

## PREFACE.

This book will be found to contain the largest and most important collection of public and private papers relative to the early history of the maritime provinces that has hitherto been published. No private collection of papers in Canada, with perhaps the single exception of the Chipman papers, can compare with the Winslow collection as regards the length of the period that it covers, the number of writers represented, and the variety of subjects with which it deals.

Some years ago the editor learned of the existence of the collection and was invited by Mr. Francis E. Winslow of Chatham, in whose keeping the greater part of the papers were, to examine them with a view to their preservation in some permanent form. The importance of such a step became apparent upon the most cursory inspection. The editor indeed found himself well nigh overwhelmed with the extent and variety of the materials available for historical purposes and the greater part of his leisure time during the last two years has been devoted to the task of digesting and arranging them for publication. Large as the volume is, as now printed, it does not begin to represent the mass of materials of varying degrees of interest and importance to be found in the original collection.

In addition to the papers in possession of Mr. Francis E. Winslow there have been added a considerable number of letters and documents kindly loaned by other members of the Winslow family, and the editor's obligations are especially due to Mr. Edward Pelham Winslow of Stratford, Ont., and Miss Mary Winslow, of Woodstock, N. B. Several letters written by Edward Winslow and a few other documents of interest have been added, of which the originals are to be found among the Chipman papers.

In the arrangement of the papers as now printed the chronological order has been adhered to as far as possible. A copious index has been prepared which will be found to add very greatly to the value of the book for purposes of reference.

Some idea of the variety of topics with which the volume deals may be gathered from the fact that it contains about six hundred and fifty letters and documents written by about one hundred and seventy different persons and covering a period of nearly fifty years. The editor's task has been chiefly one of selection and arrangement with the addition of such foot notes as will enable anyone to read the pages of the book intelligently even though not conversant with the subject in hand.