

## CHAPTER I.

The Crown and the Colonies—The Condition and Extent of Britain's Colonial Empire at Victoria's Accession—Expansion During Her Reign—The Neo-Colonial Idea and Its Evolution During the Victorian Era—The Birth of the Colonial Office as a Special Department of State—The B. N. A. Act the Fullest Charter Possessed by any Crown Colony—The Queen's Personal Influence in Colonial Government—Oath of Allegiance—Canada at the Jubilee—Culmination of Colonial Patriotism in Contributing Troops for Imperial Defense.

IN contemplating the constant progress of the British flag the mind is tempted by the Biblical simile—"as the waters cover the sea." But a mere index of colonial possessions does not place the finger upon the colonizing genius of the Victorian Era. That is to be seen most clearly in the process of transformation which the older colonies have undergone, particularly Canada, whose national birth is not beyond the memory of the oldest inhabitant. The Canada that professed colonial allegiance to William IV. and the Canada that sent four thousand troops to the defense of the Empire in South Africa are, to all but the most unimaginative, two different countries. Many people do not know that within only a few years of Victoria's accession, our annual deficits were met by a draft on the Imperial Treasury. From 1818, the date which marks the last of such payments, the Canadian colonies, self-sustained, have gone forward with steady steps, and to-day our united confederation is one of the bulwarks of that great Empire on which the sun never sets, and a patriotic pattern for the younger outposts.

Before tracing this national development, however, it is instructive to examine the various stages by which the present colonial policy of Greater Britain has been evolved. In his excellent work on "British Colonial Policy," Egerton divides colonial history into the following divisions: the period of beginnings; the period of trade ascendancy; the period of systematic colonization (which includes the granting of responsible government); the period of the zenith and decline of the laissez-aller principles; and the period of Greater Britain.