

## P R E F A C E.

ANTECEDENTLY to the year 1759, the dominion of North America was divided almost exclusively between the Kings of England and France ; the former possessing the immense Atlantic seaboard of the continent, the latter the territories along the borders of the gigantic "*Fleuve du Canada*," or River St. Lawrence. But the conquest, gallantly achieved by Wolfe on the memorable plains of Abr'am, near Quebec, left, subsequently to that event, but a slender footing to the French crown in America, whilst it at once extended the empire of Great Britain from the Atlantic Ocean to the shores of the Pacific, and rendered it almost co-extensive with the whole northern division of the New World. England continued in the undisputed possession of these her immense dominions, for a period of nearly sixteen years, when those revolutionary discontents broke out in the old colonies, which ended in the declaration of their independence, and their recognition as a free and independent state, by the treaty of Paris, 3rd of September, 1783.

Whether the reduction of Canada accelerated the separation of the original British North American Plantations, by removing the check which the relative geographical position of the surrounding French possessions was calculated to produce upon the colonists, it is difficult to say; but it is, perhaps, less problematical whether England would this day have had to boast of her valuable transatlantic dominions, had not the victory of the British hero, who fell in the consummation of the conquest of Canada, preceded the birth of the United States of America, as one of the independent nations of the world. Certain it is, however, that the severe consequences of the loss of the British plantations were greatly mitigated by Wolfe's victory, and the accession of the French colonies to the British empire, to which, not only from their intrinsic worth, but because of the political power and the commercial advantages incidental to the possession of them, they have since become important appendages.

In the war waged by the colonies against the mother country, the people of Canada, although so recently become British subjects, resisted with fidelity every