

PAUL MASCARENE OF ANNAPOLIS ROYAL*

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PAUL Mascarene played his rôle in the eighteenth century on an exceedingly obscure stage in North America, but the drama in which he had a minor part was a world drama. In 1700 Europe and its offshoots overseas were at a turning-point in their development, and nowhere was this more obvious than in the affairs of France and England. In the former the genius for despotism of Louis XIV and his great servants had raised France to continental, indeed world pre-eminence, with powers that could be directed by a single man. Secure at home, feared abroad, still expanding overseas under the impetus given her by the energy of Colbert, and with the splendour and culture of Versailles to command the admiration and emulation of Europe for a century, France—as the mirror of *Le Roi Soleil*—reflected sparkingly most of the glories of Louis's ideal State. The last pitiful scion of the Spanish Hapsburgs had just passed away and, in his dying, had willed Spain and her great colonial empire to a Bourbon, Philip of Anjou, grandson of Louis XIV. It seemed the crowning glory of the duel between France and Spain which had torn Europe for two centuries, and it afforded too tempting a prospect for the Grand Monarch to resist. He kissed his grandson, sent him across the Pyrenees to his new throne, and hastily prepared for military defence of a Bourbon hegemony which he knew the rest of Europe would not passively accept.

Yet in spite of the magnitude and polish of Louis's achievement, a keen observer might have seen some serious fissures in its structure, and have reckoned with the fact that a Dutch King of England had been hammering wedges into the cracks. The very presence of William of Orange on the English throne was evidence of the union of protest with which Louis must be prepared to cope. English and Dutch had but recently fought very bitterly for maritime supremacy, and the wittiest and least scrupulous Stuart had accepted a bribe from Louis to leave the Netherlanders to the mercies of invading French armies. When, however, the English people discovered that treachery, and added it to their fear that their Stuart

*A paper read at the unveiling of the portrait of Paul Mascarene by the Historical Association of Annapolis Royal, June 12, 1928.

kings planned to imitate the despotism of their French cousins, they proceeded to make England too warm to hold tyrants. The agent whom they retained for the expulsion was the stern Stadholder of Holland, who had proved to be the one man in Europe prepared to resist the northward expansion of France. When "Dutch William" took his place beside James II's daughter, Mary Stuart, on the throne of England, there began a new duel between the French and the English which was to last for a century and a quarter, ending with France in eclipse and Britain the first world power.

This struggle speedily involved colonial empires as well as European territory, and from its intricate ramifications there can be selected three elements which help to explain Paul Mascarene's share in it. In the first place, while Louis's greatest statesman, Colbert, had unquestionably done much to extend and to vitalize French colonies in America as elsewhere, the aid he gave them was limited by his narrow Mercantilist ideas. He believed that world trade was almost static in quantity. In consequence, he looked for increase in French commerce largely by the diminution of that of Holland and England, and this he pictured at its European rather than its overseas depôts. This conception made him the more willing to support the plans of his royal master for direct attack upon those states. Louis did not need much encouragement, but Colbert's approval meant that funds which might have paid for regiments and ships and fortresses to render secure French dominion in America went instead to pay for breastplates for cuirassiers and powder for grenadiers on European battlefields. French Port Royal became British Annapolis Royal because France did not adequately reinforce the gallant spirit of the last defender, de Subercase.

In the second place, Louis XIV in his dual rôle of Grand Monarch and "Most Christian King" decided about 1680 that the only Non-conformists to Roman Catholicism in France, the Huguenots, must either conform, or cease to mar the complete religious uniformity of his domain. When pressure and persecution of a peculiarly odious sort failed to achieve his ends, he revoked, in 1685, the Edicts under which France for a century had taught Europe the possibility of religious toleration. That year Paul Mascarene, a year-old baby, was left in Castras with his grandmother while his Huguenot father fled to England. The boy went on to Calvinistic Geneva for his education, to tolerant England for new citizenship in 1706, and to a life-career in the British army after 1708.

In the third place, the English had made a bargain with their new king to the effect that he might reign and get as much support

out of them for his foreign policy as he could, but that an oligarchy of wealth, drawn partly from the landed interests and partly from the commercial leaders, should rule. With short intermissions it was the Whigs, with their modified Mercantilism and their determination to advance the commerce of the new Great Britain, who managed British policy from 1688 to 1770. Marlborough and the Whigs had most to do with preventing the union of France and Spain under one crown, and it was for the American campaign in the War of the Spanish Succession that Paul Mascarene assisted in the siege of Port Royal. Moreover the conclusion of this war, second in a series of four, gave the first indication of what the consequences overseas were to be. The Treaty of Utrecht took from France and awarded to Great Britain "the outworks of the Canadian citadel"—Hudson's Bay, Newfoundland, and Acadia.

Paul Mascarene, then, began his fifty years of life in America when, promoted from his second-lieutenancy in Lord Montague's Regiment at Portsmouth to a captaincy in Colonel Walter's Grenadiers, he helped to whip into shape the colonial volunteers for the proposed expedition to Canada. After the siege of Port Royal and the French surrender, made necessary by the overwhelming numerical and material superiority of the British, he "had the honour to take possession of it in mounting the first guard, and was brevetted major by Mr. Nicholson, the commander-in chief of that expedition."¹

The capture of Port Royal was a sort of by-product in an instance of colonial and British aggression where appetite far exceeded capacity. The New York scheme, for which Francis Nicholson and Samuel Vetch had been successful sponsors in England, contemplated nothing less than the conquest of Canada. A late start in 1710 made it impossible to do more than aim the cannon, which was the Canada Expedition, against the sparrow, which was neglected Acadie. The success at Port Royal was almost obliterated by the abysmal failure of the delayed expedition against Canada next year. Tragic ineptitude wrecked the ships of the expedition on the reefs of the St. Lawrence. Yet French Port Royal had been a splendid haven for the privateers which preyed on colonial fisheries and commerce, and it was with a definite sense of relief that the colonists, particularly those of New England, contemplated British possession of Acadia as confirmed in 1713 by the Treaty of Utrecht. Almost immediately, and greatly to their annoyance, the French revealed their view of the situation by beginning to build the most ambitious fortress in America at Louisbourg, which was designed to serve as a Gibraltar for the St. Law-

1. *Nova Scotia State Papers, Ottawa, A Series, vol. 25, p. 73.*

rence. Even as a fishing station it had such strength as completely overshadowed the sheds and the block house which the British colonists erected at Canso, and its mere existence went far towards nullifying the surrender of Newfoundland and the existence of a British garrison at Placentia.

The years 1713-1739 were years of peace for Great Britain, and the tranquillity of the last twenty-five of them—Walpole's Peace—has been credited to the great Whig leader who laid the foundations for British empire in parliamentary sovereignty, vigorous avoidance of war, and shrewd organization of national finance. In Nova Scotia the same years were years of almost complete neglect. The original leaders, Nicholson and Vetch, had hoped for greater things, and they speedily lost what had naturally been a minor interest in their only conquest. Military reorganization to permit the release of the colonials under arms unfortunately coincided with a period of decay and stagnation in the somewhat antiquated British military machine. It took until 1718 to clear up the military confusion in Nova Scotia. The final outcome was that a Welsh colonel, named Richard Phillips, was induced to exchange his command of an old regiment for the office of Governor of Nova Scotia, at £1000 a year, and the colonelcy of a new regiment whose companies were to be stationed at Annapolis and Canso in Nova Scotia, and at St. John's and Placentia in Newfoundland. Colonel Phillips was a man of fifty-nine when he first visited this province in 1720, but he showed a great deal of vigour in his organization of the new civil government and the military establishment. He went home in 1723 in the best manner of contemporary absentee Governors, but had to return in 1729 to pull things together again when they had disintegrated under a scandalous parsimony on his part which he blamed on a defaulting regimental agent. Seventy years of age and still niggardly, he went back to Great Britain in 1731, and the neglected province saw him no more, nor heard of him, except when he refused to Paul Mascarene the office of Lieutenant-Governor with its £500 per annum.

It was under such an administration that Paul Mascarene served his first thirty years in America. Nova Scotia provided a most discouraging prospect. The inhabitants were exclusively French-speaking or Indians, except for a handful of traders from Boston in the Bay, and transient colonies of fishermen at Canso or other harbours on the Atlantic Coast. The Acadians had been retained in the colony, not really against their will, but probably unaware of a piece of deception on the part of the British, in which the French of Canada and Cape Breton were willing to concur because

of their inability to resettle them on French lands and because they hoped some day to regain the province. These quiet farmers never had had much interest in, or use for, government; they were spreading northeast from Annapolis, and already their chief numerical strength was at the head of the Bay. In general they were about to embark on the years which, although they were to provide them with their first tranquil existence, were also to make them the grist between the upper and the nether grindstones of French and British efforts to master the continent. Nova Scotia was the strategic flank in North America, the scene of petty disagreements and Indian raids in time of peace, but suddenly leaping into importance in time of war, and at such a time open to all its terrors and alarms.

It happened that Mascarene served at first under unattractive superiors. Nicholson and Vetch had rendered their service to Nova Scotia in conquering it, and their relations to it thereafter were of doubtful benefit and in any event short-lived. Phillips was far more congenial. Mascarene, who met him in Boston on his way out in 1720, was able to convince him of the ruinous condition of the fort as well as the mutinous spirit of the garrison, and to join with him in measures to repair both. It was Phillips's deputy, Lawrence Armstrong, however, who was the chief cross of Mascarene and the other officers. His was a queer, twisted and thwarted personality, chafing under the anomaly between high office and low prestige, driven to despair and violence by the neglect and selfishness of Phillips, who was ill-fitted to keep a quarrelsome officers' mess in order (he once broke a full glass wine decanter over a brother officer's head), and who could not even engage his troops in military exercises and thus find work for idle hands, because the military equipment was falling to pieces, and anyhow he dared not trust his soldiers with arms.² It was an unlovely scene. The Indians were troublesome, the Acadians would not take the oath of allegiance, the French were conspiring to hold their loyalty, the Governor was morose, the officers either quarrelling or plotting for leave of absence, the soldiers mutinous or civilian, the officer in charge of Ordnance Stores a case of *dementia praecox*, the chaplain defiantly living with another man's wife!

From this welter of neglect, incompetence, degradation, and pettiness, Mascarene had stood out from the beginning in 1710 as a gentleman officer who was competent, modest, and tactful. All his superiors trusted him, and gave him the tasks of administration which required industry and judgment. In executing them he

2. See the many reports in Armstrong's correspondence in N. S., A 16-24, also *Nova Scotia Archives*, II (edited MacMechan, Halifax, 1900) pp. 53-54 and *passim*.

proved himself to be a "sound" and dependable subordinate. The first statesmanlike and informed comment on the affairs of the province is to be found in his report to Nicholson on the winter of 1710-11 and on the first dealings with the Acadians,³ and in the description of the circumstances of the province, accompanied by shrewd and far-sighted recommendations for defence and settlement, which he sent to Phillips for the use of the Board of Trade in 1720.⁴ From year to year in those ignominious early days Major Mascarene was consulted on all manner of problems and deputed to carry out all sorts of negotiations. His superiors and his brother officers were glad to place on his capable shoulders the tasks they were either not fitted or not anxious to perform. Interestingly enough, he showed unusual ability and sympathy in direct dealing with the Acadians. He spoke their language, of course, but the bigotry and intolerance towards them which might have been expected from a naturalized Huguenot wearing the red coat were notably lacking.

It is readily understandable that such a man as Mascarene, placed by chance circumstance in such an environment, must have been considerably disgusted and disappointed. We know that he seized every legitimate opportunity to serve elsewhere, at Canso or Placentia on garrison duty, or in New England arranging for supplies or making peace with the Indians. One suspects that he, like many an officer since in like circumstances, had the knack of "wangling" some extra leave and of combining pleasure with business. He managed to keep away from the futility of duty at Annapolis a good deal of the time after 1723, and he seems to have had some interest in the precarious Bay trade as conducted by Boston merchants. At any rate he came to regard Boston as his home, and found a wife there in Miss Elizabeth Perry. They founded an American family, and it was to his "fine, brick house" in Boston and his company of friends and relations that he ultimately retired. While Lieutenant-Governor Armstrong lived, Mascarene must be regarded as an officer whose unquestioned abilities tended on the whole to keep him away from his garrison duty.

The reward (and it was a meagre one) for this somewhat interrupted career of usefulness came in March, 1740. On the 6th of the preceding December, Armstrong ended his stormy and undignified career by his own hand. After what the old civilian councillor John Adams described as being "for a long time frequently afflicted with melancholy fitts", he was discovered lying in his quarters pierced by his own sword. Adams, who had been a member

3. *N. S.*, A4, pp. 166 *et seq.*

4. *N. S. Archives*, I (edited Akins, Halifax, 1869) pp. 39-49.

of Phillips's first Council in 1720, and who in Mascarene's absence was undoubtedly the senior councillor, assumed the presidency of the Council and arranged to straighten out Armstrong's affairs, tangled as they were with debts, some of which had been incurred to make up for Phillips's neglect. Mascarene was in Boston on leave of absence and did not get back to Annapolis until March 20th, only to find that Adams vigorously disputed his right to succeed to presidency of the Council, on the ground that in accordance with the fifth Article of the Governor's instructions he had become disqualified by his absence "at Boston, in New England, where his house is, and where his estate is, and where his residence has been the greater part of the time since the Council has been established."⁵ "Providence had put into my hands a morsel of bread", reported Adams, and "Major Mascarene was come in all haste from Boston to take it from me." The situation had some of the elements of the ridiculous; but after Mascarene had explained his absences to the Council, the members left Adams in the Council-Room and took Mascarene to Dr. Skene's quarters where they swore him in as president on March 22nd. A week later Adams wrote to the Duke of Newcastle in plaintive vein, "a poor helpless blind man in the 68th year of his age", appealing for consideration of his services and his poverty, and closing on a fine Old Testament note,— "If you have done well by the house of Jerubbaal, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let Abimelech rejoice in you."

A glimpse at the dispatches to Annapolis Royal and at the letter-book which contains Mascarene's first official dispatches⁶ reveals at once the temper of the times and the temper of the man chosen by the men on the spot to deal with them. Just before his death Armstrong had been authorized to issue letters of marque and reprisal against the King of Spain, because of the latter's failure to pay the £95,000 agreed upon as the balance of compensation due for injuries to British subjects. The settlers were to be on the alert against Spanish attacks, and were to "Annoy the Subjects of Spain in the best Manner they are able". In late August, Armstrong reported to England that he had informed his officers of the situation, and also gave his opinion of the "Dismall and Melancholy Situation of the Troops at Canso who must certainly fall a Sacrifice (being Without all Manner of Defence)", if they were attacked by the French. The echoes of the complaints of that famous Captain Jenkins, who shattered Walpole's Peace and had an Anglo-Spanish war named after the ear which he declared had been cut off by a Spanish

5. *N. S. A* 25, p. 9; *B* 2, pp. 168-175.

6. *N. S. A.* 25, pp. 3 *et seq.*, and *N. S. Archives II*, pp. 130 *et seq.*

garda costa, had reached Nova Scotia, and in the emergency the officers there did not propose to leave affairs in the hands of a civilian. Mascarene was their man.

Years afterward he was recollecting his experiences in the 'forties, and his picture of Annapolis Royal and Nova Scotia seems worth reproducing *verbatim*:

I was then in a Fort capacious enough, but whose works neglected in time of peace were all in ruins, and instead of five hundred men requisite at least to man it I had butt one hundred, twenty or thirty whereof were utter Invalides, of ten or a dozen of officers not above two or three who had ever seen a gunn fir'd in anger and who for the most part were tainted by Republican principles.

He went on to say that in the crucial moments of the siege of Annapolis Royal in 1744, "by confining some of my officers I brought them *at least to obey*".⁷

His letter-book, however, shows his immediate appreciation of what must be done at once. He was already personally and, it would seem, understandingly acquainted with those Acadians whose talents distinguished them from the mass and had resulted in their being chosen either as deputies to represent the rest (Mascarene in 1710 had been the first to approve this representative system), or as notarial and executive officers for the administration in the local settlements. His first three letters (written before he reported to England) were to men of this station, and the next three to groups of deputies and to an expelled priest who wanted a passport to Minas. Mascarene knew that war with Spain meant war with France sooner or later; he knew, too, that his garrisons could resist no sustained French attack if the *habitants* were unfriendly and no aid came from Boston. He therefore set out from the beginning of his administration to do three things, in the following order of importance: secure the benevolent neutrality or mild assistance of the Acadians; interest New England in the fate of the province whose safety he knew to be vital to her interest; and shake the administrative lethargy of the Duke of Newcastle and the Board of Trade. His prescience in 1740 and the vigour and certainty of his actions as soon as he was in office were the foundations of his greatest claim to distinction—the successful defence of the province against the French in 1744 and 1745. His good fortune was that as early as 1741 he found a kindred spirit in William Shirley, Governor of Massachusetts; and the two men, having accurately estimated the

7. *Brown MS.* 19071, f. 61; the *Brown MSS.* are partially printed, *Le Canada Français, Documents Inédits.* (Quebec, 1888-1890) vol. i, p. 82 and vol. i-iii *passim*.

situation, took appropriate steps to meet it without depending too greatly on the slowly awakening administration in Britain.

If Mascarene's rôle in Nova Scotian history seems to some distasteful, or his contribution to the later fate of the Acadians a blot upon his scutcheon, it is relatively easy to make up a condemnation of him by a cursory selection from his own letters related to the events of the 'forties and 'fifties. Yet it is grossly unfair to forget that he was (willy-nilly) implicated in the operation of forces too great either to be mastered or to be set in motion by a field-officer in a weak colonial garrison. The Acadian problem is a familiar one, and cannot be adequately summarized here.⁸ Moreover, a careful examination of Mascarene's correspondence⁹ reveals a man of lively human sympathies who understood the unlucky plight of the Acadians, was grateful to them for help or neutrality when he was attacked, and was deeply concerned as to how, consistently with his responsibility and duty to his Sovereign, he could influence them for their greater safety and protect them from the evil consequences of their misunderstanding of their critical position. It is worth remembering that, Genevan though he was, he could and did enjoy cordial relations with the Roman Catholic priests in the province. Their position was somewhat dubious, but it was Mascarene who evolved a working solution for their relations with the administration when, in 1740, an excommunication caused some disturbance.¹⁰ The priests were to give formal acknowledgment of British authority by securing the Governor's permission before taking up their duties, and the exercise of a foreign ecclesiastical jurisdiction was forbidden.

It is about the last two phases of Mascarene's activity in the province that controversy can centre, and the questions to be answered are: (1) Did he in the 'forties simply use the Acadians to save himself and his province? (2) Would it be fair to interpret his policy as one which would appropriately include expulsion of the Acadians if opportunity offered? As was said before, a little discrimination in making extracts from his utterances and relating them to what happened produces a damning case against him. One can even read duplicity into his own remembrance of things past:

8. Raymond, *Nova Scotia under English Rule*, Royal Society of Canada, Transactions, 1910, ii, pp. 55 *et seq.* Doughty, *The Acadian Exiles* (Toronto, 1916); Brebner, *New England's Outpost*, (New York, 1927) all treat of it at length.

9. *N. S.*, A 4-40, *passim*; *Arch I, II*; *Le Canada Français*, *op. cit.*; *Public Archives of Canada Report*, 1905, Vol. II; *Colonial Office Series 5*, vols. 14, 15.

10. *N. S.*, B2, pp. 176 *et seq.*

In these Several Struggles I us'd our french Inhabitants with so much mildness administered Justice so impartially and employ'd all the skill I was master of in managing them to so good purpose that tho' the Enemy brought near two thousand men in Arms in the midst of them and us'd all the means of cajoling & threatning to make them take up arms having brought spare ones to that end they could not prevail above twenty to joyn with them."¹¹

There seems to be no reason to believe that Mascarene had not realized from the moment of his arrival in the province that the Acadians represented a problem, and that by 1740 their great increase in numbers and extent of holdings had made them a potential menace if the French could win them to their side in a war. Yet the Acadians *did not want to fight for anyone*. They wanted to be left alone. In the 'forties it was Mascarene's realization of this, and his grateful resignation to the fact that although they would accept wages to work on his fort, they would retire to their cottages when invaders appeared, which entitle him to be called a statesman. It is quite true that he discussed with Shirley, and the high officers who were at the siege of Louisbourg in 1745, the desirability of expelling the Acadians; but his counsels were always on the side of moderation. He saw why the others thought as they did; he joined with Shirley in the famous letters which the latter sent to reassure the *habitants* of considerate treatment from Great Britain; he pretty definitely committed himself and his province to Shirley's direction; yet he resisted infection with the Chauvinism which would use victory to expel harmless people. As Shirley said, he was "indifferent about pursuing the Advantageous Turn".¹² He even fell out with his Council on the subject, and Shirley feared that this might result in "danger of too much tenderness towards 'em [the Acadians] on his part, and perhaps vigour on theirs [the Council's]."¹³ He was alone in his stand against expulsion in 1745, and used the arguments he knew would have most force—the uncertainty of interpretation of the Treaty of Utrecht, the danger of giving the French so many new American subjects, and the cost and difficulty of removing so many people, whose number he seems purposely to have exaggerated. It is best to let him state his own case, and with it to quote his honest admission of the advantages to Britain of his opponents' scheme:

I have look't upon them the [Acadians] as grafted in the Body of the British Nation, as an unsound limb indeed and there-

11. *Doc. Ined.*, ii, p. 82.

12. *Colonial Office Series* 5, vol. 901, f. 71v.

13. *N. S.*, A 28, P. 16

fore to be nurtur'd and by time and good care to be brought to answer the purposes expected from them; first to become Subjects and after that good Subjects; which I have represented might be effected in some generations by good usage and by removing some impediments, to witt the influence of the French att Cape Breton and that of the Missionaries which have been suffer'd to remain amongst this People and which hitherto it has been reckon'd dangerous to attempt to drive away, as it has been a Question, how farr the Treaty of Utrecht was binding in that case, which certainly cannot be resolved here.

If from other Views new measures are to be taken and these Inhabitants can be remov'd and good Protestant Subjects transplanted in their room; nothing can be of greater advantage to the Brittish interest in general and to that of the Northern Colonies in particular and especially to that of this Province.

He went on to rehearse the objections noted above.¹⁴ This is the responsible judgment of a good man in his two capacities, first, the optimistic believer in the harmlessness of the *habitants* and the possibility of time making them citizens, and second, the dutiful soldier and servant of the Crown admitting that the total American situation and the struggle with France might invalidate his own slow solution.

While the Acadians were not expelled in the 'forties, it would be too much to credit this solely to Mascarene, for the Home Government never seriously entertained a proposal for so costly and disruptive an act. Yet Mascarene was right, and he had excellent evidence to support his views. When war broke out in 1744, he had already done something to rebuild his fort; and, while Canso fell in sheer surprise and impotence, he hired Annapolis Acadians to fell timber and revet the ramparts of the province's only real fort. That summer he repelled two attacks, neither of which had the artillery with which to make the fort untenable. Even so, they might well have succeeded, for Mascarene had mutiny on his hands in the garrison, as well as the ineptness which long stagnation had produced. He managed to win the devotion of his tottering old common soldiers, reinforced as they were by the timely arrival of over a hundred auxiliaries from Boston, and they held out against the second attack until the French commander, who had tried almost successfully to win over the disaffected officers to an armistice, withdrew before a further reinforcement of fifty fighting Indians. The local Acadians had refused to join the French invaders; and when three French naval vessels sailed into the Basin to shell the fort, there was no land force to co-operate with them and they too left. In 1745 the capture of Louisbourg saved Annapolis

14. N. S., A 27, p. 247.

from serious attack, but in 1746 the news that France was sending over half her naval strength under the Duc d'Anville seriously disturbed New England and Nova Scotia. When storms and disease destroyed that Armada, men breathed more easily, and Mascarene sent a detachment up to Minas in order to re-assert Government authority there. Here again he had confirmation for his views. When de Ramesay made his amazing and successful attack on Grand Pré in the snowstorms of February, 1747, he tried to get the local *habitants* to assist him. The great majority refused, and maintained their refusal even after the British forces were withdrawn. During the next few years when the Abbé Le Loutre was trying by every means in his power, even by use of his Indians, to withdraw the Acadians beyond the Missequash to "French" Acadie, most of them still refused to move and resumed their old casual relations with the Annapolis administration. It was obvious that they were truly Acadians, and meant to stay under the easy yoke of Mascarene's administration. "They acknowledge it is their interest to remain under the British Government", he wrote, and again, "They seem to be sensible of the sweets they enjoy under His Majesty's Government." If they were, and if Nova Scotia remained a British province, it was because of the humanity, moderation, foresight, and resolute behaviour of their Governor.

The scene changes, and Mascarene's rôle on it, with the grievously surprising return of Louisbourg to France in exchange for Madras in 1748, the pleasanter shock of the vigorous founding of Halifax in 1749, and the gradual accentuation of the gnawing problem created by Le Loutre's new Acadie and the Indian attacks on the British settlements. Everyone knew that the issue between France and Great Britain would soon be joined again, and that the flank in Nova Scotia would be the scene of the first conflict. In New England and Nova Scotia the question of the day was "What can be done about the Acadians?" The man who knew was at Annapolis, whither he had returned after a short visit to Halifax, where he and his shabby councillors had stood ill-at-ease on the decks of H. M. S. *Beaufort* with Cornwallis's brilliant suite before the first Council of an English-speaking Nova Scotia. There was something truly pathetic, but at the same time quite in keeping with Mascarene's sense of service discipline, in the way he, the mainstay of the province in its most troubled times, gave way to the young nobleman who was so soon to be overwhelmed and fatigued with responsibilities and resign. The old commander went back to his post in the gracious valley after having unburdened himself of his archives and his knowledge. Recent arrival of some thousands of

settlers, and the novelty of active interest in Nova Scotia on the part of the British administration, had so altered matters that even Mascarene's experience and hard-won knowledge seemed of minor account. The new Governor was young, showed a youthful impatience engendered by his great responsibilities, and was fairly contemptuous of all that had been done before he devoted his talents and the British taxpayers' money to making Nova Scotia secure. In July, 1749, he complained to the Duke of Bedford somewhat petulantly because Mascarene had told Shirley of de Ramesay's settlement at St. John river, instead of going across himself and driving him out, and in September he passed on to the Board of Trade his opinion of the old provincial troops and their command—"the management in that Regiment has been so shameful that 'tis almost incredible—there never was such another in any service; it is my business to make it better and rectify past errors." Halifax and the Misseguash bulked largest in the Governor's eyes, and Annapolis and its commander dwindled proportionately in attention and importance.

Colonel Paul Mascarene, therefore, faded quietly from the Nova Scotian scene, and his fort once more succumbed to rain and frost and its feeble materials. He had done his best to give Cornwallis his ideas on the practicability of exacting an unqualified oath of allegiance from the Acadians, and had had to resign himself to seeing the attempt made. He made judicious enquiries among his own flock at Annapolis, and reported that he thought all but a few would refuse, in spite of his warning that British families would take their places. "Several in this River are very wavering butt dare not separate themselves from the herd who in general are influenc'd by the fear of their posterity becoming att last Protestants & the natural inclination they have for the French interest preferable to the English".¹⁵ Fortunately for his peace of mind, Cornwallis did not attempt to carry through his threat of oath or expulsion, and Mascarene left the province in July, 1751, to go to New England for treaty negotiations with the Indians at St. George. Cornwallis would have gone almost to any ends to detach the Micmacs from the French, and Mascarene was perhaps the agent who induced Jean Baptiste Cope and his tribe of ninety persons on the east coast to come to terms in 1752. In 1753 the Cape Sable group followed suit. But Cornwallis was already gone, and Mascarene does not seem to have returned to the province. While events progressed towards their terrible dénouement of 1755, the old man was passing the turning point of three score years and ten with his family at Boston. It

¹⁵ *Brown MS.* 19071, f. 99.

is doubtful whether he would have judged it proper to have raised his voice in defence of the Acadians in 1755. He had always given way when the higher command ordered it; but it is permissible to suggest, on the evidence of his stand in the past, that had he had a voice in Charles Lawrence's Council he might once more have urged moderation in handling the *habitants*, whom he knew so well.

Instead of that, he gracefully grew old in Boston. In 1758 he was made a major-general at the time of the recruiting for the last Canada expedition, but he was too old to go and obliterate his memories of the panic-stricken days on the St. Lawrence in 1711 with the successes which Wolfe won at Louisbourg and Quebec.

In 1752 he had sent off his son to make useful friends in London, and in the letters of introduction he gave him we have a very pleasant picture of the old man resting on his laurels in New England. Like many another gentleman in the colonies (George Washington, e.g.) he had his liquid capital in Bank of England stock. Like most officers, he had complaint to make of his financial treatment. Phillips had never allowed him the half salary which Armstrong had enjoyed as Lieutenant-Governor, and he had had to do a good deal of entertaining during the war out of his lieutenant-colonel's pay. He had sold his commission for £2800, but got nothing for the civil office which he had held from Armstrong's death to Cornwallis's coming. His boy (who had not been allowed to go to England until he had successfully experienced the smallpox!) went with letters to all who might remember his father, and was given detailed instructions on how to proceed in securing compensation for his father's losses. He must look up his father's Huguenot friends, and if unable in one case to get an introduction "you must take Coach and wait on him (ten a clock or sooner in the morning)". He must not go to law except with "very probable hopes of succeeding." If necessary, he was to make presents to "the Clarks of the State Offices", but it would be wiser to promise them a part of any money recovered. But everything after all depends on God; the boy must simply do his best as his father had done.

His letter to another Huguenot, Colonel Ladevèze, is a summing-up of his life since leaving England in 1710. Some extracts from it are better than any paraphrase:

I am now after these tossing, gott, thanks to Almighty God in my own house amongst my Children and a numerous offspring of grand children there by God's grace to pass the remainder of my days in quiett and peace.

Being too old & crazy to act my part as the Settling a New Country requir'd. . . . I am now likely to end my days in this

Town where I am well respected and from the employments I have had and the Post continued to me by Brevet [Colonel of Foot], Keep a considerable Rank tho' not able to make any great figure... You see my hand keeps still studdy, my legs do still their office and with the help of spectacles I can yet pass whole days in reading.

Equally attractive are some rather more domestic glimpses from his other correspondence:

Mrs. Mascarene return'd from Cambridge the day I expected, Stay'd the time of our washing and went back the 15th to keep thanksgiving. . . .

The family at Cambridge have visited us two or three times within this fortnight when no company & the Ladies not abroad I read to them *Amelia* with which they seem very well pleas'd.

At another time he entertained the little company in his drawing-room by showing them

Some little pieces as old as the time of my courting your mother to Shew them as I term'd it how we made love fourty years ago and the way we then had of expressing our sentiments, all this not out of Vanity to my Self butt with a view still farther to contribute to your own [his son's] happiness.

Yet entertaining seems to have been a burden on his resources, for he explained that he had been cool with "the Cambridge relations" . . . "as that family is large, too great an inlett would have drawn too great a flood." He rode almost daily to display his new saddle and horse furniture "which fitt my horse very well & are much admir'd." He went to church "att least once every Sunday all this winter." He urged his boy to keep on sending for his garden "the Slipps & roots of flowers you send in Boxes." His great pleasure was to play with his grand-daughter Betsy who "beginns to walk alone." His own diversion was chess.

Thanks to these letters¹⁴ we have a delightful picture of the retired soldier. He died on January 22, 1760, and thus tranquilly closed a distinguished, if in no sense a spectacular, career. History is full of such instances of sterling service, good judgment, gentlemanliness, and practical ability, which fail to stand out sharply in a crowded canvas of more spectacular exploits. Here was a man who might have been bigoted and harsh, and revenged himself on French peasants for the evils done him by a bigoted French king. Instead of that, he showed a reasonableness quite remarkable under the circumstances of his employment. Repeatedly in his career, which on both civil and military sides was marked by outstanding

grasp of practical essentials, he stood out alone for humane moderation and patience. Even the envy of brother officers at a time of back-biting and tale-telling left him unscathed. His relations with the Acadians were marked by friendliness and patient explanation even when duty compelled him to be firm. These unusual qualities were perhaps the reason why he never secured conspicuous employment or advancement; but however small and obscure the stage on which he acted, he was an able gentleman who served his adopted country well and died respected and beloved. It may seem a far cry from the splendour of the court of the royal line whose born subject he had been, or from the high politics of the corrupt but inspired parliament which he served, to the pettiness of defending an almost ignored American colony. But if commercial Britain wrested from courtly France the lion's share of Europe's outposts overseas, it was because even in the obscure arenas of the conflict between them she could inspire and retain and weave into a world-wide fabric of brilliant effort such honest and able devotion as that of the exiled Huguenot, Paul Mascarene.