

THE HABITANT HIS ORIGIN AND HISTORY

I

CHAMPLAIN AND FRENCH COLONIZATION

OF all the colonies planted in the New World during the seventeenth century by several European nations, after years of constant effort and at the price of so much blood, not one remains as an oversea dependency in the hands of its original possessors. Mexico, Peru, Chili, Paraguay and Argentina long ago cast off the Spanish yoke. Portugal, once all-powerful in South America, does not hold a foot of ground in that rich continent. War drove France out of North America, and twenty years later England lost her vast colonies. It is, however, the pride and honour of England still to rule over half the continent of North America—the half that she did not originally colonize.

The colony reared for generations by France has, since the Conquest, remained true to the England that lost her own offspring to the south. For the loyalty of French Canada, Great Britain may thank the statesmen who directed her colonial policy, who kept pace with the development of the country, and led the youthful nation step by step through the first stages of political life, and finally crowned it with a full measure of political liberty. The king's French subjects became to all intents and purposes British subjects, and as such entitled to share all rights attached to that status. And was there not a substantial reason for the confidence implied in the grant of enlarged institutions? Did not the French colonists contribute largely to repel from Canada in 1775 and in 1812 Great Britain's own estranged children, and thereby to the maintenance of the supremacy