

let him understand indirectly, that if he undertook to drive them to extremes, he would have the Indians on his hands, who would never allow them to be forced to take an oath of allegiance or deprived of their pastors. This reply had its effect; Richard deemed it unwise to rouse the Indians in his vicinity,¹ at a time when those on the Kennebec were quite ill-disposed to the New Englanders, (Bostonnois,) nor expose himself to see Acadia depopulated; for Saint Ovide had already taken steps to facilitate the retreat of the French to Isle St. Jean, where they then talked of making a large settlement.

Next to Isle Royale, that of Saint Jean, which is quite near it, is the largest of all that lie in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and it surpasses the former in one point, all the spoil being fertile. It is twenty-two leagues long, and about fifty in circuit; it has a secure and commodious harbor, and was then covered with wood of all the best kinds. Up to the time when settlements were begun on Isle Royale, no attention was paid to Isle Saint Jean; then, however, from their proximity, it was judged that they might be of great service to each other.

A company was accordingly formed in 1719, to settle Saint Jean, employing funds more easily found at that time, than maintained at the arbitrary value assigned to them. The Count de Saint Pierre, first Equerry to the Duchess of Orleans, was at the head of the project, and the King, by his Letters Patent, granted in the month of August in that year, granted it the islands of Saint Jean and Miscou in "franc Aleu Noble," without justice, which

1713.

Settlement
of Isle St.
Jean,
(Prince
Edward's
Island).

¹ He was so alarmed that he sent to England for at least 600 additional troops. N. S. Doc., p. 56. Subsequently Father Gaulin submitted, and 880 Acadians took a verbally modified oath, understanding that they were not required to bear arms against France, and were to enjoy their religion and retain their clergy. Haliburton, i., p. 94. Unfortunately these poor, simple

Acadians remained under these verbal promises never meant to be kept, and lived in constant trouble till they were torn away from their homes and deprived of everything, without trial or any legal proceedings, by an act whose enormity will ever live in history.

² Franc Aleu is a freehold under which lands are exempt from all rights or duties to seigneurs, ac-