

PREFACE.

The building-up of a nation is not a mere effort of will on the part of an individual or a people. A people or an individual may have much to do with shaping the destinies of a country, but when the events which constitute the salient points in the history of that country come to be viewed from the somewhat elevated standpoint which he who would write a history must necessarily occupy in order that his vision may have scope sufficient to include everything bearing on the situation, those actors who in the bustle of "history-making" tower in magnitude and importance as primary causes, suddenly dwindle into "temporary agents," "creatures of circumstance," "mere puppets," moved and controlled by some unseen and unknown power, be it Providence, Destiny or Fate. But while the acts of one agent fit into those of another in making a history which so rises in importance and far-reaching effects as to dwarf the men who made its integral parts, we must not forget to hold each man morally responsible for his acts. An over-ruling Power may so control the acts of individuals as to cause good to result where only greed or selfish ambition prompted, but this must not blind us to the moral responsibility of the actors, who must be judged only by the motives which actuated them.

To-day Canada has just shaken herself free from the clutches of Rebellion, which at one time threatened to bring with her her sisters Anarchy and Revolution. Somebody is to blame for all this, and if the reader after scanning the evidence as to the causes of the rebellion chooses to call prominent men by hard names, we cannot help it. It is not our business to call harsh names nor to judge our neighbours. It is ours to state the