

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE Debates in the House of Commons, in the year 1774, on the Bill for making more effectual provision for the Government of the province of Quebec, are not reported in any of the publications of that time. So strictly was the standing order enforced for the exclusion of strangers, and so rigidly were those persons punished who ventured to make public the speeches of the members, that none but the merest outlines of the proceedings on this most important bill have been given to the world.

There was, however, at that time, in the House of Commons, a gentleman of rank and talent, who took copious notes, in short-hand, of the whole of these very interesting Debates; and from his manuscripts, the speeches contained in the following pages have been drawn up.

The bill was brought into the House of Lords by the Earl of Dartmouth, on the 2nd of May. It passed without opposition, and without any witnesses having been called to support the allegations upon which it was founded, on the 17th of the same month. On the 18th of June, it was returned to the House of Lords, with the amendments introduced by the House of Commons; and then the Earl of Chatham, though extremely ill at the time, came down to oppose it, stating, in a short speech, his conviction, that "it would involve this country in a thousand difficulties; that it was a most cruel, oppressive,