

## INTRODUCTION

and his achievements as a statesman full justice has never heretofore been done. It is the crowning merit of the work of Dr. Saunders that he has made a thorough and impartial examination of the record, and presented, in a form that must arrest and enchain the attention of his readers, a correct and clearly drawn outline of the part played by Mr. Johnstone in the eventful drama of our pre-Confederation history.

But while this seems to the writer of these introductory sentences the chief merit of the interesting pages that follow, it is far from being their only merit. The long political duel between Mr. Howe and his young antagonist from Cumberland is described in a vivid and convincing manner—convincing, as it will probably happen, to some who would have preferred not to be so convinced. For the events narrated are, many of them, comparatively recent, and it may well happen that these are yet live coals beneath the ashes of controversy, over which the feet of the historian have undertaken to walk. More than one passage in the life of the reputed father and founder of responsible government is dealt with in the present volume, which will be the subject of future controversy, as it has been the occasion of violent conflict in the past. Of one thing the reader may rest assured. There is no controverted subject with which the author has undertaken to deal as to which he has not been prepared to give a reason for the faith that is in him. He has examined the record with painstaking industry, with great thoroughness of research, and with a very evident disposition nothing to extenuate nor set down aught in malice. His judgments, if in some instances severe, are always discriminating and never lacking in charity. But he has throughout endeavoured to be faithful to historical truth, and his researches have shed a flood of light on more than one of the enigmas that have perplexed the casual inquirer into the history of the period covered by his volume.