

PREFACE

“**B**IOGRAPHIES written by sons are, as a rule, only one degree less contemptible than those written by daughters,” says a candid friend. It is impossible to come so closely into contact with the life of a great man as is implied in writing his biography without becoming a hero-worshipper. When the life to be written is that of one who has been the biographer’s hero ever since he drew conscious breath, the attainment of impartiality becomes almost impossible. Even to attempt it is to seem, in the eyes of many, guilty of unfilial coldness, of disloyalty to the loved and honoured dead. Yet much of the available material was contained in letters, portions of which were too private for any eye save my own; and filial reverence, even if endangering impartiality, at least shuts out the possibility of ignorance. It thus seemed fitting that I should take a share in the work, and I have been fortunate in having as my colleague a graduate of Queen’s—a friend of my father, and a writer of repute. Chapters I to X, XVII, and XX to XXV are my own; the remainder are by Mr. Hamilton. But our work is in the fullest sense a collaboration. Its plan was thought out by us both; we discussed together