

PREFACE.

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 the acknowledgment of the American confederation 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,