

others for their abstract interest or importance. And it may be added, that whilst I have striven to make the intent and purport of the insertion of each letter, minute, or despatch especially appreciable by the reader of Lord Metcalfe's "Life and Correspondence," it has been my endeavour, at the same time, so to select and so to arrange the papers as to give to the present volume something of a biographical character, and thereby to render it in itself sufficiently intelligible to those who now for the first time make the acquaintance of the great and good man who wrote them.

To the accomplishment of this object I believed that the intrusion of many explanatory notes was not necessary. The papers, for the most part, tell their own story. To have inserted much biographical matter would have been to repeat what I have written elsewhere; and to comment, either approvingly or disapprovingly, on Lord Metcalfe's opinions, would have been clearly an impertinence. These opinions are published because they are his; and whether they are mine or not the majority of readers will not care to inquire. It is hardly in the nature of things that any two men should concur wholly in opinion on so large a variety of subjects; but, where difference arises, there are few who will not mistrust their own judgment on finding that Metcalfe is their opponent. The reader, at all events, may in every case feel assured that the opinion expressed is the growth of much thought and much experience; that it comes honestly and earnestly, from the full heart; and that it has been maintained throughout a life distinguished by many great qualities, but by none so much as by its consistency.

In such a collection as this, altogether to have avoided the insertion of papers relating to circumstances almost forgotten, or to systems of government long since exploded, would have been impossible, if it would have been desirable. The vast changes which have taken place during the last half century, in the administrative principles and practices of the English in India, must necessarily impart something of an antiquarian character to such a volume as this. But whilst, in a biogra-