

Literature, &c.

New Works.

From Baneroff's "American Revolution,"
THE ACADIANS.

MR BANEROFF has drawn a touching picture of the homely virtues and obscure happiness of this rural population before the interference of the British officers changed their joy into wailing, and endowed their simple annals with a dark and tragic interest:—

'After repeated conquests and restorations, the treaty of Utrecht conceded Acadia, or Nova Scotia, to Great Britain. Yet the name of Annapolis, the presence of a feeble English garrison, and the emigration of hardly five or six English families, were nearly all that marked the supremacy of England. The old inhabitants remained on the soil which they had subdued, hardly conscious that they had changed their sovereign. They still loved the language and the usages of their forefathers, and their religion was graven upon their souls. They promised submission to England; but such was the love with which France had inspired them, they would not fight against its standard or renounce its name. Though conquered they were French neutrals. For nearly forty years from the peace of Utrecht they had been forgotten or neglected, and had prospered in their seclusion. No tax gatherer counted their folds, no magistrate dwelt in their hamlets. The parish priests made their records and regulated their successions. Their little disputes were settled among themselves, with scarcely an instance of an appeal to English authority at Annapolis. The pastures were covered with their herds and flocks; and dikes, raised by extraordinary efforts of social industry, shut out the rivers and the tide from alluvial marshes of exuberant fertility. The meadows, thus reclaimed, were covered by richest grasses, or fields of wheat, that yielded fifty and thirty fold at the harvest. Their houses were built in clusters, neatly constructed, and comfortably furnished, and around them all kinds of domestic fowls abounded. With the spinning wheel and the loom, their women made, of flax from their own fields, of fleeces from their own flock, coarse, but sufficient clothing. The few foreign luxuries that were coveted could be obtained from Annapolis or Louisburgh, in return for furs, or wheat, or cattle. Thus were the Acadians happy in their neutrality and in the abundance which they drew from their native land. They formed, as it were one great family. Their morals were of unaffected purity. Love was sanctified and calmed by the universal custom of early marriages. The neighbors of the community would assist the new couple to raise their cottage while the wilderness offered land. Their numbers increased, and the colony which had begun only as the trading station of a company, with a monopoly of the fur trade, counted perhaps, sixteen or seventeen thousand inhabitants.'

The transfer of this Colony from French to English rule could not fail to be productive of some untoward results. The native priests feared the introduction among them of heretical opinions:—the British officers treated the people with insolent contempt. 'Their papers and records' says our historian, 'were taken from them' by their new masters:—

'Was their property demanded for the public service? they were not to be bargained with for the payment.' The order may still be read on the Council records at Halifax. They must comply, it was written, without making any terms, 'immediately,' or 'the next courier would bring an order for military execution upon the delinquents.' And when they delayed in fetching firewood for their oppressors, it was told them from the governor, 'If they do not do it in proper time, the soldiers shall absolutely take their houses for fuel.' The unoffending sufferers submitted meekly to the tyranny. Under pretence of fearing that they might rise in behalf of France, or seek shelter in Canada, or convey provisions to the French garrisons, they were ordered to surrender their boats and firearms; and, conscious of innocence, they gave up their barges and their muskets, leaving themselves without the means of flight, and defenceless. Further orders were afterwards given to the English officers, if the Acadians behaved amiss to punish them at discretion; if the troops were annoyed, to inflict vengeance on the nearest, whether the guilty one or not,—'taking an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'

There is no reason to believe that these atrocious orders were not executed in the spirit in which they had been conceived.—But worse remained to come:

'The Acadians covered before their masters, hoping for forbearance; willing to take an oath of fealty to England; in their single-mindedness and sincerity, refusing to pledge themselves to bear arms against France. The English were masters of the sea, were undisputed lords of the country, and could exercise clemency without apprehension. Not a whisper gave a warning of their purpose till it was ripe for execution. But it had been determined upon after the ancient device of Oriental despotism, that the French inhabitants of Acadia should be carried away into captivity to other parts of the British dominions. * * France remembered the descendants of her sons in the hour of their affliction, and asked that they might have time to remove from the peninsula with their effects, leaving the lands to the English; but the answer of the British Minister claimed

them as useful subjects, and refused them the liberty of transmigration. The inhabitants of Minas and the adjacent country pleaded with the British officers for the restitution of their boats and their guns, promising fidelity, if they could but retain their liberties, and declaring that not the want of arms, but their conscience, should engage them not to revolt. 'The memorial,' said Lawrence in Council, 'is highly arrogant, invidious and insulting.' The memorialists, at his summons, came submissively to Halifax. 'You want your canoes for carrying provisions to the enemy,' he said to them, though he knew no enemy was left in their vicinity. 'Guns are no part of your goods,' he continued, 'as by the laws of England all Roman Catholics are restrained from having arms, and are subject to penalties if arms are found in their houses. It is not the language of British subjects to talk of terms to the Crown, or capitulate about their fidelity or allegiance. What excuse can you make for your presumption in treating this government with such indignity as to expound to them the nature of fidelity? Manifest your obedience by immediately taking the oaths of allegiance in the common form before the Council.' The deputies replied that they would do as the generality of the inhabitants should determine; and they merely entreated leave to return home and consult the body of their people. The next day, the unhappy men, foreseeing the sorrows that menaced them, offered to swear allegiance unconditionally.'

But it was now too late. The savage purpose had been formed. That the cruelty might have no excuse, it happened that while the scheme was under discussion letters arrived leaving no doubt that all the shores of the Bay of Fundy were in the possession of the British. It only remained to be fixed how the exportation should be effected:

'To hunt them into the net was impracticable; artifice was therefore resorted to. By a general proclamation on one and the same day, the scarcely conscious victims, 'both old men and young men, as well as the lads of ten years of age,' were peremptorily ordered to assemble at their respective posts. On the appointed 5th of September they obeyed. At Grand Pre, for example, 418 unarmed men came together. They were marched into the church, and its avenues were closed, when Winslow, the American commander, placed himself in their centre and spoke:—'You are convened together to manifest to you His Majesty's final resolution to the French inhabitants of this his province. Your lands and tenements, cattle of all kinds and live stock of all sorts, are forfeited to the crown and you yourselves are to be removed from this his Province. I am through his Majesty's goodness, directed to allow you to carry off your money and household goods, as many as you can, without discommoding the vessels you go in.' And he then declared them the King's prisoners. Their wives and families shared their lot; their sons, 527 in number, their daughters, 576; in the whole, women and babes and old men and children all included, 1,923 souls. The blow was sudden; they had left home but for the morning, and they never were to return. Their cattle was to stay unfed in their stalls, their fires to die out on their hearths. They had for that first day even no food for themselves or their children, and were compelled to beg their bread. The 10th of September was the day for the embarkation of a part of the exiles. They were drawn up six deep, and the young men, 161 in number, were ordered to march first on board the vessel. They could leave their farms and cottages, the shady rocks on which they had reclined, their herds and their gardens; but nature yearned within them, and they would not be separated from their parents. Yet of what avail was the frenzied despair of the unarmed youth? They had not one weapon; the bayonet drove them to obey; and they marched slowly and heavily from the chapel to the shore, between women and children, who kneeling, prayed blessings on their heads, they themselves weeping, and praying and singing hymns. The seniors went next; the wives and children must wait till other transport vessels arrived. The delay had its horrors. The wretched people left behind were kept together near the sea, without proper food or raiment or shelter, till other ships came to take them away; and December, with its appalling cold had struck the shivering, half clad, broken hearted sufferers before the last of them were removed. 'The embarkation of the inhabitants goes on but slowly,' wrote Monckton, from Fort Cumberland, near which he had burned three hamlets, 'the most part of the wives of the men we have prisoners are gone off with their children, in hopes I would not send off their husbands without them.' Their hope was vain. Near Annapolis a hundred heads of families fled to the woods, and a party was detached on the hunt to bring them in. 'Our soldiers hate them,' wrote an officer on this occasion, 'and if they can but find a pretext to kill them they will.' Did a prisoner seek to escape, he was shot down by the sentinel. Yet some fled to Quebec; more than 3,000 had withdrawn to Miramichi and the region south of the Restigouche; some found rest on the banks of the St. John and its branches; some found a fair in their native forests; some were charitably sheltered from the English in the wigwags of the savages. But 7,000 of these banished people were driven on board ships, and scattered among the English colonies from New Hampshire to Georgia alone; 1,020 to South Carolina alone.—They were cast ashore without resources; hating the poor house as a shelter for their offspring, and abhorring the thought of selling themselves as laborers. Households,

too were separated; the colonial newspapers contained advertisements of members of families seeking their companions, of sons anxious to reach and relieve their parents, of mothers mourning for their children. The wanderers sighed for their native country; but to prevent their return, their villages, from Annapolis to the isthmus were laid waste.—their old home were but ruins. In the district of Minas, for instance, 250 of their houses, and more than as many barns, were consumed. The live stock which belonged to them, consisting of great numbers of horned cattle, hogs, sheep, and horses, were seized as spoils and disposed of by the English officials. A beautiful and fertile tract of country was reduced to a solitude. There was none left round the ashes of the cottages of the Acadians but the faithful watchdog, vainly seeking the hand that fed him. Thickets of forest trees choked their orchards; the ocean broke over their neglected dikes, and desolated their meadows.'

Nor were the woes of this ill-treated people ended:

'Relentless misfortune pursued the exiles wherever they fled. Those sent to Georgia, drawn by a love for the spot where they were born as strong as that of the captive Jews, who wept by the side of the rivers of Babylon for their own temple and land, escaped to sea in boats, and went coasting from harbor to harbor but when they had reached New England, just as they would have set sail for their native fields, they were stopped by orders from Nova Scotia. Those who dwelt on the St. John were torn once more from their new homes. When Canada surrendered, hatred with its worst venom pursued the 1,500 who remained south of the Restigouche. Once more those who dwelt in Pennsylvania presented a humble petition to the Earl of Loudoun, then the British Commander-in-Chief in America; and the cold hearted peer, offended that the prayer was made in French, seized their five principal men, who in their own land had been persons of dignity and substance, and shipped them to England, with the request that they might be kept from ever again becoming troublesome by being consigned to service as common sailors on board ships of war.'

From 'Nicaragua,' its People, Scenery, Monuments, and the Proposed Inter-oceanic Canal. By E. G. Squier.

NICARAGUA.

Central America includes an area of 150,000 square miles. Under Spanish dominion it was divided into the Provinces of Guatemala, Honduras, San Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. These became independent states in 1821, and subsequently united to form the 'Republic of Central America.' They separated again, in 1839, into so many distinct republics. Nicaragua, Honduras, and San Salvador have recently confederated. The entire region of Central America presents very marked and important physical features. These are the great plain, six thousand feet above the sea, upon which stands the city of Guatemala; the high plain forming the centre of Honduras and part of Nicaragua; and the elevated country of Costa Rica. Between the two latter lies the basin of the Nicaraguan Lakes, with broad and undulating verdant slopes broken by deep volcanic cones, and a few ranges of hills along the shores of the Pacific, intermingled with undulating plains.—Of the two great lakes, the lesser, Managua, is one hundred and fifty six feet, and the larger, Nicaragua, one hundred and twenty eight above the Pacific Ocean. The former is fifty or sixty miles in length by thirty five wide, the latter about a hundred miles long by fifty wide. On or near the western borders are the chief cities of the country. Enormous isolated volcanic cones rise to the height of from 4000 to 7000 feet in their neighborhood on the islands that stud them. Numerous remains of antiquity, ruins of temples, and deserted monolithic idols, give interest to their precincts, whilst the scenery is described as being surpassingly grand and beautiful. The sole outlet is the river San Juan, a magnificent stream flowing from the south eastern extremity of Lake Nicaragua for a length of about ninety miles, into the Atlantic. The climate is generally healthy, more especially towards the Pacific side. Nicaragua is inhabited by a population of about 260,000, one-half of which, or more, is composed of mixed breeds, Indians, in great part civilised, coming next in number, then whites, of whom there are about 25,000, and lastly, some 15,000 Negroes. They live chiefly in towns and cultivate the soil, which is very productive, and capable of supporting a much larger population. The natural resources of Nicaragua appear to be very great. Sugar, cotton, coffee, indigo, tobacco, rice, and maize, are the chief productions. There is, besides, great mineral wealth. In ancient times the aborigines appear to have occupied considerable cities, and to have attained a civilization comparable with that of the Mexicans. Indeed, Mr. Squier has proved, by philological and other evidence, that a Mexican colony did exist in Nicaragua at the period of discovery of the country in the fifteenth century. This had been surmised before but not clearly made out.

Much interest attaches to the population of Nicaragua, on account of the large proportion of families of Indian blood, pure and mixed of whom it is made up. The qualities which enabled the ancient Indian people of Mexico, Central America and Peru, to become civilized nations of a peculiar fashion, are not extinct, and seem to be retained and re-developed in proportion to the prevalence of Indian over Spanish blood. The Indians of Nicara-

gua are remarkable for industry and docility; they are unobtrusive, hospitable, and brave, although, fortunately for themselves, not warlike. They make good soldiers, yet have no morbid taste for the military profession. The men are agriculturists; the women occupy themselves with the weaving of cotton, and make fabrics of good quality and tasteful design. It is interesting to find the Tyrian dye still employed in their manufactures. They procure it from a species of *Murex* inhabiting the shores of the Pacific. They take the cotton thread to sea side, where, having gathered together a sufficient quantity of shell fish, they patiently squeeze over the cotton, the coloring fluid, at first pellucid and colorless, from the animals, one by one. At first the thread is pale blue, but on exposure to the atmosphere becomes of the desired purple.—This color is so prized that purple thread dyed by cheaper and speedier methods, imported from Europe, cannot supplant the native product. With mingled humanity and thrift they replace the whelks in their native element, after these shell-fish have yielded up the precious liquor for which they were originally gathered. The Indian population also exclusively manufacture variegated mats and hammocks from the Pita, a species of Agave, and are as skilful as their ancient ancestors in the making of pottery. They do not use the potter's wheel. Politically they enjoy equal privileges with the whites, and all positions in church or state are open to them.—Among them are men of decided talent. Physically they are a smaller and a paler race than the Indians of the United States, but are well developed and muscular. Their women are not unfrequently pretty, and when young are often very finely formed.

Happily in Nicaragua no distinctions of caste are recognised, or, at any rate, they have no influence. Such of the people as claim to be of pure Spanish blood are, evidently partly of Indian descent. The Sambos, or offspring of Indian and Negro parents, are of a fine race of people, taller and stronger than the Indians.

From Dickens's 'Bleak House.'
IN CHANCERY.

Never can there come fog too thick, never can there come mud and mire too deep, to assort with the groping and floundering condition which this High Court of Chancery, most pestilent of hoary sinners, holds, this day, in the sight of heaven and earth.

On such an afternoon, if ever, the Lord High Chancellor ought to be sitting here—as here he is—with a foggy glory round his head, softly fenced in with crimson cloth and curtains, addressed by a large advocate with great whiskers, a little voice and an interminable brief, and outwardly directing his contemplation to the lantern in the roof where he can see nothing but fog. On such an afternoon, some score of members of the High Court of Chancery ought to be—as here they are—mistily engaged in one of the ten thousand stages of an endless cause, tripping up one another on slippery precedents, groping knee deep in technicalities, running their goat-hair and horse-hair warded heads against walls of words, and making a pretense of equity with serious faces as players might. On such an afternoon the various solicitors in the cause, some two or three of whom have inherited it from their fathers, ought to be—as are they not?—ranged in a line, in a long matted well (but you might look in vain for truth at the bottom of it), between the registrar's red table and the silk gowns, with bills, cross bills, answers, rejoinders, injunctions affidavits, issues, references to masters, masters' reports, mountains of costly nonsense, piled before them. Well may the court be dim with wasting candles here and there; well may the fog hang heavy in it, as if it would never get out; well may the stained glass windows lose their color and admit no light of day into the place; well may the uninitiated from the streets, who peep in through the glass panes in the door, be deterred from entering by its owlish aspect, and by the drawl languidly echoing to the roof from the padded dais where the Lord High Chancellor looks into the lantern that has no light in it, and where the attendant wigs are all stuck in a fog bank. This is the Court of Chancery; which has its decaying houses and its blighted lands in every shire; which has its worn-out lunatic in every mad house, and its dead in every church-yard; which has its ruined suitor with his slipshod heel and threadbare dress, borrowing and begging through the round of every man's acquaintance which gives to moneyed might the means abundantly of wearying out the right; which so exhausts finances, patience, courage, hope; so overthrows the brain and breaks the heart, that there is not an honorable man among its practitioners who would not give—who does not often give—the warning, 'Suffer any wrong that can be done you rather than come here!'

Jarndyce and Jarndyce drones on. This scare crow of a suit has, in course of time, become so complicated that no man alive knows what it means. The parties to it understand it least; but no two Chancery lawyers can talk about it for five minutes without coming to a total disagreement as to all the premises. Innumerable children have been born into the cause; innumerable young people have married into it; innumerable old people have died out of it. Scores of persons have deliriously found themselves made parties in Jarndyce and Jarndyce, without knowing how or why; whole families have inherited legendary hatreds with the suit. The little plaintiff or defendant, who was promised