

## PREFACE.

IN attempting to place before the public an account of the lives of the leading personages who have figured in Canadian history, from the period of the first discovery of the country down to the present times, the editor has encountered the difficulties incidental to such an undertaking. With respect to past times the principal difficulty has been one of selection. It has constantly been necessary to bear in mind the fact that the present is a Canadian, and not a mere Provincial work, and that many names must be excluded from its pages which would rightfully find a place in a Biographical Cyclopædia of a particular Province. During the period before the Conquest, for instance, there were many gallant gentlemen whose lives and achievements are pleasant to recall, and who left at least a temporary impress upon the civil, political and ecclesiastical institutions of New France. The interest in the lives of these personages, however, is for the most part confined to the inhabitants of the Lower Provinces, and only a few sketches of the lives of the more prominent among them could be admitted into the present work with due regard to their relative importance. Similar remarks are applicable to various personages who have played a not insignificant part in the history of the Maritime Provinces, and even to some who have figured in the annals of the Province of Ontario. It is believed, however, that no name of really national importance has been omitted, and that the selection has been made with due regard to the comprehensive scope of the work.

As respects the present day, it has been found necessary to adopt a much wider range. There are many living persons who, from the mere fact of their occupying more or less conspicuous positions, are entitled to notice in the work, but who would undoubtedly have had no place there by reason of their personal merits or abilities. This is an incident of every work which attempts to deal with contemporaneous biography, and it is one which can neither be ignored nor surmounted.

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