

rights of the Netherlands, the unity of the history of Britain will in vain be sought for among its ruling princes, of whom all were insignificant; or in its great families in an age when the aristocracy was absolutely supreme, and yet when little is to be told about its chiefs but their factious altercations for the lead. The unity resides in the struggle for lordship over the commerce of the world. Every question, dynastic or ministerial, was drawn into this mighty ocean stream, where, in the great naval race, the flag of England was ever foremost. In these struggles Africa and Asia were the scenes of wonderful deeds; but every effort, every contention, every war pointed to the rivalry of the powers of Europe in North America. The climax of this period for England is marked by the double victory of the elder Pitt, as minister, through Wolf on the Plains of Abraham, and, though he had ceased to be minister, as still the animating soul of the English army and fleet which made the conquest of Havana.

In the epochs that next followed, no one disputes that the paramount interest in the history of the world rests on the colonies held by Britain in North America.

In this last revision, as in the first composition, it is the fixed purpose to secure perfect accuracy in the relation of facts, even to their details and their coloring, and to keep truth clear from the clouds, however brilliant, of conjecture and tradition. No well-founded criticism that has been seen, whether made here or abroad, with a good will or a bad one, has been neglected.

The next aim is lucidity in the ordering of the narrative, so that the reader may follow the changes of public affairs in their connection, and with every page be carried forward in the story.

There is no end to the difficulty in choosing language