectual method of deporting the Acadians which Provincial Surveyor Morris drew up early in 1755 for Governor Lawrence—a work which brought Morris a judgeship—has vanished; and this invaluable document, which makes it evident that the decision to deport the Acadians was not forced upon the authorities as the last and only means of securing the country to the crown, but was coldly and deliberately designed to some other end, would be lost to history had not the Reverend Andrew Brown, to use his own words, “found this paper among the coun-

cil fyles” (where it no longer remains) and had a transcript of it made. This clergyman set out to write a history of Nova Scotia. Unfortunately he never accomplished his design; but his manuscripts (which are in the British Museum, and of which Mr. Richard fully availed himself) containing his unfinished work and accumulated material, afford most valuable data on a subject of abiding interest. A Protestant minister, he could have had no prejudice in favor of the Acadians. He lived at Halifax as a contemporary, not only of witnesses of the tragedy, but of actors in it; and having attained a chair in the University of Edinburgh, he must have had the intellectual discipline necessary for the proper winnowing of the information which he gathered. Yet the Historical Society of Halifax had only a partial copy made of the Brown MSS., and the student who consults the Society's collection will find an emasculated transcript of Brown's copy of Morris' report in which nothing is touched on but topography. All along there seems to have been interested persons at work shutting off the light.

It is true that for upwards of a

*Acadia: Missing Links in a Lost Chapter of American History. By Edouard Richard, an Acadian, ex-member of the House of Commons of Canada. New York: Home Book Company.