

PREFACE.

The manuscript documents relating to the history of Nova Scotia were collected, arranged, bound, indexed and catalogued by the late Thomas Beamish Akins, D. C. L., who was appointed Commissioner of Public Records, in accordance with a resolution passed by the House of Assembly on the thirtieth of April, 1857. According to the catalogue prepared by Dr. Akins in 1886, and now out of print, they number over 535 volumes; and there are besides fifty-nine boxes of unbound papers, arranged and indexed. All these are preserved in the Province Building at Halifax, and form the materials for a complete history of the province.

The collection is twofold in character. It consists of original documents, and transcripts of papers from the Public Record Office in London and elsewhere. A selection from them was published at the expense of the province in 1868 by Dr. Akins. It was a stout volume of over 750 pages, and related to the Acadians, the encroachments of French Canada upon Nova Scotia, the Seven Years' War, the founding of Halifax, and the establishment of representative government in 1758. The preface ends with the words, "There are yet many documents of value and interest among our archives worthy of publication."

With this justification, the Nova Scotia Historical Society made representations to the Legislature, which resulted in my appointment to the task of editing another selection from the archives.

The documents chosen are among the very oldest in the possession of the Government. Like all papers not kept in a fire-proof room, they are in danger of destruction; and MS. 20 was noted as in a "damaged condition from damp" when it was catalogued. In all the writing is often very faint; pages are patched and worn, and crumbled in the mere process of turning them over. It is doubtful if they will soon be read again.

The three documents selected, MSS. 14, 15, 20, relate to the internal administration of the province during Walpole's long peace;