

PREFACE

It is, perhaps, needless to say, that this little book is not intended to compete with the standard works on the Constitution which have been produced by eminent writers, such as the late Sir William Anson, the late Bishop Stubbs, or Professor Dicey, happily still with us. Still less does it claim to rival the classical monographs on the various aspects of the Constitution which are the work of experts in the strict sense. It is written only in the hope that those who have not yet the leisure, or who have not yet arrived at the age, to appreciate these larger works, will be enabled by it to look forward to that advantage at a later date. And the immediate prospect of a largely increased electorate, combined with the great stimulus of interest in problems of government produced by the war, would seem to make that hope reasonable.

For the many defects of the book, the writer will not apologize; for he knows that critics best able to appreciate the difficulty of writing it, will be the readiest to forgive them. He will merely deprecate the suggestion that the book is a 'précis' of larger treatises. So far as it goes, it is original both in plan and execution, and from first-hand material. For neither plan nor execution is any one but the writer responsible.

Nevertheless, it is the writer's keen pleasure, as well as his bounden duty, to tender his grateful thanks to

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