

CHAPTER IV.

New Problems of the North-West.

It is something of a coincidence that when young Smith landed in Canada in 1838, he found the country the scene of unrest and trouble, and when he came out of the wilderness, after thirty years' retirement, he found that signs of trouble were not wanting. During those thirty years events moved quickly. The scattered and politically separated Provinces had at last, after long negotiations, been bound together in a Confederation, and in 1867 the "Dominion of Canada" became an accomplished fact, with its Capital at Ottawa. The statesmen of that time, chief of whom was Sir John A. Macdonald, had no easy task. The older Provinces had to be conciliated and managed. The West, beyond Lake Superior, was a terra incognita, controlled and ruled by the Hudson Bay Company. One of its most important posts was Fort Garry, at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. Beyond that were the prairies, the home of immense herds of Buffalo—the chief food of the Indians. This became a source of trouble. The incoming settlers and the servants of the Company, French and Scotch,