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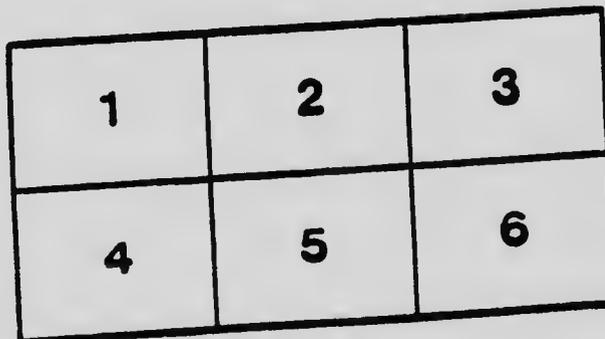
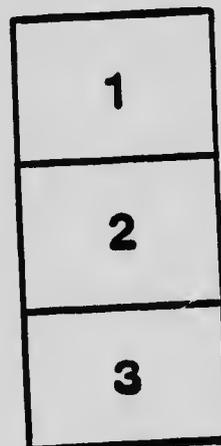
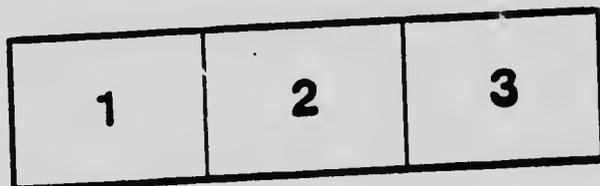
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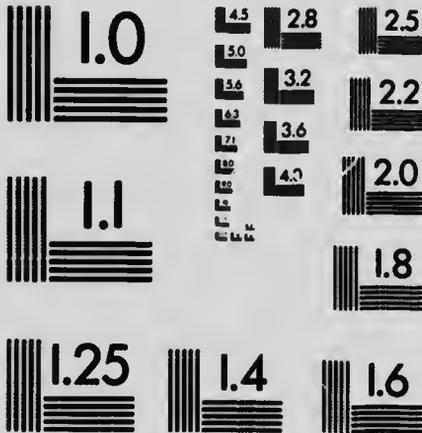
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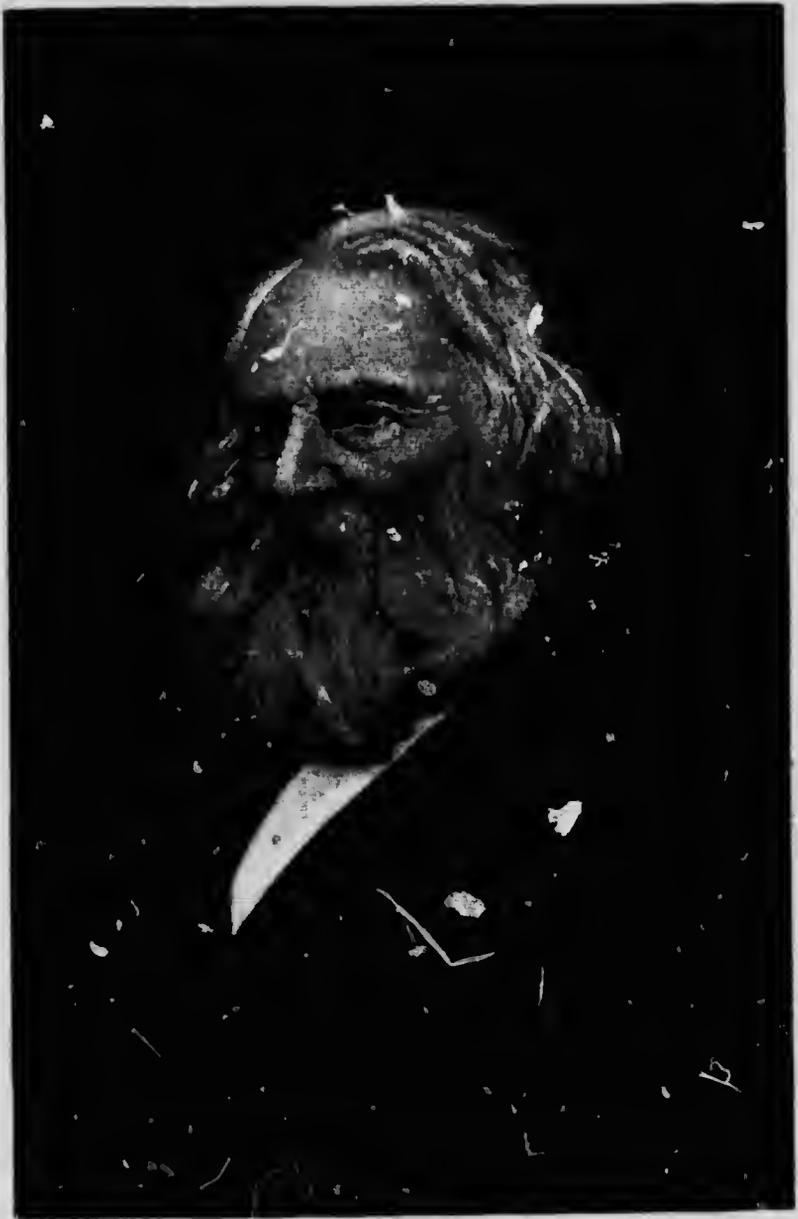
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Henry W. Longfellow.



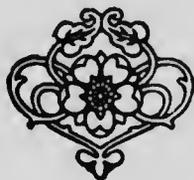
Evangeline

By Henry W. Longfellow

With an Introduction

by

Arthur Wentworth Hamilton Eaton



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by

R. U. PARKER



Announcement

THIS book has been designed to place Longfellow's most exquisite Idyll readily convenient to the visitor, and to set beside it, between the same covers, the true story of "EVANGELINE" and of her country. This, we believe, has been fittingly accomplished by Dr. Arthur Wentworth Hamilton Eaton, a noted historian, who has given us in the Introduction a most readable tale, though in no way departing from historical fact.

For the visitor who has but a week or ten days to devote to a hurried visit, its contents will help him locate himself, as it were.

It is hoped that a perusal of these pages will create a desire to visit the scenes described, and the reader who wishes to know something definite about the cost and the various routes hither is respectfully requested to communicate with the General Passenger Agent or call on one of the DOMINION ATLANTIC RAILWAY Representatives listed on page 138.

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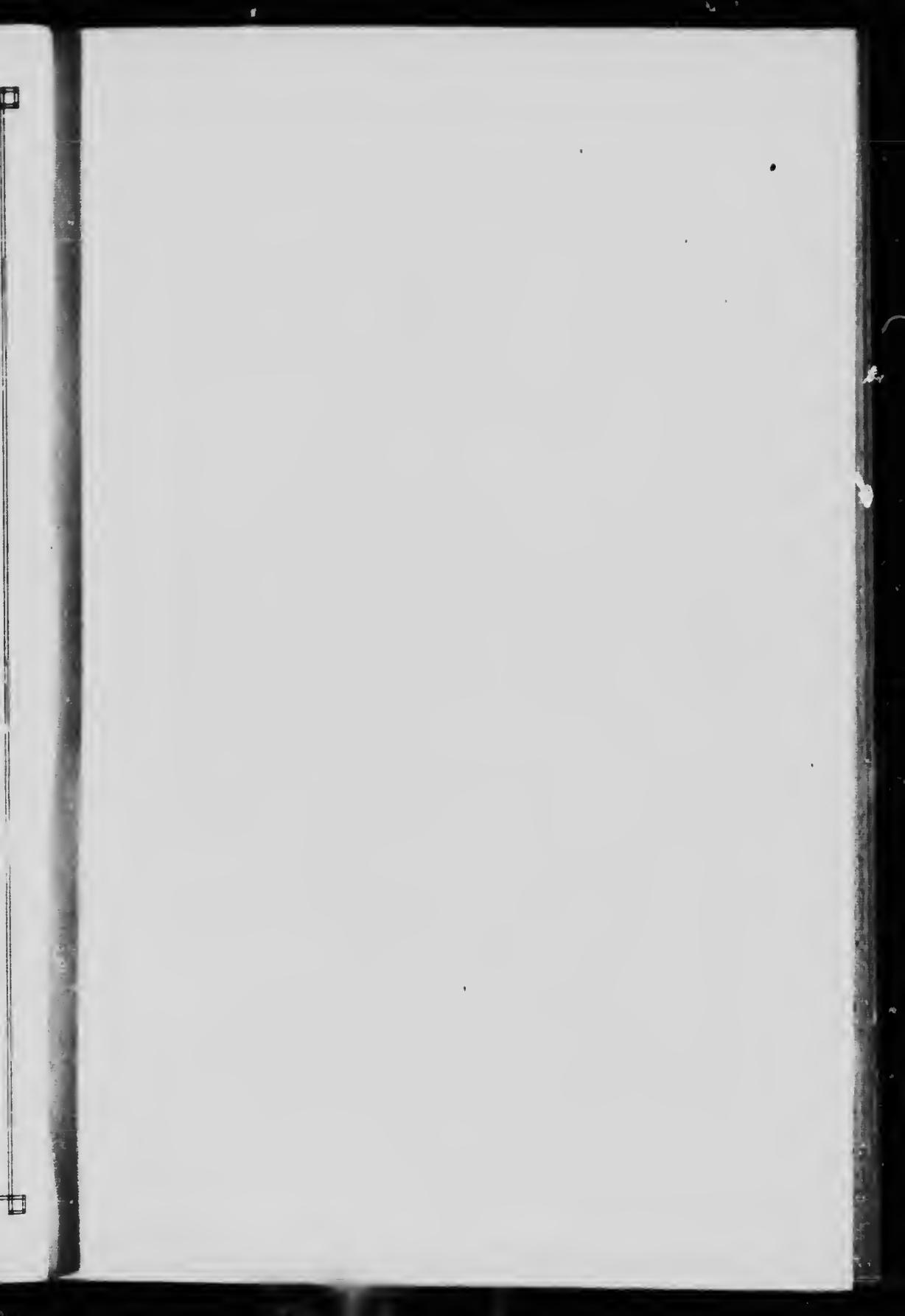
ANNOUNCEMENT

coast line for boating and bathing. There are sweet-smelling orchards and leafy groves. The summer days are balmy, the nights cool and sleep-inducing.

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General Passenger Agent, Dominion Atlantic Railway
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Kentville, Nova Scotia.





Evangeline—from a painting by Thos. Faed. R. A. (used in the first illustrated edition of the poem).



Introduction to Evangeline

A rare enchantment rests upon the place
Where Gabriel wooed and won Evangeline,
O'er all the Minas marshland, emerald-green,
Lies the soft spell of a romantic race.

THE subtle spirit of romance that envelops the ancient country of Acadie or Acadia, now Nova Scotia, and that belongs in equal measure to few other parts of the American continent, can hardly be said to have its source in any special episode of the history of the country, but rather seems to be begotten largely by the landscape itself. Yet there are certain definite facts of the history that stir the imagination of all readers and quicken the interest of even the most casual visitor to the Acadian shores. The country called Acadie or Acadia, which in the widest interpretation ever given its boundaries included the peninsula of Nova Scotia, the province of New Brunswick, and a certain portion of eastern Maine, was first visited by French explorers in 1604. In that year the adventurous Samuel de Champlain, "the first great name in Canadian history," with his noble associates, Sieur de Monts, who had been commissioned lieutenant-general of Acadie, and Monsieur Jean de Biencourt Poutrincourt, crossed the ocean from Havre de Grace or Dieppe and sailed into the Bay of Fundy, and from there into the sheltered Annapolis Basin. On the shores of the Basin, a little farther down than the present town of Annapolis, the party landed and for a short time stayed.

Then they sailed away to St. Croix, where some of the party wintered, but many died. The next summer the survivors came back to the spot where they had first landed, and there established themselves, calling their new settlement by the familiar name Port Royal and setting the French flag flying over these western shores. Henceforth, though its progress was for a few years interrupted, Port Royal was the acknowledged fellow capital with the later founded Quebec of the great country in the western world known as New France. The first winter in Port Royal of the noble adventurers and the party they had brought with them was signalized by the now historic founding of the jovial *Ordre de Bon Temps*, which has been commemorated over and over in poems relating to the earliest settlement of this famous land. "A good and joyous company of gentlemen," says Ferland, "was united about Poutrincourt, among whom were to be remarked his son, the young Biencourt, Champlain, Louis Hébert, and probably Claude de la Tour, as well as his young son, Charles Amador de la Tour."

The event of Acadian history that is best known to the world is the expulsion of the French people at large from Nova Scotia in 1755, a tragedy which makes the historic basis of and affords the picturesque and tragical setting for the sad tale *Evangeline*, created by Longfellow, and justly considered by the world one of the finest triumphs of English narrative verse. The people who in 1755 suffered expatriation from their peaceful homes were chiefly descendants of French farmers and tradesmen, industrious colonists brought hither between 1632 and 1651, shortly after the founding of Port Royal, by Messieurs de Razilly, Charnisay, and

Charles de la Tour—their native homes in Europe having been on the marshy west coast of France, the provinces of Rochelle, Saintonge, and Poitou, within the limits of the modern department of Vendée and Charente Inférieure. At first these emigrants to Acadie confined themselves chiefly to what is now the county of Annapolis, about the river and the marshes, or else to the farther south Atlantic seaboard, near the dividing line between Shelburne and Queens, but about 1680 a few families at Port Royal more adventurous than the rest pushed up the Bay of Fundy into Minas Basin and established themselves with great satisfaction in the fertile country now included in the County of Kings.

To the neighbourhood of the Grand Pré, where they cleared their farms, they were naturally soon followed by others, and by the beginning of the eighteenth century the population had spread over the wide district of Minas; across the Cornwallis River into many parts of the equally fertile district of Rivière aux Canards; to Piziquid, which became after the expulsion the townships of Falmouth and Windsor, in the county of Hants; and across Minas Basin to the Colchester and Cumberland County shores. Long before the expulsion, the districts of Minas and Rivière aux Canards and the settlements near Minas in the District of Piziquid had become by all means the most prosperous and independent part of Acadia, the people industriously cultivating wheat, rye, barley, maize, root-crops, and flax; dyking the marshes, from which they gathered annually great quantities of hay, raising apples, which they pressed into cider, and accumulating fine herds of horned cattle, numbers of horses, and



In the ancient fortress, Annapolis Royal. "Green ramparts mindful in their quiet sleep of many an old assault."



many sheep. Much of their surplus produce they transported to Louisburg or Annapolis Royal in small schooners or sloops or else sold to agents who had established truck houses on the Basin shore, and until the fortress of Louisburg was captured under Pepperrell in 1745 it was a continual source of annoyance and apprehension to the English authorities at Annapolis Royal that this very natural trade with Louisburg persisted in going on.

In 1710 Port Royal was finally captured for England, and three years later by the Treaty of Utrecht "Acadia or Nova Scotia," as it was designated, was formally ceded to the British Crown. With this important event of history, began in Acadia the permanent rule of a French population by an English military garrison, and this military rule went on uninterruptedly until 1749, when Colonel Edward Cornwallis was sent from England by the Lords of Trade with a colony consisting largely of disbanded soldiers and sailors to found the town of Halifax on Chebucto Bay. With Cornwallis' coming the military rule of the province was abolished, and a civil government, with Halifax as the capital, took its place, but the subjects of the new government, as of the old, were preponderatingly not English, but French.

In the treaty of Utrecht it was clearly stated that such of the French inhabitants of Acadia as were willing to continue in the province under British rule would be welcome to do so, but that any who chose might remove with their effects within a year. After the expiration of a year, however, those who remained must take an unqualified oath of allegiance to the new power. During the year very few removed, but England had left

In the ancient fortress, Annapolis Royal. "Green ramparts mindful in their quiet sleep of many an old assault."

the people in the exercise of the religion of their fathers, and, owing to strong national sympathy, it was seventeen years before they could be persuaded by the authorities at Halifax to take an oath of allegiance which in the judgment of any civilized community would make such people safe subjects of a government under which they lived. The terms of this oath were not such as would make it obligatory on the people to take arms on behalf of England in the event of war between the two countries, and from time to time a more unqualified oath was demanded of them. To such demand they always replied that in case of war they would remain neutral and that they would positively take no stronger oath than that they had already taken. When Cornwallis came, empowered by England at last to establish civil government and promote settlement, he insisted on this oath, but as strongly as ever the people refused to take it. From July, 1750, to July, 1756, Colonel Charles Lawrence was Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, and from July, 1756, to October, 1760, Governor-in-Chief, the actual command of the province devolving solely upon him after October, 1753. Lawrence was a soldier, and whether he was as utterly unscrupulous and cruel as some writers have made him out or not, it is evident that tenderness and pity were not his distinguishing traits. In 1745, William Shirley, who was then Governor of Massachusetts, had planned, and through the almost fanatical zeal of New England militia troops had carried out, the destruction of the fortress of Louisburg, and Lawrence and Shirley were in frequent communication, and in regard to the necessity of sweeping the French from the continent were entirely of one mind.

By common understanding, the province of Acadia, as we have said, anciently comprised roughly the two provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and a portion of eastern Maine, but when the country was finally ceded to England in 1713 the boundaries of it were left uncertain. When the matter became a subject of discussion the French claimed that they had relinquished to Britain only the peninsula of Nova Scotia, while the English claimed the whole of the ancient territory. At last to make secure their claim that Nova Scotia reached only to the isthmus of Chignecto, in 1749 the French Governor of Quebec ordered a fort built just across the little Missiquash River, on the New Brunswick side of the isthmus, and there in the face of the English authorities at Halifax set the French flag flying. The second measure proposed in the destruction of French power was the capture of this fort, which bore the name Beauséjour, and though the plan originated with Lawrence, it was warmly seconded by Shirley, who sent from Massachusetts for the enterprise a little over two thousand militia troops. The commander of this force, which in June, 1755, successfully besieged Beauséjour, was a militia lieutenant-colonel of Marshfield, Massachusetts, named John Winslow, and soon after the fort surrendered Winslow received a fresh commission. The question of forcibly removing the Acadians from Nova Scotia in case they still persisted in remaining, as they claimed, neutral had evidently been for a good while in the minds of both Lawrence and Shirley, and the time in the opinion of both these governors had now come where this radical measure should be carried out. Accordingly, Lawrence sent orders to Captain Hand-

field, a regular officer at Annapolis, and Captain Alexander Murray at Windsor, to announce to the people at these centres that the Government had determined to remove them, and to take decisive steps to prevent their escaping the troops which guarded the forts where they held command. To Winslow he gave orders to sail down to Grand Pré with a sufficient force from the captured Beauséjour and pursue a similar course with the Acadians at Minas and Rivière aux Canards, as well as Cobequid. On the 15th of August, Winslow with three hundred men reached Minas Basin, but instead of anchoring there he sailed on to Windsor to arrange with Captain Murray the details of the deportation. Within the precincts of the little fort at Windsor, known as Fort Edward, which had been built by Lawrence's orders five years before, the two commanders drew up a proclamation to be issued in both the district of Piziquid, where Fort Edward was, and at Minas, in which they ordered the males of the various settlements, both old and young, to assemble in their respective churches on the 5th of September, to receive fresh instructions from the Government. On the day named, four hundred and eighteen men and boys from both sides of the Cornwallis River gathered in the church of St. Charles at Grand Pré, and immediately Winslow ordered his troops to surround the church. Then from somewhere within the sacred inclosure, in full uniform and with due impressiveness, he read to his homespun-clad audience, sunburnt with open-air toil, able to understand him only as his words were translated to them by an interpreter, the following mandate from the governor, who spoke with the authority of the King:



INTRODUCTORY

17

"Gentlemen: I have received from His Excellency, Governor Lawrence, the King's Commission which I have in my hand, and by whose orders you are Convened together, to Manifest to you His Majesty's Final resolution to the French Inhabitants of this his Province of Nova Scotia, who for almost half a Century have had more Indulgence Granted them than any of his Subjects in any part of his Dominions; what use you have made of them you yourselves best know.

"The Part of Duty I am now upon is what though Necessary is Very Disagreeable to my natural make and Temper, as I know it must be Grievous to you who are of the same Specia. But it is not my business to animadvert, but to obey Such orders as I receive, and therefore without Hesitation Shall Deliver you his Majesty's orders and Instructions, Viz:— That your Lands and Tenements, Cattle of all kinds, and Live Stock of all Sorts are Forfeited to the Crown with all other your Effects, Saving your money and Household Goods, and you your Selves to be removed from this his Province.

"Thus it is Peremptorily his Majesty's orders That the whole French Inhabitants of these Districts be removed, and I am Through his Majesty's Goodness Directed to allow you Liberty to Carry of your money and Household Goods as Many as you Can without Discomod'ing the Vessels you Go in. I shall do Everything in my Power that all Those Goods be Secured to you and that you are Not Molested in Carrying of them off, and also that whole Families Shall go in the Same Vessel, and make this remove, which I am sensible must give you a great Deal of Trouble, as Easy as his Majesty's Service will admit, and hope that in whatever part of the world you may Fall you may be Faithful Subjects, a Peaceable and happy People. I Must also Inform you That it is his Majesty's Pleasure that you remain in Security under the Inspection and Direction of the Troops that I have the Honour to Command."



Warlike relics. Officers' Quarters, Old Fort, Annapolis Royal.

He then declared them prisoners to the King.

From the journal of Colonel Winslow and the correspondence that went on between him at Grand Pré and Captain Murray at Piziquid, as well as from letters between Winslow and Governor Lawrence, we have very intimate knowledge of immediately subsequent events. The prisoners were almost stunned and could hardly believe that such drastic measures had really been determined on. Soon they asked to be allowed to send word to their families, and after some deliberation ten of the older men were given leave to go under guard to their homes across the river and ten to their homes at Grand Pré, and announce the now certain doom of the whole population. In order to get bread for not only the Acadians until they should be deported, but no doubt for Winslow's soldiers as well, certain men were allowed to operate the mills, but for the most part the prisoners were held, first in the church, then on the three sloops in the Basin that had brought Winslow's troops from Fort Beauséjour. On the 7th of September Winslow writes Murray:

"Things are as well as we could expect and the people as easy as I should be were I in their case. I have permitted the millers to attend to their usual duty, and ten of the River Canard &c., and ten of Grand Pré at a time to provide for the rest, and had come in the first day '18 if their list is right, which I am now approving, 34 heads of families sick, and this day have had 6 fresh bands come in, and on the whole believe there is very few indeed intend to escape."

On the 8th of September Murray answers:

"I received your favour and am extremely pleased that things are so clever at Grand Pré, and that the

poor devils are so resigned. Here they are more patient than I could have expected for people in their circumstances, and which still surprises me more is the indifference of the women, who really are or seem quite unconcerned. When I think of those of Annapolis, I applaud our thought of summoning them in. I am afraid there will be some lives lost before they are got together. You know our soldiers hate them and if they can find a pretence to kill them they will. . . . I long much to see the poor wretches embarked and our affair a little settled and then I will do myself the pleasure of meeting you and drinking their good voyage."

The vessels in which the people were to be removed had been ordered from Boston, all probably from the merchants, Charles Apthorp and Thomas Hancock, who almost from the beginning of civil authority, had been the government's commissioned agents to supply the garrison at Halifax with clothing and food. But for some time the vessels did not come, and it was not until a month from the date of the men's imprisonment in the church that it was found possible to embark the first of the families. "This day" (October 8th), writes Winslow in his journal, "began to Embarke the Inhabitants, who went off Very Solentarily and unwillingly, the women in Great Distress Carrying off Their Children In their arms. Others Carrying their Decript Parents in their Carts and all their Goods, moving in Great Confusion and appeared a Scéen of woe and Distres." By the beginning of November, 1510 persons had gone in nine vessels, and Winslow writes that he has more than six hundred still to send. Because of the scarcity of vessels not all were removed before the 20th of December, but in the meantime by Winslow's



orders all the houses and barns and mills, and the churches of both Grand Pré and River Canard, had been burned, only an occasional building of any kind being left standing.

From Winslow's journal it seems clear that fewer of the inhabitants of Minas and River Canard were able or cared to escape to the woods and remain fugitives in the country than was the case at Beaubassin, Annapolis Royal, Piziquid, or Cobequid (Truro), at the last of which places the whole population early took flight and got away. It is certain, however, that a number of the Minas Acadians did thus escape deportation. To follow the wanderings of the six or seven thousand French who were forcibly removed from Nova Scotia is too long and too sorrowful a task to attempt here. They were landed from the crowded sloops in which they were packed, in larger or smaller groups, at the ports of Boston, New London, and Portland, and on the coasts of Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, not a few of them also being put ashore on the banks of the Delaware River, a little below Philadelphia. Instead of thrifty and hopeful people they were now despondent paupers, and because of their poverty, and still more in some cases because of their hated nationality and their religion, they were received most unwillingly where they were allowed to land, and in the communities that admitted them were treated as outcasts and pests. The only colony in America where any of them were received kindly was French Louisiana, where in 1765 a considerable number of them finally wandered the long distance on foot from Maryland. At New Orleans the authorities pitied their forlorn condition and in a short time gave them

lands at Attakapas and Opelousas, in the luxuriant country that borders the Têche and the Vermillion, where they found sugar-planting and tobacco and cotton and indigo raising awaiting their toil. That some of these Louisiana refugees were from Minas is made certain by the fact that in recent years the registers of the parish of St. Charles at Grand Pré have been found with their descendants. In Boston, a recent writer says, two thousand Acadians were at first given some sort of rude shelter on the Common, but these were soon distributed among the neighbouring towns. Thus placed, they were not permitted to visit any of their kindred or friends in adjoining towns, under the penalty of ten lashes and five days imprisonment. After the peace of 1763 a good many of these wanderers in the various northern colonies were allowed to travel back through the forests to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, and it is their descendants or descendants of their neighbours who fled to the woods who dwell so prosperously and peaceably on the shores of St. Mary's Bay, in Digby County, to-day.

The general social condition and habits of life of the Minas Acadians by common consent have been much idealized by Longfellow in *Evangeline*. A French writer, Abbé Raynal, who personally knew nothing of the people, about 1770 wrote a description of them which Longfellow closely copied. The Abbé says they were a gentle, kindly, considerate, moral, industrious people, obedient to authority, reverent in religion, regularly giving a twenty-seventh part of their harvests to the church, always ready to share what they had with each other, and never having quarrels which they had to settle by law. Longfellow writes:



EVANGELINE

23

Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian
farmers,—

Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were they
free from

Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of
republics.

Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their
windows;

But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of
the owners;

There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in
abundance.

Mr. Parkman gives them full credit for industry and common morality, and above all general submissiveness to the church, but he says that like the Canadians "they were a litigious race, and neighbours often quarrelled about their boundaries." "Nor were they," he writes, "without a bountiful share of jealousy, gossip and backbiting, to relieve the monotony of their lives; and every village had its turbulent spirits, sometimes by fits, though rarely long, contumacious towards the curé, the guide, counsellor and ruler of his flock." "It is very possible," says Mr. Longfellow's biographer, his brother, "that the poet painted in too soft colors the rude robustness which may have characterized the peasants of Grand Pré; as artists are apt to soften the features and clean the faces of the Italian peasant boys they put on their canvas. The picture of Acadian life, however, was but a part of his background. The scenery of Grand Pré he painted from books, having never visited the place, but it is sufficiently accurate for his purpose."

Not only because of the strictly literary purpose of the poet in writing *Evangeline*, but because of the now comparatively remote period when he wrote, we find in



the poem no trace of the controversial spirit which for the past thirty years has entered into most accounts of the expulsion of the French from Nova Scotia. Mr. Parkman, not only a delightful historian but for the most part a judicious and fair-minded one, in his *Montcalm and Wolfe* has said that while the measure was harsh even to cruelty the English authorities had been most tolerant in their treatment of the Acadians and were obliged at last to act in some very decided way. Other writers, particularly those of French origin, argue that the Acadians were victims not only of religious bigotry and national dislike but still more of the rapacity and greed of Lawrence and his Council,

NOTE.—The chief authority for the details of the expulsion of the Acadians is Colonel John Winslow's Journal and the correspondence recorded there between Winslow and Captain Murray at Piziquid, and Governor Lawrence at Halifax, during the expulsion. This journal is printed entire in Vols. 3 and 4 of the Nova Scotia Historical Society's Collections, and is very interesting. The part of it relating strictly to the expulsion is printed in Vol. 3, that which relates to the siege of Beauséjour, though antedating the expulsion, is in Vol. 4. From this journal Mr. Francis Parkman chiefly drew the facts concerning the expulsion that he gives in his *Montcalm and Wolfe*. Mr. Parkman, as is well known, in his account of the relations between the government and the subject French during the long period between 1713 and 1755, very largely defends the government. With great acrimony Mr. Edward Richard, in his *Acadia, Missing Links in a Lost Chapter in American History* (New York, 1895), and other recent writers, attack Lawrence and his council, charging that their motives in removing the Acadians were entirely selfish, and their hearts devoid of common pity. Dr. Edward Channing in his recent *History of the United States* says very judiciously: "The Acadians, unfortunately for themselves, lived in one of the most important strategic points on the Atlantic coast, holding the southern entrance to the Gulf of St. Lawrence . . . had their homes been a hundred miles farther south or north they might have lived placidly and died peacefully where they were born." A lengthy account of the Acadians at Minas and River Canard, and of their dispersion, as of the subsequent settlement of their lands by New England people, will be found in *Eaton's History of Kings County, Heart of the Acadian Land*, published in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1910.



who had long had their eye upon the people's cultivated lands. That Lawrence was none too scrupulous in matters of humanity we may well believe, but that the chief or indeed a leading object of the Nova Scotia authorities was to get for their own gain the lands of the Acadians we see not the slightest reason to think. The fact that from 1755 to 1759 the lands for the most part lay ungranted to new owners is, we feel sure, sufficient refutation of the charge that the governor and his council took the extreme course they did from motives of personal greed.

How Longfellow came to write *Evangeline* is a matter not without interest. Some time between 1830 and 1832 there came to Boston to reside a Mr. George Mordaunt Haliburton, who had always previously lived in Nova Scotia. Between 1835 and 1838 he and his wife were parishioners of the Rev. Horace Lorenzo Conolly, Rector of St. Matthew's Protestant Episcopal Church, South Boston. In April, 1838, Mr. Conolly left St. Matthew's Parish and apparently went to Salem to live, and there he and Nathaniel Hawthorne were on terms of intimacy. One day Hawthorne took his clerical friend to Cambridge to dine with Mr. Longfellow at Craigie House, and at dinner Mr. Conolly said that he had been trying to get Hawthorne to write a story on an incident which had been told him by a late parishioner of his, Mrs. Haliburton, connected with the removal of the French from Nova Scotia and their wanderings after they left their native homes. The story was of a young Acadian girl, who at the dispersion of her people from Minas had been separated from her betrothed lover, and who had sought him, as he had sought her, vainly, for many

years, until at last she had found him in a hospital, where he lay dying. The story touched Longfellow, who said to Hawthorne: "If you really do not want this incident for a story let me have it for a poem." Hawthorne consented, and in time Mr. Longfellow began the poem. In Hawthorne's *American Note-Books*, under date of October 24, 1838, occurs the following memorandum:

"H. L. C.— heard from a French Canadian a story of a young couple in Acadie. On their marriage day all the men of the province were summoned to assemble in the church to hear a proclamation. When assembled, they were seized and shipped off to be distributed through New England, among them the new bridegroom. His bride set off in search of him, wandered about New England all her lifetime, and at last when she was old, she found her bridegroom on his death-bed. The shock was so great that it killed her likewise."

The statement in this memorandum of Hawthorne's that "H. L. C." had heard the story from a French Canadian is probably due to a slight misunderstanding on Hawthorne's part. Mrs. Haliburton, who before her marriage was Maria Peoples, a woman of New England birth, was undoubtedly, as the statement in Longfellow's life goes, the person who told the Rector of St. Matthew's the Acadian tale. She, however, may have heard it from an Acadian.

A story somewhat similar to that which forms the basis of Longfellow's poem is said by a recent writer to have been preserved as a tradition among the Acadians who found their way to Louisiana. Emmeline Labiche, the story goes, was a young orphan Acadian girl, who at the time of the expulsion was



about to be married to Louis Arsenaux. The couple had been lovers from childhood and when Emmeline saw Louis torn from the village and taken ahead of her into exile her grief was pitiful to see. Soon she, too, was exiled, and with others of her people set down on the shores of Maryland. From this colony she travelled on foot the long overland journey to the Tête country in Louisiana, where suddenly one day she came upon Louis. To his side she flew, crying out in an ecstasy of joy and love. "He turned ashy pale, and hung his head without uttering a word. 'Louis,' she said, 'why do you turn your eyes away? I am still your Emmeline, your betrothed!' With quivering lips and trembling voice he answered: 'Emmeline, do not speak so kindly to me; I am unworthy of you, I can love you no longer. I have pledged my faith to another. Tear from your heart the remembrance of the past and forgive me.' Then he wheeled away and disappeared in the forest." From that moment Emmeline's reason was gone. At last she died insane.

The poem *Evangeline* was completed and published in 1847, and its enthusiastic reception by the public and especially by Mr. Longfellow's literary compeers must have given the poet many hours of deep satisfaction. Some friendly critics at first objected to the English dactylic hexameters which the poet had chosen for his verse, but the measure lends itself so well to the "lingering melancholy which marks the greater part of the poem" that it is doubtful if this criticism was long felt to be warranted. Apart from all technical discussion of its form, the poem charmed by its touching story of constant love and by the beauty of its descriptions, and it pleased the public well as being in theme

and scene strictly American. When he had finished reading it, Dr. Holmes wrote the author: "The story is beautiful in conception as in execution. I read it as I should have listened to some exquisite symphony." In the same vein Mr. John Lothrop Motley wrote: "I find it in many respects superior to anything you have published. As it is the longest, so it is the most complete, the most artistically finished, of all your poems. I know nothing better in the language or in any language than the landscape painting." From London Mr. John Forster wrote: "How beautiful and masterly your poem is. . . . Your pictures are charming throughout, radiant with colour, rich in emotion; and you do as much with a single word very often as the best of our old poets."

When he began his poem Longfellow was undecided as to the name he should give his heroine. On the 7th of December, 1845, he wrote in his journal: "I know not what name to give to, — not my new baby, but my new poem. Shall it be 'Gabrielle' or 'Celestine' or 'Evangeline'?" The name he fixed upon he probably finally chose because it seemed to him, as it seems to us, much the most musical of the three. Of the persons who figure as actors in the tale of *Evangeline* only the man René le Blanc had an actual existence.

That Longfellow should have chosen Philadelphia as the place of the meeting of the long separated lovers, Evangeline and Gabriel, is not hard to account for. He knew that many of the Acadians had been set down near the Quaker City, and the terrible yellow fever pestilence there of the year 1795 was an historic event that might well serve as the occasion of Gabriel's death. Once in his earlier life, while waiting in New York for



Grand Pré is now a rich but scattered farming community.

the sailing of the packet ship which was to take him to Europe, Longfellow made a short visit to Philadelphia. During this visit, as he was strolling about the streets, he came one morning on the pleasant enclosure of the Pennsylvania Hospital, between 8th and 9th streets. The picture of this hospital remained so fixed in his mind, his biographer tells us, that many years after, he made it the scene of the last meeting of his Acadian lovers. Another building in Philadelphia that must have attracted him strongly at this time was the Swedes' Church at Wicaco, on the Delaware River, the oldest church in Philadelphia, the building of which was begun in 1698, for this church he refers to near the close of his poem.

Longfellow's description of the landscape about Grand Pré, though attractive, can hardly be said to be strictly accurate. "Primeval forest" there was in Nova Scotia, but it was not as near the village of Grand Pré as the poet evidently supposed. The "meadows" that he says stretched to the eastward in reality lay chiefly to the north. Over these marsh-lands, considerable tracts of which the Acadians had dyked from the sea, the tides were never allowed to flow if the farmers could prevent their doing so, for any such inundation destroyed, or seriously injured, the hay-crops for several succeeding years. But such slight lapses in matters of detail have no power to mar the effect of the poem as its pictures and its pathetic story lie in our minds. The poem throughout has breadth and movement and fine rhythmic measure, and as long as the language lasts it cannot cease to charm.

Since Longfellow wrote his *Evangeline*, the "Minas marsh-country" has inspired many less known poets



EVANGELINE

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and has woven about itself a considerable body of attractive verse. The chief motive of this verse has not been the Acadian occupation of the country or the sad dispersion of the unhappy French, but rather the perpetual haunting charm of the Minas landscape, a charm that is inexpressibly subtle and powerful in its influence on the mind. Since the first tillers of the upland and builders of the dykes were removed, the inclosed marshes have grown far greater in extent and the farms and orchards much more luxuriant and beautiful to see, but it is the region's native witchery that casts the chief spell over the mind, and no visitor with artistic sensibility but will keep forever in memory the lovely lights, always changing, on the Basin of Minas, the soft white mists that encircle stern Blomidon, and the exquisite play of sunlight and shadow on the wide expanse of the verdant Grand Pré.



2



Photos by Edith S. Watson

1. A modern "Evangeline."
2. Descendants of exiled Acadians who found their way home.
3. "The wheel and the loom are still busy."
4. Change and the modern spirit have passed by these contented households.



*Where Evangeline's People
Dwell To-day*

FROM Weymouth the traveler should visit the district of Clare, where dwell the descendants of exiled Acadians, who found their way back home from their places of banishment. The Acadians make comfortable provision for tourists at Meteghan and elsewhere. After the expulsion the scattered Acadians gradually gathered together in groups, as crystals form in a solution. They found it hard to blend with the alien peoples who surrounded them. Even in Quebec they tended to cling together. Even in French Louisiana they formed a community apart, where they retain their characteristics and their name to this day, though in the midst of a kindred race and language. Indomitable is their patient tenacity. A band of them came back and settled on the narrow bays west of Halifax harbor — the district now known as Chezzetcook. Larger bands came to St. Mary's Bay, and to the extreme southwest corner of the province, the bewildering labyrinth of inlets, lakes, and islands around Tusket, where their compatriots had formerly rested undisturbed.

In Clare they have kept themselves, as it were, unspotted from the world. Change and the modern spirit have passed by their contented homesteads. Here is the old Acadian speech, the tongue of Evangeline, unmodified by time. Here are the old costumes, the old customs, the old superstitions. The people do not gather into villages, but string their little white cot-



tages for miles along the highway, which thus becomes an endless village street. Far back behind each house extends a narrow strip of a farm; for each landholder at his death divides his farm equally among his children — who are always numerous — and he so divides that each shall have a fair frontage on the street or on the water. The Evangeline pilgrim, after having digested Longfellow and Parkman, and soaked himself in the beauty of Evangeline's Land, should come to Clare and see for himself, face to face, Evangeline's people in the flesh.





Evangeline

PRELUDE

This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines
and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct
in the twilight,
Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their
bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neigh-
boring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail
of the forest.

This is the forest primeval; but here are the hearts
that beneath it
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland
the voice of the huntsman?
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Aus-
dian farmers,—
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the
woodlands,
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image
of heaven?
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers for-
ever departed!
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts
of October
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them
far o'er the ocean.

Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village
of Grand-Pré.

Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures,
and is patient,
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's
devotion,
List to the mournful tradition still sung by the pines
of the forest;
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy.

PART THE FIRST

I

In the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin
of Minas,
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-Pré*
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched
to the eastward,
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks
without number.
Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had raised with
labor incessant,
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated seasons the
flood-gates
Opened and welcomed the sea to wander at will o'er
the meadows.
West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards
and cornfields
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain; and away
to the northward

*Beaubassin, Beauséjour, Gaspereau, Grand Pré, Riviere aux Canard, Port
Royal,—never were names more musical attached to a country than these.



The Minas region. Blomidon in the distance.



Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the
mountains

Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty
Atlantic

Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their sta-
tion descended.

There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian
village.

Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and
of hemlock,

Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign
of the Henries.

Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-windows; and
gables projecting

Over the basement below protected and shaded the
doorway.

There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when
brightly the sunset

Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the
chimneys,

Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in
kirtles

Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the
golden

Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles
within doors

Mingled their sound with the whirl of the wheels and
the songs of the maidens.

Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and
the children

Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to
bless them.



EVANGELINE

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Reverend walked he among them; and up rose ma-
trons and maidens,

Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate
welcome.

Then came the laborers home from the field, and se-
renely the sun sank

Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from
the belfry

Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of the
village

Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense
ascending,

Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and
contentment.

Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian
farmers,—

Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were
they free from

Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice
of republics.

Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their
windows;

But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts
of the owners;

There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in
abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the
Basin of Minas,

Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of
Grand-Pré,

Dwelt on his goodly acres; and with him, directing
his household,



"When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at Noontide
Flagons of home-brewed ale."



EVANGELINE

43

Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of
the village.

Stalworth and stately in form was the man of seventy
winters;

Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with
snow-flakes;

White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as
brown as the oak-leaves.

Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen sum-
mers;

Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the
thorn by the wayside,

Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown
shade of her tresses!

Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed
in the meadows.

When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at
noontide

Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah! fair in sooth was the
maiden.

Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the bell
from its turret

Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with
his hyssop

Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon
them,

Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of
beads and her missal,

Wearing her Norman cap and her kirtle o. blue, and
the ear-rings

Brought in the olden time from France, and since, as
an heirloom,

Handed down from mother to child, through long generations.

But a celestial brightness — a more ethereal beauty —
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when, after
confession,

Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon her.

When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of
exquisite music.

Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house of
the farmer
Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea; and
a shady
Sycamore grew by the door, with a woodbine wreath-
ing around it.
Rudely carved was the porch, with seats beneath; and
a footpath
Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared in the
meadow.
Under the sycamore-tree were hives overhung by a
penthouse,
Such as the traveller sees in regions remote by the
roadside,
Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed image of
Mary.
Farther down, on the slope of the hill, was the well
with its moss-grown
Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for
the horses.
Shielding the house from storms, on the north, were
the barns and the farm-yard;



EVANGELINE

45

There stood the broad-wheeled wains and the antique
ploughs and the harrows;

There were the folds for the sheep; and there, in his
feathered seraglio,

Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock, with
the selfsame

Voice that in ages of old had startled the penitent
Peter.

Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves a vil-
lage. In each one

Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch; and a
staircase,

Under the sheltering eaves, led up to the odorous corn-
loft.

There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek and inno-
cent inmates

Murmuring ever of love; while above in the variant
breezes

Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and sang of
mutation.

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the farmer
of Grand-Pré

Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed
his household.

Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and opened
his missal,

Fixed his eyes upon her as the saint of his deepest
devotion;

Happy was he who might touch her hand or the hem
of her garment!

Many a suitor came to her door, by the darkness be-
friended,

And, as he knocked and waited to hear the sound of
her footsteps,
Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the
knocker of iron;
Or, at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the vil-
lage,
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as he
whispered
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the
music.
But among all who came young Gabriel only was
welcome;
Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith,
Who was a mighty man in the village, and honored
of all men;
For since the birth of time, throughout all ages and
nations,
Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by the
people.
Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from
earliest childhood
Grew up together as brother and sister; and Father
Felician,
Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had taught
them their letters
Out of the selfsame book, with the hymns of the
church and the plain-song.
But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson
completed,
Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the
blacksmith.
There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes to
behold him



EVANGELINE

47

Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a
plaything,
Nailing the shoe in its place; while near him the tire
of the cart-wheel
Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of cinders.
Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gathering
darkness
Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through every
cranny and crevice,
Warr, by the forge within they watched the laboring
bellows,
And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired in
the ashes,
Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going into
the chapel.*
Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the scap of the
eagle,
Down the hillside bounding, they glided away o'er the
meadow.
Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests
on the rafters,
Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone, which
the swallow
Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the sight
of its fledglings;
Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of the
swallow!
Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer
were children.
He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of
the morning,

* The French have another saying similar to this, that they were guests going into the wedding.



"St. Eulalie," summer home of Sir Robert Weatherbe, at Grand Pré.

Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought
into action.

She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of a
woman.

"Sunshine of Saint Eulalie" was she called; for that
was the sunshine

Which, as the farmers believed, would load their
orchards with apples;

She too would bring to her husband's house delight
and abundance,

Filling it full of love and the ruddy faces of children.

II

Now had the season returned, when the nights grow
colder and longer,

And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion enters.
Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air, from
the ice-bound,

Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical is-
lands.

Harvests were gathered in; and wild with the winds
of September

Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of old with
the angel.

All the signs foretold a winter long and inclement.

Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had hoarded
their honey

Till the hives overflowed; and the Indian hunters as-
serted

Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur of the
foxes.

Such was the advent of autumn. Then followed that
beautiful season,

Called by the pious Acadian peasants the Summer of
All-Saints!

Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light;
and the landscape

Lay as if new-created in all the freshness of childhood.

Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the restless
heart of the ocean

Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were in
harmony blended.

Voices of children at play, the crowing of cocks in the
farm-yards,

Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and the cooing of
pigeons,

All were subdued and low as the murmurs of love,
and the great sun

Looked with the eye of love through the golden va-
pors around him;

While arrayed in its robes of russet and scarlet and
yellow,

Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glittering tree
of the forest

Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian adorned with
mantles and jewels.

Now recommenced the reign of rest and affection
and stillness.

Day with its burden and heat had departed, and twi-
light descending

Brought back the evening star to the sky, and the
herds to the homestead.

Pawing the ground they came, and resting their necks
on each other,



EVANGELINE

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And with their nostrils distended inhaling the freshness of evening.

Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's beautiful heifer,

Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon that waved from her collar,

Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious of human affection.

Then came the shepherd back with his bleating flocks from the seaside,

Where was their favorite pasture. Behind them followed the watch-dog,

Patient, full of importance, and grand in the pride of his instinct,

Walking from side to side with a lordly air, and superbly

Waving his bushy tail, and urging forward the stragglers;

Regent of flocks was he when the shepherd slept; their protector,

When from the forest at night, through the starry silence, the wolves howled.

Late, with the rising moon, returned the wains from the marshes,

Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with its odor.

Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on their manes and their fetlocks,

While aloft on their shoulders the wooden and ponderous saddles,

Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned with tassels of crimson,

Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks heavy with blossoms.



Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and yielded their
udders
Unto the milkmaid's hand; whilst loud and in regular
cadence
Into the sounding pails the foaming streamlets de-
scended.
Lowing of cattle and peals of laughter were heard in
the farm-yard,
Echoed back by the barns. Anon they sank into
stillness;
Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the valves of the
barn-doors,
Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a season was silent.

In-doors, warm by the wide-mouthed fireplace, idly
the farmer
Sat in his elbow-chair, and watched how the flames
and the smoke-wreaths
Struggled together like foes in a burning city. Be-
hind him,
Nodding and mocking along the wall with gestures
fantastic,
Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished away into
darkness.
Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back of his arm-
chair
Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter plates
on the dresser
Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of armies
the sunshine.
Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols of
Christmas,



A fair country of jukes and orchards and mighty tides.



Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers before
him
Sang in their Norman orchards and bright Burgundian
vineyards.
Close at her father's side was the gentle Evangeline
seated,
Spinning flax for the loom that stood in the corner
behind her.
Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest was its diligent
shuttle,
While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like the
drone of a bagpipe,
Followed the old man's song, and united the fragments
together.
As in a church, when the chant of the choir at inter-
vals ceases,
Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of the priest
at the altar,
So, in each pause of the song, with measured motion
the clock clicked.

Thus as they sat, there were footsteps heard, and,
suddenly lifted,
Sounded the wooden latch, and the door swung back
on its hinges.
Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it was Basil
the blacksmith,
And by her beating heart Evangeline knew who was
with him.
"Welcome!" the farmer exclaimed, as their footsteps
paused on the threshold,
"Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take thy place
on the settle



EVANGELINE

55

Close by the chimney-side, which is always empty
without thee;

Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and the box of
tobacco;

Never so much thyself art thou as when, through the
curling

Smoke of the pipe or the forge, thy friendly and jovial
face gleams

Round and red as the harvest moon through the mist
of the marshes."

Then, with a smile of content, thus answered Basil the
blacksmith,

Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by the fire-
side:—

"Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever thy jest and
thy ballad!

Ever in cheerfullest mood art thou, when others are
filled with

Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin before
them.

Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst picked up
a horseshoe."

Pausing a moment, to take the pipe that Evangeline
brought him,

And with a coal from the embers had lighted, he slowly
continued:—

"Four days now are passed since the English ships
at their anchors

Ride in the Gaspereau's mouth, with their cannon
pointed again: t us.

What their design may be is unknown; but all are
commanded

On the morrow to meet in the church, where his
Majesty's mandate
Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas! in the
mean time

Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the people."
Then made answer the farmer:—"Perhaps some
friendlier purpose

Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps the harvests
in England

By untimely rains or untimelier heat have been
blighted,

And from our bursting barns they would feed their
cattle and children."

"Not so thinketh the folk in the village," said warmly
the blacksmith,

Shaking his head as in doubt; then, heaving a sigh,
he continued:—

"Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour, nor
Port Royal.

Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk on its
outskirts,

Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate of to-
morrow.

Arms have been taken from us, and warlike weapons
of all kinds;

Nothing is left but the blacksmith's sledge and the
scythe of the mower."

Then with a pleasant smile made answer the jovial
farmer:—

"Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our flocks
and our cornfields,

Safer within these peaceful dikes besieged by the ocean,



EVANGELINE

57

Than our fathers in forts, besieged by the enemy's
cannon.

Fear no evil, my friend, and to-night may no shadow
of sorrow

Fall on this house and hearth; for this is the night
of the contract.

Built are the house and the barn. The merry lads of
the village

Strongly have built them and well; and, breaking the
glebe round about them,

Filled the barn with hay, and the house with food for
a twelvemonth.

René Leblanc will be here anon, with his papers and
inkhorn.

Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the joy of
our children?"

As apart by the window she stood, with her hand in
her lover's,

Blushing Evangeline heard the words that her father
had spoken,

And, as they died on his lips, the worthy notary en-
tered.

III

Bent like a laboring oar, the toils in the surf of the
ocean,

Bent, but not broken, by age was the form of the no-
tary public;

Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of the maize,
hung

Over his shoulders; his forehead was high; and glasses
with horn bows

Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom supernal.

Father of twenty children was he, and more than a
hundred
Children's children rode on his knee, and heard his
great watch tick.
Four long years in the times of the war had he lan-
guished a captive,
Suffering much in an old French fort as the friend of
the English.
Now, though warier grown, without all guile or sus-
picion,
Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient, and simple, and
childlike.
He was beloved by all, and most of all by the children;
For he told them tales of the Loup-garou in the forest,
And of the goblin that came in the night to water the
horses,
And of the white Létiche, the ghost of a child who
unchristened
Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen the chambers
of children;
And how on Christmas eve the oxen talked in the
stable,
And how the fever was cured by a spider shut up in a
nutshell,
And of the marvellous powers of four-leaved clover
and horseshoes,
With whatsoever else was writ in the lore of the village.
Then up rose from his seat by the fireside Basil the
blacksmith,
Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly extending
his right hand,
"Father Leblanc," he exclaimed, "thou hast heard
the talk in the village,



The forge of Basil.

And, perchance, canst tell us some news of these ships
and their errand."

Then with modest demeanor made answer the notary
public,—

"Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet am never
the wiser;

And what their errand may be I know no better than
others.

Yet am I not of those who imagine some evil inten-
tion

Brings them here, for we are at peace; and why then
molest us?"

'God's name!' shouted the hasty and somewhat iras-
cible blacksmith;

"Must we in all things look for the how, and the why,
and the wherefore?

Daily injustice is done, and might is the right of the
strongest!"

But, without heeding his warmth, continued the notary
public,—

"Man is unjust, but God is just; and finally justice
Triumphs; and well I remember a story, that often
consoled me,

When as a captive I lay in the old French fort at
Port Royal."

This was the old man's favorite tale, and he loved to
repeat it

When his neighbors complained that any injustice was
done them.

"Once in an ancient city, whose name I no longer re-
member,

Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of Justice



EVANGELINE

61

Stood in the public square, upholding the scales in its
left hand,

And in its right a sword, as an emblem that justice
presided

Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and homes
of the people.

Even the birds had built their nests in the scales of
the balance,

Having no fear of the sword that flashed in the sun-
shine above them.

But in the course of time the laws of the land were
corrupted;

Might took the place of right, and the weak were
oppressed, and the mighty

Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced in a noble-
man's palace

That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere long a sus-
picion

Fell on an orphan girl who lived as maid in the house-
hold.

She, after form of trial condemned to die on the scaf-
fold,

Patiently met her doom at the foot of the statue of
Justice.

As to her Father in heaven her innocent spirit as-
cended,

Lo! o'er the city a tempest rose; and the bolts of the
thunder

Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in wrath from
its left hand

Down on the pavement below the clattering scales of
the balance,

And in the hollow thereof was found the nest of a
magpie,
Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of pearls was
inwoven."
Silenced, but not convinced, when the story was ended,
the blacksmith
Stood like a man who fain would speak, but findeth
no language;
All his thoughts were congealed into lines on his face,
as the vapors
Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes in the
winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the
table,
Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard with
home-brewed
Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in the
village of Grand-Pré;
While from his pocket the notary drew his papers and
inkhorn,
Wrote with a steady hand the date and the age of the
parties,
Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of sheep and
in cattle.
Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well were
completed,
And the great seal of the law was set like a sun on
the margin.
Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw on the
table
Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces of silver;



EVANGELINE

63

And the notary rising, and blessing the bride and
bridegroom,
Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their
welfare.

Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly bowed and
departed,

While in silence the others sat and mused by the fire-
side,

Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out of its
corner.

Soon was the game begun. In friendly contention
the old men

Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful manoeuvre,
Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach was
made in the king-row.

Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a window's
embrasure,

Sat the lovers and whispered together, beholding the
moon rise

Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of the mead-
ows.

Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of heaven,
Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the
angels.

Thus was the evening passed. Anon the bell from
the belfry

Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew, and
straightway

Rose the guests and departed; and silence reigned in
the household.

Many a farewell word and sweet good-night on the
door-step

Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it with
gladness.
Carefully then were covered the embers that glowed
on the hearth-stone,
And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the
farmer.
Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline fol-
lowed.
Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the dark-
ness,
Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of the
maiden.
Silent she passed through the hall, and entered the
door of her chamber.
Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of white,
and its clothes-press
Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were care-
fully folded
Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline
woven.
This was the precious dower she would bring to her
husband in marriage,
Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her skill
as a housewife.
Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow and
radiant moonlight
Streamed through the windows, and lighted the room,
till the heart of the maiden
Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous tides
of the ocean.
Ah! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as she stood
with



Old willows which fringed the street of the ancient village of Grand Pré.

Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of her
chamber!
Little she dreamed that below, among the trees of the
orchard,
Waited her lover and watched for the gleam of her
lamp and her shadow.
Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a feeling
of sadness
Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of clouds in
the moonlight
Flitted across the floor and darkened the room for a
moment.
And, as she gazed from the window, she saw serenely
the moon pass
Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow
her footsteps,
As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered
with Hagar.

IV

Pleasantly rose next morn the sun on the village
of Grand-Pré.
Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the Basin of
Minas,
Where the ships, with their wavering shadows, were
riding at anchor.
Life had long been astir in the village, and clamorous
labor
Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden gates
of the morning.
Now from the country around, from the farms and
neighboring hamlets,



EVANGELINE

67

Came in their holiday dresses the blithe Acadian
peasants.

Many a glad good-morrow and jocund laugh from the
young folk

Made the bright air brighter, as up from the numerous
meadows,

Where no path could be seen but the track of wheels
in the greensward,

Group after group appeared, and joined, or passed on
the highway.

Long ere noon, in the village all sounds of labor were
silenced.

Thronged were the streets with people; and noisy
groups at the house-doors

Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and gossiped to-
gether.

Every house was an inn, where all were welcomed and
feasted;

For with this simple people, who lived like brothers
together,

All things were held in common, and what one had
was another's.

Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed more
abundant:

For Evangeline stood among the guests of her father;
Bright was her face with smiles, and words of welcome
and gladness

Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as
she gave it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of the orchard,
Stript of its golden fruit, was spread the feast of be-
trothal.

There in the shade of the porch were the priest and
the notary seated;
There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil the black-
smith.
Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-press and
the beehives,
Michael the fiddler was placed, with the gayest of
hearts and of waistcoats.
Shadow and light from the leaves alternately played
on his snow-white
Hair, as it waved in the wind; and the jolly face of the
fiddler
Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are blown
from the embers.
Gayly the old man sang to the vibrant sound of his
fiddle,
Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres, and Le Carillon de Dun-
*kerque.**

And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to the
music.
Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzying
dances
Under the orchard-trees and down the path to the
meadows;
Old folk and young together, and children mingled
among them.
Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's
daughter!
Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the
blacksmith!

*On the 29th of March, 1846, Longfellow writes in his note-book:
"Looked over the *Recueil de Cantiques à l'usage des Missions, etc.*,
Quebec 1833. A curious book, in which the most ardent spiritual



So passed the morning away. And lol with a sum-
mons sonorous
Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the meadows
a drum beat.
Thronged ere long was the church with men. Without,
in the churchyard,
Waited the women. They stood by the graves, and
hung on the headstones
Garlands of autumn-leaves and evergreens fresh from
the forest.
Then came the guard from the ships, and marching
proudly among them
Entered the sacred portal. With loud and dissonant
clangor

canticles are sung to common airs and dancing tunes. For instance
... Other airs are: *Le Carillon de Dunquerque*; *Charmante Ga-
brielle*; *Tous les Bourgeois le Chartres*." The editor of a recent Amer-
ican edition of *Evangeline* says that: *Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres*
was a song written by Ducauroi, *maître de chapelle* of Henri IV.,
he words of which are:—

Vous connaissez Cybèle,
Qui sut fixer le Temps;
On la disait fort belle,
Même dans ses vieux ans.

You remember Cybele,
Wise the seasons to unfold;
Very fair, said men, was she,
Even when her years grew oid.

CHORUS

CHORUS

Cette divinité, quoique déjà grand'mère
Avait les yeux doux, le teint frais,
Avait même certains attrait
Fermes comme la Terre.

A grandame, yet by goddess birth
She kept sweet eyes, a color warm,
And held through everything a charm
Fast like the earth.

The other, *Le Carillon de Dunquerque*, was a popular song to a
tune played on the Dunkirk chimes, the words being:

Le Carillon de Dunquerque.

The Carillon of Dunkirk.

Imprudent, téméraire,
A l'instant, je l'espère
Dans mon juste courroux,
Tu vas tomber sous mes coups!
—Je brave ta menace
—Être moi! quelle audace!
Avance donc, pultron!
Tu trembles? non, non, non.
—J'étouffe de colère!
—Je ris de ta colère.

Reckless and rash,
Take heed for the flash
Of mine anger, 'tis just
To lay thee with its blows in the dust.
—Your threat I defy.
—What! You would be li!
Come, coward! I'll show—
You tremble? No, no!
—I'm choking with rage!
—A fig for your rage!

Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from ceiling
and caement,—
Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponderous portal
Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will of
the soldiers.
Then uprose their commander, and spake from the
steps of the altar,
Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the royal
commission.
"You are convened this day," he said, "by his Majesty's
orders.
Clement and kind has he been; but how you have
answered his kindness
Let your own hearts reply! To my natural make and
my temper
Painful the task is I do, which to you I know must
be grievous.
Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of our
monarch:
Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and cattle
of all kinds
Forfeited be to the crown; and that you yourselves
from this province
Be transported to other lands. God grant you may
dwell there
Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable people!
Prisoners now I declare you, for such is his Majesty's
pleasure!"
As, when the air is serene in the sultry solstice of
summer,
Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling of the
hailstones



EVANGELINE

71

Beats down the farmer's corn in the field, and shatters
his windows,

Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with thatch
from the house-roofs,

Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break their en-
closures;

So on the hearts of the people descer 'ed the words of
the speaker.

Silent a moment they stood in speechless wonder, and
then rose

Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and anger,
And, by one impulse moved, they madly rushed to the
door-way.

Vain was the hope of escape; and cries and fierce
imprecations

Rang through the house of prayer; and high o'er the
heads of the others

Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of Basil the
blacksmith,

As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by the billows.
Flushed was his face and distorted with passion; and
wildly he shouted,—

“Down with the tyrants of England! we never have
sworn them allegiance!

Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on our
homes and our harvests!”

More he fain would have said, but the merciless hand
of a soldier

Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him down to
the pavement.

In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry con-
tention,



.. Father Felician entered with serious men ..



EVANGELINE

73

Lo! the door of the chancel opened, and Father Felician
Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the steps of
the altar.

Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed
into silence

All that clamorous throng; and thus he spake to his
people;

Deep were his tones and solemn; in accents measured
and mournful

Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum, distinctly the
clock strikes.

"What is this that ye do, my children? what madness
has seized you?

Forty years of my life have I labored among you, and
taught you,

Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one another!

Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and prayers
and privations?

Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and
forgiveness?

This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and would
you profane it

Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing with
hatred?

Lo! where the crucified Christ from His cross is gaz-
ing upon you!

See! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness and holy
compassion!

Hark! how those lips still repeat the prayer, 'O Father,
forgive them!'

Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the wicked
assail us,

.. Father Felician entered with serious mien ..

Let us repeat it now, and say, 'O Father, forgive them!'"

Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the hearts
of his people

Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded the pas-
sionate outbreak,

While they repeated his prayer, and said, "O Father,
forgive them!"

Then came the evening service. The tapers gleamed
from the altar;

Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest, and the
people responded,

Not with their lips alone, but their hearts; and the
Ave Maria

Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their souls,
with devotion translated,

Rose on the ardor of prayer, like Elijah ascending to
heaven.

Meanwhile had spread in the village the tidings of
ill, and on all sides

Wandered, wailing, from house to house the women
and children.

Long at her father's door Evangeline stood, with her
right hand

Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the sun,
that, descending,

Lighted the village street with mysterious splendor,
and roofed each

Peasant's cottage with golden thatch, and emblazoned
its windows.

Long within had been spread the snow-white cloth on
the table;



EVANGELINE

75

There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey fragrant
with wild flowers;

There stood the tankard of ale, and the cheese fresh
brought from the dairy;

And at the head of the board the great arm-chair of
the farmer.

Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's door, as the
sunset

Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the broad am-
brosial meadows.

Ah! on her spirit within a deeper shadow had fallen,
And from the fields of her soul a fragrance celestial
ascended,—

Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and forgiveness,
and patience!

Then, all forgetful of self, she wandered into the vil-
lage,

Cheering with looks and words the mournful hearts of
the women,

As o'er the darkening fields with lingering steps they
departed,

Urged by their household cares, and the weary feet of
their children.

Down sank the great red sun, and in golden, glimmer-
ing vapors

Veiled the light of his face, like the Prophet descend-
ing from Sinai.

Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus sounded.

Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the church Evange-
line lingered.

All was silent within; and in vain at the door and the
windows

Stood she, and listened and looked, until, overcome by
emotion,
"Gabriell" cried she aloud with tremulous voice;
but no answer
Came from the graves of the dead, nor the gloomier
grave of the living.
Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless house
of her father.
Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the board was
the supper untasted.
Empty and drear was each room, and haunted with
phantoms of terror.
Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor of her
chamber.
In the dead of the night she heard the disconsolate
rain fall
Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore-tree by
the window.
Keenly the lightning flashed; and the voice of the
echoing thunder
Told her that God was in heaven, and governed the
world He created!
Then she remembered the tale she had heard of the
justice of Heaven;
Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peacefully
slumbered till morning.

V

Four times the sun had risen and set; and now on
the fifth day
Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids of the
farm-house.



EVANGELINE

77

Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mournful procession,
Came from the neighboring hamlets and farms the
Acadian women,
Driving in ponderous wains their household goods to
the sea-shore,
Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on their
dwellings,
Ere they were shut from sight by the winding road and
the woodland.
Close at their sides their children ran, and urged on
the oxen,
While in their little hands they clasped some frag-
ments of playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried; and
there on the sea-beach
Piled in confusion lay the household goods of the
peasants.
All day long between the shore and the ships did the
boats ply;
All day long the wains came laboring down from the
village.
Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to his
setting,
Echoed far o'er the fields came the roll of drums from
the churchyard.
Thither the women and children thronged. On a sud-
den the church-doors
Opened, and forth came the guard, and marching in
gloomy procession
Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient, Acadian
farmers.

Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their homes
and their country,
Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are weary
and wayworn,
So with songs on their lips the Acadian peasants de-
scended
Down from the church to the shore, amid their wives
and their daughters.
Foremost the young men came; and, raising together
their voices,
Sang with tremulous lips a chant of the Catholic
Missions:—
"Sacred heart of the Saviour! O inexhaustible foun-
tain!
Fill our hearts this day with strength and submission
and patience!"
Then the old men, as they marched, and the women
that stood by the wayside
Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in the sun-
shine above them
Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of spirits
departed.

Half-way down to the shore Evangeline waited in
silence,
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of
affliction,—
Calmly and sadly she waited, until the procession ap-
proached her,
And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.
Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to
meet him,



Expulsion of the Acadians—from the painting by Franz Dicksee.

Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder,
and whispered, —

“Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we love one another
Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances
may happen!”

Smiling she spake these words; then suddenly paused,
for her father

Saw she, slowly advancing. Alas! how changed was
his aspect!

Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire from
his eye, and his footstep

Heavier seemed with the weight of the heavy heart
in his bosom.

But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck and
embraced him,

Speaking words of endearment where words of com-
fort availed not.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved on that mourn-
ful procession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir of
embarking.

Busily plied the freighted boats; and in the confusion
Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers,
too late, saw their children

Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest
entreaties.

So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel carried,
While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood with
her father.

Half the task was not done when the sun went down,
and the twilight



EVANGELINE

81

Deepened and darkened around; and in haste the re-
fluent ocean

Fled away from the shore, and left the line of the
sand-beach

Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the slip-
pery sea-weed.

Farther back in the midst of the household goods and
the wagons,

Like to a gypsy camp, or a leaguer after a battle.
All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels near
them,

Lay encamped for the night the houseless Acadian
farmers.

Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bellowing
ocean,

Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles, and
leaving

Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats of the
sailors.

Then, as the night descended, the herds returned from
their pastures;

Sweet was the moist still air with the odor of milk
from their udders;

Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known bars
of the farm-yard,—

Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the hand
of the milkmaid.

Silence reigned in the streets; from the church no
Angelus sounded,

Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleaned no lights
from the windows.

But on the shores meanwhile the evening fires had
been kindled,
Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands from
wrecks in the tempest.
Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful faces were
gathered,
Voices of women were heard, and of men, and the
crying of children.
Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to hearth in
his parish,
Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and blessing
and cheering,
Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's desolate sea-
shore.
Thus he approached the place where Evangeline sat
with her father,
And in the flickering light beheld the face of the old
man,
Haggard and hollow and wan, and without either
thought or emotion,
E'en as the face of a clock from which the hands have
been taken.
Vainly Evangeline strove with words and caresses to
cheer him,
Vainly offered him food; yet he moved not, he looked
not, he spake not,
But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the flickering
fire-light.
"Benedicite!" murmured the priest, in tones of com-
passion.
More he fain would have said, but his heart was full,
and his accents



EVANGELINE

83

Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet of a child
on a threshold,
Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the awful pres-
ence of sorrow.
Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the head of the
maiden,
Raising his tearful eyes to the silent stars that above
them
Moved on their way, unperturbed by the wrongs and
sorrows of mortals.
Then sat he down at her side, and they wept together
in silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in autumn
the blood-red
Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and o'er the
horizon
Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon mountain
and meadow,
Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and piling huge
shadows together.
Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the roofs of
the village,
Gleamed on the sky and the sea, and the ships that
lay in the roadstead.
Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes of
flame were
Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, like the
quivering hands of a martyr.
Then as the wind seized the gleeds and the burning
thatch, and, uplifting,
Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from a
hundred house-tops



Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flame intermingled.

These things beheld in dismay the crowd on the shore and on shipboard.
Speechless at first they stood, then cried aloud in their anguish,
"We shall behold no more our homes in the village of Grand-Pré!"
Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow in the farmyards,
Thinking the day had dawned; and anon the lowing of cattle
Came on the evening breeze, by the barking of dogs interrupted.
Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles the sleeping encampments
Far in the western prairies or forests that skirt the Nebraska,
When the wild horses affrighted sweep by with the speed of the whirlwind,
Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes rush to the river.
Such was the sound that arose on the night, as the herds and the horses
Broke through their folds and fences, and madly rushed o'er the meadows.
Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless, the priest and the maiden
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and widened before them;
And as they turned at length to speak to their silent companion,



EVANGELINE

85

Lol from his seat he had fallen, and stretched abroad
on the seashore

Motionless lay his form, from which the soul had de-
parted.

Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and the
maiden

Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud in her
terror.

Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her head on
his bosom.

Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious
slumber;

And when she woke from the trance, she beheld a
multitude near her.

Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully gaz-
ing upon her,

Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest com-
passion.

Still the blaze of the burning village illumined the
landscape,

Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the faces
around her,

And like the day of doom it seemed to her wavering
senses.

Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the peo-
ple,—

“Let us bury him here by the sea. When a happier
season

Brings us again to our homes from the unknown land
of our exile,

Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the church-
yard.”



The Gasperau's mouth—where the exiles embarked.

Such were the words of the priest. And there in
haste by the sea-side,
Having the glare of the burning village for funeral
torches,
But without bell or book, they buried the farmer of
Grand-Pré.
And as the voice of the priest repeated the service of
sorrow,
Lo! with a mournful sound like the voice of a vast
congregation,
Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar with
the dirges.
'Twas the returning tide, that afar from the waste of
the ocean,
With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and hur-
rying landward.
Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of
embarking;
And with the ebb of the tide the ships sailed out of
the harbor,
Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and the
village in ruins.

PART THE SECOND

I

Many a weary year had passed since the burning of
Grand-Pré,
When on the falling tide the freighted vessels departed,
Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into
exile,
Exile without an end, and without an example in
story.

Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians landed;
Scattered were they, like flakes of snow, when the
wind from the northeast
Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the Banks
of Newfoundland.
Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wandered from
city to city,
From the cold lakes of the North to sultry Southern
savannas, —
From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands where
the Father of Waters
Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them down to
the ocean,
Deep in their sands to bury the scattered bones of the
mammoth.
Friends they sought and homes; and many, despairing,
heart-broken,
Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer a friend
nor a fireside.
Written their history stands on tablets of stone in the
churchyards.
Long among them was seen a maiden who waited and
wandered,
Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering all
things.
Fair was she and young; but, alas! before her extended,
Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of life, with its
pathway
Marked by the graves of those who had sorrowed and
suffered before her,
Passions long extinguished, and hopes long dead and
abandoned,

As the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert is
marked by

Camp-fires long consumed, and bones that bleach in
the sunshine.

Something there was in her life incomplete, imperfect,
unfinished;

As if a morning of June, with all its music and sun-
shine,

Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading, slowly de-
scended

Into the East again, from whence it late had arisen.

Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by the
fever within her,

Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and thirst of
the spirit,

She would commence again her endless search and en-
deavor;

Sometimes in churchyards strayed, and gazed on the
crosses and tombstones,

Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that perhaps
in its bosom

He was already at rest, and she longed to slumber be-
side him.

Sometimes a rumor, a hearsay, an inarticulate whis-
per,

Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her for-
ward.

Sometimes she spake with those who had seen her be-
loved and known him,

But it was long ago, in some far-off place or forgot-
ten.

"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" they said; "Oh, yes! we have
seen him."



He was with Basil the blacksmith, and both have gone
to the prairies;

Coueurs-des-bois are they, and famous hunters and
trappers."

"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" said others; "Oh, yes! we
have seen him.

He is a voyageur in the lowlands of Louisiana."

Then would they say, "Dear child! why dream and
wait for him longer?

Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel? others
Who have hearts as tender and true, and spirits as
loyal?

Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary's son, who has
loved thee

Many a tedious year; come, give him thy hand and be
happy!

Thou art too fair to be left to braid St. Catherine's
tresses."

Then would Evangeline answer, serenely but sadly,
"I cannot!

Whither my heart has gone, there follows my hand,
and not elsewhere.

For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and
illumines the pathway,

Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in
darkness."

Thereupon the priest, her friend and father confessor,
Said, with a smile, "O daughter! thy God thus speaketh
within thee!

Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was
wasted;

If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, re-
turning



EVANGELINE

91

Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full
of refreshment;

That which the fountain sends forth returns again to
the fountain.

Patience; accomplish thy labor; accomplish thy work
of affection!

Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance
is godlike.

Therefore accomplish thy labor of love, till the heart
is made godlike,

Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered more
worthy of heaven!"

Cheered by the good man's words, Evangeline labored
and waited.

Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of the
ocean,

But with its sound there was mingled a voice that
whispered, "Despair not!"

Thus did that poor soul wander in want and cheerless
discomfort,

Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and thorns of
existence.

Let me essay, O Muse! to follow the wanderer's foot-
steps;—

Not through each devious path, each changeful year
of existence;

But as a traveller follows a streamlet's course through
the valley:

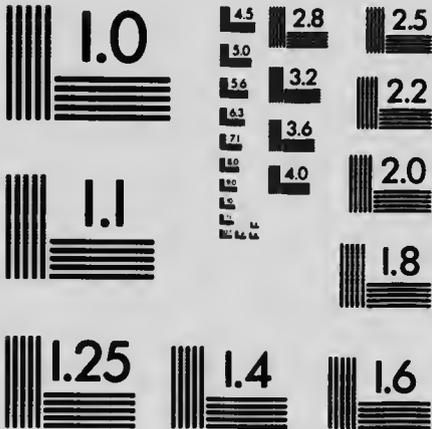
Far from its margin at times, and seeing the gleam of
its water

Here and there, in some open space, and at intervals
only;



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Then drawing nearer its banks, through sylvan glooms
that conceal it,
Though he behold it not, he can hear its continuous
murmur;
Happy, at length, if he find a spot where it reaches
an outlet.

II

It was the month of May. Far down the Beautiful
River,
Past the Ohio shore and past the mouth of the Wa-
bash,
Into the golden stream of the broad and swift Mis-
sissippi,
Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed by Acadian
boatmen.
It was a band of exiles: a raft, as it were, from the
shipwrecked
Nation, scattered along the coast, now floating to-
gether,
Bound by the bonds of a common belief and a com-
mon misfortune;
Men and women and children, who, guided by hope
or by hearsay,
Sought for their kith and their kin among the few-
acred farmers
On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of fair Ope-
lousas.
With them Evangeline went, and her guide, the
Father Felician.
Onward 'er sunken sands, through a wilderness
sombre with forests,
Day after day they glided adown the turbulent river;



EVANGELINE

93

Night after night, by their blazing fires, encamped on
its borders.
Now through rushing chutes, among green islands,
where plumelike
Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests, they swept
with the current,
Then emerged into broad lagoons, where silvery sand-
bars
Lay in the stream, and along the wimpling waves of
their margin,
Shining with snow-white plumes, large flocks of pel-
icans waded.
Level the landscape grew, and along the shores of the
river,
Shaded by china-trees, in the midst of luxuriant gar-
dens,
Stood the houses of planters, with negro cabins and
dove-cots.
They were approaching the region where reigns per-
petual summer,
Where through the Golden Coast, and groves of
orange and citron,
Sweeps with majestic curve the river away to the east-
ward.
They, too, swerved from their course; and, entering
the Bayou of Plaquemine,
Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and devious
waters,
Which, like a network of steel, extended in every
direction.
Over their heads the towering and tenebrous boughs
of the cypress
Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses in mid-air



Waved like banners that hang on the walls of ancient
cathedrals.

Deathlike the silence seemed, and unbroken, save by
the herons

Home to their roosts in the cedar-trees returning at
sunset,

Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with demoniac
laughter.

Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced and gleamed
on the water,

Gleamed on the columns of cypress and cedar sustain-
ing the arches,

Down through whose broken vaults it fell as through
chinks in a ruin.

Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange were all things
around them;

And o'er their spirits there came a feeling of wonder
and sadness,—

Strange forebodings of ill, unseen and that cannot be
compassed.

As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf of the
prairies,

Far in advance are closed the leaves of the shrinking
minosa,

So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad forebodings of
evil,

Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke of doom
has attained it.

But Evangeline's heart was sustained by a vision, that
faintly

Floated before her eyes, and beckoned her on through
the moonlight.



EVANGELINE

95

It was the thought of her brain that assumed the
shape of a phantom.

Through those shadowy aisles had Gabriel wandered
before her,

And every stroke of the oar now brought him nearer
and nearer.

Then in his place, at the prow of the boat, rose one
of the oarsmen,

And, as a signal sound, if others like them peradventure
Sailed on those gloomy and midnight streams, blew a
blast on his bugle.

Wild through the dark colonnades and corridors leafy
the blast rang,

Breaking the seal of silence and giving tongues to the
forest.

Soundless above them the banners of moss just stirred
to the music.

Multitudinous echoes awoke and died in the distance,
Over the watery floor, and beneath the reverberant
branches;

But not a voice replied; no answer came from the
darkness;

And when the echoes had ceased, like a sense of pain
was the silence.

Then Evangeline slept; but the boatmen rowed through
the midnight,

Silent at times, then singing familiar Canadian boat-
songs,

Such as they sang of old on their own Acadian rivers,
While through the night were heard the mysterious
sounds of the desert,



Far off,—indistinct,—as of wave or wind in the forest,
Mixed with the whoop of the crane and the roar of the grim alligator.

Thus ere another noon they emerged from the shades; and before them
Lay, in the golden sun. the lakes of the Atchafalaya.
Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight undulations
Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent in beauty, the lotus
Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the boatmen.
Faint was the air with the odorous breath of magnolia blossoms,
And with the heat of noon; and numberless sylvan islands,
Fragrant and thickly embowered with blossoming hedges of roses,
Near to whose shores they glided along, invited to slumber.
Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were suspended.
Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that grew by the margin,
Safely their boat was moored; and scattered about on the greensward,
Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travellers slumbered.
Over them vast and high extended the cope of a cedar.
Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet-flower and the grapevine



EVANGELINE

97

Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of
Jacob,
On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending, de-
scending,
Were the swift humming-birds, that flitted from blos-
som to blossom.
Such was the vision Evangeline saw as she slumbered
beneath it.
Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn of an
opening heaven
Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of regions
celestial.

Nearer, ever nearer, among the numberless islands,
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the
water,
Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters
and trappers.
Northward its prow was turned, to the land of the
bison and beaver.
At the helm sat a youth, with countenance thoughtful
and careworn.
Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his brow, and
a sadness
Somewhat beyond his years on his face was legibly
written.
Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting, unhappy and
restless,
South in the Western wilds oblivion of self and of
sorrow.
Swiftly they glided along, close under the lee of the
island,

But by the opposite bank, and behind a screen of palmettos;
So that they saw not the boat, where it lay concealed
in the willows;
All undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and unseen,
were the sleepers;
Angel of God was there none to awaken the slumbering
maiden.
Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a cloud on
the prairie.
After the sound of their oars on the tholes had died
in the distance,
As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke, and the
maiden
Said with a sigh to the friendly priest, "O Father
Felician!
Something says in my heart that near me Gabriel
wanders.
Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague superstition?
Or has an angel passed, and revealed the truth to my
spirit?"
Then, with a blush, she added, "Alas for my credulous
fancy!
Unto ears like thine such words as these have no
meaning."
But made answer the reverend man, and he smiled as
he answered,—
"Daughter, thy words are not idle; nor are they to
me without meaning,
Feeling is deep and still; and the word that floats on
the surface
Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where the anchor
is hidden.



Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the world
calls illusions.
Gabriel truly is near thee; for not far away to the
southward,
On the banks of the Têche, are the towns of St. Maur
and St. Martin.
There the long-wandering bride shall be given again
to her bridegroom,
There the long-absent pastor regain his flock and his
sheepfold.
Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and forests of
fruit-trees;
Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the bluest of
heavens
Bending above, and resting its dome on the walls of
the forest.
They who dwell there have named it the Eden of
Louisiana."

With these words of cheer they arose and continued
their journey.
As the evening came. The sun from the western
horizon
A magician extended his golden wand o'er the
landscape;
Twinkling vapors arose; and sky and water and forest
Seemed all on fire at the touch, and melted and mingled
together.
Hanging between two skies, a cloud with edges of
silver,
Floated the boat, with its dripping oars, on the motionless
water.

Filled was Evangeline's heart with inexpressible sweetness.

Touched by the magic spell, the sacred fountains of feeling

Glowed with the light of love, as the skies and waters around her.

Then from a neighboring thicket the mocking-bird, wildest of singers,

Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er the water,

Shook from his little throat such floods of delirious music,

That the whole air and the woods and the waves seemed silent to listen.

Plaintive at first were the tones and sad; then soaring to madness

Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of frenzied Bacchantes.

Single notes were then heard, in sorrowful, low lamentation;

Till, having gathered them all, he flung them abroad in derision,

As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the tree-tops

Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower on the branches.

With such a prelude as this, and hearts that throbbed with emotion,

Slowly they entered the Têche, where it flows through the green Opelousas,

And, through the amber air, above the crest of the woodland,



The Old Church a. Grand Pré.

Saw the column of smoke that arose from a neighboring dwelling;—
 Sounds of a horn they heard, and the distant lowing of cattle.

III

Near to the bank of the river, o'ershadowed by oaks
 from whose branches
 Garlands of Spanish moss and of mystic mistletoe
 flaunted,
 Such as the Druids cut down with golden hatchets at
 Yule-tide,
 Stood, secluded and still, the house of the herdsman.
 A garden
 Circled it round about with a belt of luxuriant blossoms,
 Filling the air with fragrance. The house itself was of
 timbers
 Hewn from the cypress-tree, and carefully fitted together.
 Large and low was the roof; and on slender columns
 supported,
 Rose-wreathed, vine-encircled, a broad and spacious
 veranda,
 Haunt of the humming-bird and the bee, extended
 around it.
 At each end of the house, amid the flowers of the
 garden,
 Stationed the deities were, as love's perpetual symbol,
 Scenes of endless wooing, and endless contentions of
 rivals.

Silence reigned o'er the place. The line of shadow
and sunshine
Ran near the tops of the trees; but the house itself
was in shadow,
And from its chimney-top, ascending and slowly ex-
panding
Into the evening air, a thin blue column of smoke
rose.
In the rear of the house, from the gar' n gate, ran a
pathway
Through the great groves of oak to the skirts of the
limitless prairie,
Into whose sea of flowers the sun was slowly descend-
ing.
Full in his track of light, like ships with shadowy
canvas
Hanging loose from their spars in a motionless calm
in the tropics,
Stood a cluster of trees, with tangled cordage of grape-
vines.

Just where the woodlands met the flowery surf of
the prairie,
Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish saddle and
stirrups,
Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and doublet of
deerskin.
Broad and brown was the face that from under the
Spanish sombrero
Gazed on the peaceful scene, with the lordly look of
its master.
Round about him were numberless herds of kine that
were grazing

Quietly in the meadows, and breathing the vapory
freshness
That uprose from the river, and spread itself over the
landscape.
Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his side, and ex-
panding
Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a blast, that re-
sounded
Wildly and sweet and far, through the still damp air
of the evening.
Suddenly out of the grass the long white horns of the
cattle
Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents of
ocean.
Silent a moment they gazed, then bellowing rushed
o'er the prairie,
And the whole mass became a cloud, a shade in the
distance.
Then, as the herdsman turned to the house, through
the gate of the garden
Saw he the forms of the priest and the maiden ad-
vancing to meet him.
Suddenly down from his horse he spring in amaze-
ment, and forward
Pushed with extended arms and exclamations of won-
der;
When they beheld his face, they recognized Basil the
blacksmith.
Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests to the
garden.
There in an arbor of roses with endless question and
answer



Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed their
friendly embraces,
Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent and
thoughtful.
Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not; and now dark
doubts and misgivings
Stole o'er the maiden's heart; and Basil, somewhat
embarrassed,
Broke the silence and said, "If you came by the
Atchafalaya,
How have you nowhere encountered my Gabriel's
boat on the bayous?"
Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil a shade
passed.
Tears came into her eyes, and she said, with a trem-
ulous accent,
"Gone? is Gabriel gone?" and, concealing her face
on his shoulder,
All her o'erburdened heart gave way, and she wept
and lamented.
Then the good Basil said,— and his voice grew blithe
as he said it,—
"Be of good cheer, my child; it is only to-day he
departed.
Foolish boy! he has left me alone with my herds and
my horses.
Moody and restless grown, and tried and troubled, his
spirit
Could no longer endure the calm of this quiet exis-
tence.
Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and sorrowful ever,
Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and his troubles,

He at length had become so tedious to men and to
maidens,
Tedious even to me, that at length I bethought me, and
sent him
Unto the town of Adayes to trade for mules with the
Spaniards.
Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the Ozark
Mountains,
Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers trapping the
beaver.
Therefore be of good cheer; we will follow the fugi-
tive lover;
He is not far on his way, and the Fates and the streams
are against him.
Up and away to-morrow, and through the red dew of
the morning,
We will follow him fast, and bring back him to his
prison."

Then glad voices were heard, and up from the banks
of the river,
Borne aloft on his comrades' arms, came Michael the
fiddler.
Long under Basil's roof had he lived, like a god on
Olympus,
Having no other care than dispensing music to mor-
tals.
Far renowned was he for his silver locks and his fiddle.
"Long live Michael," they cried, "our brave Acadian
minstrel!"
As they bore him aloft in triumphal procession; and
straightway



EVANGELINE

107

Father Felician advanced with Evangeline, greeting
the old man
Kindly and oft, and recalling the past, while Basil,
enraptured,
Hailed with hilarious joy his old companions and gos-
sips,
Laughing loud and long, and embracing mothers and
daughters.
Much they marvelled to see the wealth of the ci-devant
blacksmith,
All his domains and his herds, and his patriarchal
demeanor;
Much they marvelled to hear his tales of the soil and
the climate,
And of the prairies, whose numberless herds were his
who would take them;
Each one thought in his heart, that he, too, would go
and do likewise.
Thus they ascended the steps, and, crossing the breezy
veranda.
Entered the hall of the house, where already the sup-
per of Basil
Waited his late return; and they rested and feasted
together.

Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness de-
scended.
All was silent without, and, illuming the landscape
with silver,
Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad stars; but
within doors,
Brighter than these, shone the faces of friends in the
glimmering lamplight.

Then from his station aloft, at the head of the table,
the herdsman
Poured forth his heart and his wine together in endless
profusion.
Lighting his pipe, that was filled with sweet Natchi-
toches tobacco.
Thus he spake to his guests, who listened, and smiled
as they listened:—
“Welcome once more, my friends, who long have been
friendless and homeless,
Welcome once more to a home, that is better per-
chance than the old one!
Here no hungry winter congeals our blood like the
rivers;
Here no stony ground provokes the wrath of the
farmer;
Smoothly the ploughshare runs through the soil, as a
keel through the water.
All the year round the orange-groves are in blossom;
and grass grows
More in a single night than a whole Canadian summer.
Here, too, numberless herds run wild and unclaimed
in the prairies;
Here, too, lands may be had for the asking, and forests
of timber
With a few blows of the axe are hewn and framed
into houses.
After your houses are built, and your fields are yellow
with harvests,
No King George of England shall drive you away from
your homesteads,
Burning your dwellings and barns, and stealing your
farms and your cattle.”



EVANGELINE

109

Speaking these words, he blew a wrathful cloud from
his nostrils,

While his huge, brown hand came thundering down
on the table,

So that the guests all started; and Father Felician,
astounded,

Suddenly paused, with a pinch of snuff half-way to
his nostrils.

But the brave Basil resumed, and his words were
milder and gayer: —

“Only beware of the fever, my friends, beware of the
fever!

For it is not like that of our cold Acadian climate,
Cured by wearing a spider hung round one's neck in a
nutshell!”

Then there were voices heard at the door, and foot-
steps approaching

Sounded upon the stairs and the floor of the breezy
veranda.

It was the neighboring Creoles and small Acadian
planters,

Who had been summoned all to the house of Basil the
herdsman.

Merry the meeting was of ancient comrades and
neighbors;

Friend clasped friend in his arms; and they who before
were as strangers,

Meeting in exile, became straightway as friends to each
other,

Drawn by the gentle bond of a common coun'ry
together.

But in the neighboring hall a strain of music, proceeding



From the accordan: strings of Michael's melodious
fiddle,
Broke up all further speech. Away, like children
delighted,
All things forgotten besides, they gave themselves to
the maddening
Whirl of the dizzy dance, as it swept and swayed to
the music,
Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the rush of flutter-
ing garments.

Meanwhile, apart, at the head of the hall, the priest
and the herdsman
Sat, conversing together of past and present and
future;
While Evangeline stood like one entranced, for within
her
Olden memories rose, and loud in the midst of the
music
Heard she the sound of the sea, and an irrepressible
sadness
Came o'er her heart, and unseen she stole forth into
the garden.
Beautiful was the night. Behind the black wall of
the forest,
Tipping its summit with silver, arose the moon. On
the river
Fell here and there through the branches a tremulous
gleam of the moonlight,
Like the sweet thoughts of love on a darkened and
devious spirit.
Nearer and round about her, the manifold flowers
of the garden



The old well at Grand Pré.

Poured out their souls in odors, that were their prayers
and confessions
Unto the night, as it went its way, like a silent Car-
thusian.
Fuller of fragrance than they, and as heavy with
shadows and night-dews,
Hung the heart of the maiden. The calm and the
magical moonlight
Seemed to inundate her soul with indefinable long-
ings,
As, through the garden gate, and beneath the shade
of the oak-trees,
Passed she along the path to the edge of the measure-
less prairie.
Silent it lay, with a silvery haze upon it, and fire-flies
Gleaming and floating away in mingled and infinite
numbers.
Over her head the stars, the thoughts of God in the
heavens,
Shone on the eyes of man, who had ceased to marvel
and worship,
Save when a blazing comet was seen on the walls of
that temple,
As if a hand had appeared and written upon them,
"Upharsin."
And the soul of the maiden, between the stars and
the fire-flies,
Wandered alone, and she cried, "O Gabriel! O my
beloved!
Art thou so near unto me, and yet I cannot behold
thee?
Art thou so near unto me, and yet thy voice does not
reach me?"



Ah! how often thy feet have trod this path to the
prairie!

Ah! how often thine eyes have looked on the wood-
lands around me!

Ah! how often beneath this oak, returning from labor,
Thou hast lain down to rest, and to dream of me in
thy slumbers!

When shall these eyes behold, these arms be folded
about thee?"

Loud and sudden and near the note of a whippoor-
will sounded

Like a flute in the woods; and anon, through the
neighboring thickets,

Farther and farther away it floated and dropped into
silence.

"Patience!" whispered the oaks from oracular caverns
of darkness;

And, from the moonlit meadow, a sigh responded,
"To-morrow!"

Bright rose the sun next day; and all the flowers
of the garden

Bathed his shining feet with their tears, and anointed
his tresses

With the delicious balm that they bore in their vases
of crystal.

"Farewell!" said the priest, as he stood at the shadowy
threshold;

"See that you bring us the Prodigal Son from his
fasting and famine,

And, too, the Foolish Virgin, who slept when the
bridegroom was coming."

"Farewell!" answered the maiden, and, smiling, with
Basil descended
Down to the river's brink, where the boatmen already
were waiting.
Thus beginning their journey with morning, and sun-
shine, and gladness,
Swiftly they followed the flight of him who was speed-
ing before them,
Blown by the blast of fate like a dead leaf over the
desert.
Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the day that suc-
ceeded,
Found they trace of his course, in lake or forest or
river,
Nor, after many days, had they found him; but vague
and uncertain
Rumors alone were their guides through a wild and
desolate country;
Till, at the little inn of the Spanish town of Adayes,
Weary and worn, they alighted, and learned from the
garrulous landlord
That on the day before, with horses and guides and
companions,
Gabriel left the village, and took the road of the
prairies.

IV

Far in the West there lies a desert land, where the
mountains
Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and lumi-
nous summits.
Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where the
gorge, like a gateway,



EVANGELINE

115

Opens a passage rude to the wheels of the emigrant's
wagon,
Westward the Oregon flows and the Walleway and
Owyhee.
Eastward, with devious course, among the Wind-river
Mountains,
Through the Sweet-water Valley precipitate leaps the
Nebraska;
And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-bout and the
Spanish sierras,
Fretted with sands and rocks, and swept by the wind
of the desert,
Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound, descend to
the ocean,
Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and solemn
vibrations.
Spreading between these streams are the wondrous,
beautiful prairies,
Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and sun-
shine,
Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and purple
amorphas.
Over them wandered the buffalo herds, and the elk
and the roebuck;
Over them wandered the wolves, and herds of rider-
less horses;
Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are weary
with travel;
Over them wander the scattered tribes of Ishmael's
children,
Staining the desert with blood; and above their terri-
ble war-trails
Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic, the vulture,

Like the implacable soul of a chieftain slaughtered
in battle,
By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the heavens.
Here and there rise smokes from the camps of these
savage marauders;
Here and there rise groves from the margins of swift-
running rivers;
And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk of
the desert,
Climbs down their dark ravines to dig for roots by
the brook-side,
And over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline
heaven,
Like the protecting hand of God inverted above them.

Into this wonderful land, at the base of the Ozark
Mountains,
Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and trappers
behind him.
Day after day, with their Indian guides, the maiden
and Basil
Followed his flying steps, and thought each day to
o'ertake him.
Sometimes they saw, or thought they saw, the smoke
of his camp-fire
Rise in the morning air from the distant plain; but
at nightfall,
When they had reached the place, they found only
embers and ashes.
And, though their hearts were sad at times and their
bodies were weary,
Hope still guided them on, as the magic Fata Morgana



EVANGELINE

117

Showed them her lakes of light, that retreated and
vanished before them.

Once, as they sat by their evening fire, there silently
entered
Into the little camp an Indian woman, whose features
Wore deep traces of sorrow, and patience as great as
her sorrow.
She was a Shawnee woman returning home to her
people,
From the far-off hunting-grounds of the cruel Ca-
manches,
Where her Canadian husband, a *coureur-des-bois*,
had been murdered.
Touched were their hearts at her story, and warmest
and friendliest welcome
Gave they, with words of cheer, and she sat and feasted
among them
On the buffalo-meat and the venison cooked on the
embers.
But when their meal was done, and Basil and all his
companions,
Worn with the long day's march and the chase of the
deer and the bison,
Stretched themselves on the ground, and slept where
the quivering fire-light
Flashed on their swarthy cheeks, and their forms
wrapped up in their blankets,
Then at the door of Evangeline's tent she sat and re-
peated
Slowly, with soft, low voice, and the charm of her In-
dian accent,

All the tale of her love, with its pleasures, and pains,
and reverses.
Much Evangeline wept at the tale, and to know that
another
Hapless heart like her own had loved and had been
disappointed.
Moved to the depths of her soul by pity and woman's
compassion,
Yet in her sorrow pleased that one who had suffered
was near her,
She in turn related her love and all its disasters.
Mute with wonder the Shawnee sat, and when she had
ended
Still was mute; but at length, as if a mysterious hor-
ror
Passed through her brain, she spake, and repeated the
tale of the Mowis;
Mowis, the bridegroom of snow, who won and wedded
a maiden,
But, when the morning came, arose and passed from
the wigwam,
Fading and melting away and dissolving into the sun-
shine,
Till she beheld him no more, though she followed far
into the forest.
Then, in those sweet, low tones, that seemed like a
weird incantation,
Told she the tale of the fair Lilinau, who was wooed
by a phantom,
That, through the pines o'er her father's lodge, in the
hush of the twilight,
Breathed like the evening wind, and whispered love to
the maiden,



Acadian burying ground, Grand Pré.

Till she followed his green and waving plume through
the forest,
And nevermore returned, nor was seen again by her
people.
Silent with wonder and strange surprise, Evangeline
listened
To the soft flow of her magical words, till the region
around her
Seemed like enchanted ground, and her swarthy guest
the enchantress.
Slowly over the tops of the Ozark Mountains the
moon rose,
Lighting the little tent, and with a mysterious splen-
dor
Touching the sombre leaves, and embracing and filling
the woodland.
With a delicious sound the brook rushed by, and the
branches
Swayed and sighed overhead in scarcely audible whis-
pers.
Filled with the thoughts of love was Evangeline's
heart, but a secret,
Subtile sense crept in of pain and indefinite terror,
As the cold, poisonous snake creeps into the nest of
the swallow.
It was no earthly fear. A breath from the region of
spirits
Seemed to float in the air of night; and she felt for a
moment
That, like the Indian maid, she, too, was pursuing a
phantom.
With this thought she slept, and the fear and the phan-
tom had vanished.



Early upon the morrow the march was resumed, and
the Shawnee
Said, as they journeyed along, —“On the western
slope of these mountains
Dwells in this little village the Black Robe chief of
the Mission.
Much he teaches the people, and tells them of Mary
and Jesus;
Loud laugh their hearts with joy, and weep with pain,
as they hear him.”
Then, with a sudden and secret emotion, Evangeline
answered,
“Let us go to the Mission, for there good tidings
await us!”
Thither they turned their steeds; and behind a spur
of the mountains,
Just as the sun went down, they heard a murmur of
voices,
And in a meadow green and broad, by the bank of a
river,
Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents of the Jesuit
Mission.
Under a towering oak, that stood in the midst of the
village,
Knelt the Black Robe chief with his children. A
crucifix fastened
High on the trunk of the tree, and overshadowed by
grapevines,
Looked with its agonized face on the multitude kneel-
ing beneath it.
This was their rural chapel. Aloft, through the intri-
cate arches,
Of its aerial roof, arose the chant of their vespers,

Mingling its notes with the soft susurrus and sighs of
the branches.
Silent, with heads uncovered, the travellers, nearer
approaching,
Knelt on the swarded floor, and joined in the evening
devotions.
But when the service was done, and the benediction
had fallen
Forth from the hands of the priest, like seed from the
hands of the sower,
Slowly the reverend man advanced to the strangers
and bade them
Welcome; and when they replied he smiled with be-
nignant expression,
Hearing the homelike sounds of his mother-tongue in
the forest,
And, with words of kindness, conducted them into his
wigwam.
There upon mats and skin they reposed, on and cakes
of the maize-ear
Feasted, and slaked their thirst from the water-gourd
of the teacher.
Soon was their story told; and the priest with solem-
nity answered: —
“Not six suns have risen and set since Gabriel, seated
On this mat by my side, where now the maiden re-
poses,
Told me this same sad tale; then arose and continued
his journey!”
Soft was the voice of the priest, and he spake with an
accent of kindness;
But on Evangeline’s heart fell his words as in winter
the snow-flakes



EVANGELINE

123

Fall into some lone nest from which the birds have departed.

"Far to the north he has gone," continued the priest;
"but in autumn,

When the chase is done, will return again to the Mission."

Then Evangeline said, and her voice was meek and submissive,

"Let me remain with thee, for my soul is sad and afflicted."

So seemed it wise and well unto all; and betimes on the morrow,

Mounting his Mexican steed, with his Indian guides and companions,

Homeward Basil returned, and Evangeline stayed at the Mission.

Slowly, slowly, slowly the days succeeded each other,—

Days and weeks and months; and the fields of maize that were springing

Green from the ground when a stranger she came, now waving about her,

Lifted their slender shafts, with leaves interlacing, and forming

Cloisters for mendicant crows and granaries pillaged by squirrels.

Then in the golden weather the maize was husked, and the maidens

Blushed at each blood-red ear, for that betokened a lover,

But at the crooked laughed, and called it a thief in the corn-field.

Even the blood-red ear to Evangeline brought not her lover.

"Patience!" the priest would say; "have faith, and thy prayer will be answered!

Look at this vigorous plant that lifts its head from the meadow,

See how its leaves are turned to the north, as true as the magnet;

This is the compass-flower, that the finger of God has planted

Here in the houseless wild, to direct the traveller's journey

Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the desert.

Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms of passion,

Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and fuller of fragrance,

But they beguile us, and lead us astray, and their odor is deadly.

Only this humble plant can guide us here, and hereafter

Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet with the dews of nepenthe."

So came the autumn, and passed, and the winter, yet Gabriel came not;

Blossomed the opening spring, and the notes of the robin and bluebird

Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood, yet Gabriel came not.

But on the breath of the summer winds a rumor was wafted



EVANGELINE

125

Sweeter than song of bird, or hue or odor of blossom.
Far to the north and east, it said, in the Michigan
forests,

Grabriel had his lodge by the banks of the Saginaw
River.

And, with returning guides, that sought the lakes of
St. Lawrence,

Saying a sad farewell, Evangeline went from the Mis-
sion.

When over weary ways, by long and perilous marches,
She had attained at length the depths of the Michigan
forests,

Found she the hunter's lodge deserted and fallen to
ruin!

Thus did the long sad years glide on, and in seasons
and places

Divers and distant far was seen the wandering
maiden;—

Now in the Tents of Grace of the meek Moravian
Missions,

Now in the noisy camps and the battle-fields of the
army,

Now in secluded hamlets, in towns and populous
cities.

Like a phantom she came, and passed away unremem-
bered.

Fair was she and young, when in hope began the long
journey;

Faded was she and old, when in disappointment it
ended.

Each succeeding year stole something away from her
beauty,

Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the gloom and
the shadow.
Then there appeared and spread faint streaks of gray
o'er her forehead,
Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her earthly hori-
zon,
As in the eastern sky the first faint streaks of the
morning.

V

In that delightful land which is washed by the Dela-
ware's waters,
Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn, the
apostle,
Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream the city
he founded.
There all the air is balm, and the peach is the emblem
of beauty,
And the streets still reëcho the names of the trees of
the forest,
As if they fain would appease the Dryads whose
haunts they molested.
There from the troubled sea had Evangeline landed,
an exile,
Finding among the children of Penn a home and a
country.
There old René Leblanc had died; and when he de-
parted,
Saw at his side only one of all his hundred descendants.
Something at least there was in the friendly streets of
the city,
Something that spake to her heart, and made her no
longer a stranger;



Those pleasant farms—where even to-day the poorest live in abundance.

And her ear was pleased with the Thee and Thou of
the Quakers,
For it recalled the past, the old Acadian country,
Where all men were equal, and all were brothers and
sisters.
So, when the fruitless search, the disappointed en-
deavor,
Ended, to recommence no more upon earth, uncom-
plaining,
Thither, as leaves to the light, were turned her thoughts
and her footsteps.
As from a mountain's top the rainy mists of the morn-
ing
Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape below us,
Sun-illuminated, with shining rivers and cities and ham-
lets,
So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw the world
far below her,
Dark no longer, but all illumined with love; and the
pathway
Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth and fair
in the distance.
Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was his
image,
Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last she
beheld him,
Only more beautiful made by his deathlike silence and
absence.
Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for it was
not.
Over him years had no power; he was not changed,
but transfigured;



EVANGELINE

129

He had become to her heart as one who is dead, and
not absent;

Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others,
This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had
taught her.

So was her love diffused, but, like to some odorous
spices,

Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with
aroma.

Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to follow,
Meekly with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her
Saviour.

Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy; fre-
quently

Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes of
the city,

Where distress and want concealed themselves from
the sunlight,

Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished neg-
lected.

Night after night when the world was asleep, as the
watchman repeated

Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was well in
the city,

High at some lonely window he saw the light of her
taper.

Day after day, in the gray of the dawn, as slow through
the suburbs

Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruits
for the market,

Met he that meek, pale face, returning home from its
watchings.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on the
city,
Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by flocks of
wild pigeons,
Darkening the sun in their flight, with naught in their
claws but an acorn.
And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month of Sep-
tember,
Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a lake
in the meadow,
Such a flood flooded life, and, o'erflowing its natural mar-
gin,
Spread to a brackish lake the silver stream of exist-
ence.
Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to charm,
the oppressor;
But all perished alike beneath the scourge of his
anger;—
Only, alas! the poor, who had neither friends nor at-
tendants,
Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of the
homeless.
Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst of meadows
and woodlands;—
Now the city surrounds it; but still, with its gateway
and wicket
in the midst of splendor, its humble walls seem
to echo
Some words of the Lord: —“The poor ye always
have with you.”
Thither, by night and by day, came the Sister of
Mercy. The dying

Looked up into her face, and thought indeed, to behold there

Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with splendor,

Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints and apostles,

Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen at a distance.

Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the city celestial,

Into whose shining gates ere long their spirits would enter.

Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets, deserted and silent,

Wending her quiet way she entered the door of the almshouse.

Sweet on the summer air was the odor of flowers in the garden,

And she paused on her way to gather the fairest among them,

That the dying once more might rejoice in their fragrance and beauty.

Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors, cooled by the east-wind,

Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from the belfry of Christ Church,

While, intermingled with these, across the meadows were wafted

Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the Swedes in their church at Wicaco.

Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the hour on her spirit;



Something within her said, "At length thy trials are ended;"

And, with light in her looks, she entered the chambers of sickness.

Noiselessly moved about the assiduous, careful attendants,

Moistening the feverish lip, and the aching brow, and in silence

Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and concealing their faces,

Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts of snow by the roadside.

Many a languid head, upraised as Evangeline entered, Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while she passed, for her presence

Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the walls of a prison.

And, as she looked around, she saw how Death, the consoler,

Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed it forever.

Many familiar forms had disappeared in the night time;

Vacant their places were, or filled already by strangers.

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling of wonder,

Still she stood, with her colorless lips apart, while a shudder

Ran through her frame, and, forgotten, the flowerets dropped from her fingers,

And from her eyes and cheeks the light and bloom of the morning.



EVANGELINE

133

Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such terrible anguish,
That the dying heard it, and started up from their pillows.
On the pallet before her was stretched the form of an old man.
Long, and thin, and gray were the locks that shaded his temples;
But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for a moment
Seemed to assume once more the forms of its earlier manhood;
So are wont to be changed the faces of those who are dying.
Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of the fever,
As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had besprinkled its portals,
That the Angel of Death might see the sign, and pass over.
Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his spirit exhausted
Seemed to be sinking down through infinite depths in the darkness,
Darkness of slumber and death, forever sinking and sinking.
Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied reverberations,
Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush that succeeded
Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saint-like,

"Gabriel! O my beloved!" and died away into silence.

Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of his childhood;

Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them,

Village, and mountain, and woodlands; and, walking under their shadow,

As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision.

Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly he lifted his eyelids,

Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his bedside.

Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the accents unuttered

Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what his tongue would have spoken.

Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him,

Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom. Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it suddenly sank into darkness,

As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a casement.

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow,

All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,

All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!

And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,



Sweet clover—on Grand Pré dykes.

Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, "Father,
I thank thee!"

Still stands the forest primeval; but far away from
its shadow,
Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers are
sleeping.
Under the humble walls of the little Catholic church-
yard,
In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown and un-
noticed.
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside
them,
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest
and forever,
Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer
are busy,
Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased
from their labors,
Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed
their journey!

Still stands the forest primeval; but under the
shade of its branches
Dwells another race, with other customs and language.
Only along the shore of the mournful and misty
Atlantic
Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers from
exile
Wandered back to their native land to die in its bosom.
In the fisherman's cot the wheel and the loom are still
busy;



EVANGELINE

137

Maidens still wear their Norman caps and their kirtles
of homespun,
And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline's story,
While from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced, neigh-
boring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail
of the forest.



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- Springfield, Mass. A. C. Wentworth, 282 Main Street.
- Waltham, Mass. E. E. Jennison, 208 Moody Street.
- Fitchburg, Mass. F. P. Allen, 407 Main Street.
- Gloucester, Mass. Geo. W. Scott, 201 Main Street.
- Paterson, N. J. Buckley's Tourist Agency, 301 Main Street.
- Hartford, Conn. W. W. Jacobs & Co., Mechanics Saving Bk. Bldg.
H. R. Gridley, 26 State Street.
- Halifax, N. S. L. Kirkpatrick, City Ticket Agent, 126 Hollis St.
- New Haven, Conn. Sweezy & Kelseg, 67 Centre Street.
- Providence, R. I. F. C. Church, 1 Weybossett Street.
- Montreal, P. Q. A. E. Lalonde, C.P.A., 141, 143, 145 St. James St.
- Toronto, Ont. T. Mullins, C.P.A., 1 King Street, E.
Hone & Rivet, 9 St. Lawrence Boulevard.
- Ottawa, Ont. George Duncan, C.P.A., 42 Sparks Street.
- Quebec, P. Q. G. J. P. Moore, C.P.A., 30 St. John St., Cor. Palace Hill.
Hone & Rivet, 31 Buade Street.
- St. John's, Nfld. Harvey & Co.
- Yarmouth, N. S. T. E. Wixtead, Agent.

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