

## JOSEPH HOWE.

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### I.

NOVA SCOTIA boasts of a galaxy of great men in the political arena, but Joseph Howe is regarded almost universally as easily first. Uniacke was eloquent, cultured, and high-minded. Archibald was polished, able, and erudite. Johnston was a man of impassioned oratory, and strong and vigorous qualities. Young was sagacious, eloquent, and forceful. All of these men had intellectual qualities which would have made them conspicuous figures in any parliament in the world. Tupper and Thompson are living, and well known throughout Canada, and it is best, for obvious reasons, that nothing special should be said of them now.

But Howe was different from all the others, and had a personality peculiarly his own, which made him another sort of person. Readers of history will recall that occasionally a figure is met whose personality lends charm to all incidents with which he is connected. When reading the history of the last years of the Eighteenth and the first fifteen years of the Nineteenth Centuries, who does not feel that he is in the realms of romance whenever Napoleon is moving and acting. The commonplace vanishes, and events glow whenever the great personality comes upon the scene. In like manner, in literature, some writers are bound to attract admiration by the simple fact that they are unlike all others, and have a commanding way of their own. Carlyle has a style and line of thought absolutely his own, and based upon no models, and belonging to no school. Dickens writes fiction as no other person writes it. He may have less of literary finish than Thackeray; less of stirring action

than Scott; less of subtle analysis than George Eliot; but there is an indefinable charm thrown over the characters of "Nell," "Little Dorrit," "Paul Dombey," "Dick Swiveller," "The Marchioness," "Oliver Twist," "Sam Weller," and a host of others, that is nowhere to be paralleled in the works of fiction. When, therefore, a Nova Scotian is asked why Joseph Howe, or "Joe Howe," as he always was and always will be known, is the patron saint of the Province, it might not be easy to put in words and phrases the reason: but it is due to the fact that he had a matchless personality: that he was not like other great men; that he was a character by himself, and had, in his palmy days, a capacity for firing the popular imagination altogether unequalled among his contemporaries.

Joseph Howe was born in Halifax in 1814. His father was a loyalist who had come from Massachusetts. He was the only one of his family who took the British side at the time of the Revolution, and on taking up his residence in Halifax he soon took office. He was first King's Printer, and afterwards Postmaster-General for the Lower Provinces. He seems to have been a man of high character and benevolent disposition. He was twice married. By his first wife he had five children, of whom, at least, three were sons. By his second wife he had a daughter and a son. This son was the famous Joe Howe.

Mr. John Howe lived in a cottage on the banks of the beautiful North-west Arm, which forms the western boundary of Halifax. This place was then merely a suburb of the city, and