

INTRODUCTION.

I have sometimes seen a necklace or chain of beads strung so closely together that one could not see the thread beneath ; but there always is a thread. Now, in some ways this little book is like such a string of beads, for it is made up of a number of short stories (each of which may be read separately), and it has a thread which holds them all together.

This thread is the history of our country, and I hope when you have looked at my beads (or read my stories) that you will know not only a little about the great men, whose names are written on the first page of this book, but also something of how the Maritime Provinces, and even the Dominion of Canada, came to be what they are.

The first three stories tell something of the lives of several bold mariners and discoverers, and you will find that in early days both France and England were trying, by sending out explorers and colonists, to win North America for their own. The next half-dozen stories are all about soldiers, and—if we look for the string that runs through these beads of our chain—we find that the fighting men held at this time such an important place in our history because France and England were each trying to get the better, by force, of the other. Another thing we shall notice is that the nearness of Acadia, or Nova Scotia, to the strong colonies of New England, and its distance from the other French colony of Canada, gave the British an advantage in the struggle, which was at last brought to a close by Wolfe's great victories.