

CHAPTER II

THE CANADIAN DOMINION

Section I.—The Name and Extent

It was thus a Frenchman of Brittany who, first of Europeans in historic times, set foot upon Canadian soil and claimed the country for his king, and so for many of his fellow-countrymen who afterwards came to make New France their home. It was a company of English adventurers on Hudson Bay who for two centuries kept for their king and country the almost continuous sovereignty of the land bestowed upon them, and it was a young English general, dying in the hour of victory on the plains near Quebec, who engraved the name of England on Canada—the fairest jewel in the British crown. It was brave Fraser and Montgomery Highlanders, and restless Scottish pioneers, who came as early settlers, the former to carry with French voyageurs the fur trade from Montreal to distant Athabasca, the latter to reclaim the wilderness along the sea-shore of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, as well as elsewhere, who gave elements of energy and thrift to Canada. It was the sweetest poet of Ireland who, gliding with the boatmen down the beautiful St. Lawrence, sang the best-known Canadian song in the land whither many of his countrymen have since come to find freedom and prosperity. Last, and perhaps most important, it was American loyalists who, sacrificing worldly goods, preserved their honour to be an inheritance to their children in New Brunswick and elsewhere along the sea, as well as to be the leaders in laying the foundations of a new community upon the