

## WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE

the persons who had been engaged in the rebellions. In the time of Lord Metcalfe, Papineau, Nelson, and other rebels long in exile, had been allowed to return to Canada either by virtue of special pardons granted by the Crown under the great seal, or by the issue of writs of *nolle prosequi*. The signal result of the Amnesty Act passed in 1849 by the Canadian legislature, in accordance with the recommendation in the speech from the throne, was the return of William Lyon Mackenzie, who had led an obscure and wretched life in the United States ever since his flight from Upper Canada in 1837, and had gained an experience which enabled him to value British institutions more highly than those of the republic.

An impartial historian must always acknowledge the fact that Mackenzie was ill-used by the family compact and English governors during his political career before the rebellion, and that he had sound views of constitutional government which were well worthy of the serious consideration of English statesmen. In this respect he showed more intelligence than Papineau, who never understood the true principles of parliamentary government, and whose superiority, compared with the little, pugnacious Upper Canadian, was the possession of a stately presence and a gift of fervid eloquence which was well adapted to impress and carry away his impulsive and too easily deceived countrymen. If Mackenzie had shown more control of his