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AN OLD PROVINCIAL STATUTE BOOK.

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AMONG the books bequeathed by the late Sir William Young to the library of Dalhousie College, Halifax, although there are many more rare and valuable, there is none that is of such real and vital interest to the historian as that which contains the acts of the first five General Assemblies of the province. An old yellow folio volume, suggesting the general flavor of mild decay—though neither dog-eared nor worm-eaten, as volumes of its age are apt to be—it presents evidence, both in printing and binding, of the pains taken by the publisher to make it the best that the art of the printer and binder could in those early days produce. The title page informs us that it was printed and sold at Halifax, Nova Scotia, by Robert Fletcher, in 1767; but a certain degree of mystery attaches to this announcement, as the volume contains, under a continuous paging, acts of the Legislature down to 1776. This would seem to indicate that the book was published in instalments, the achievement outrunning the original design as indicated by the title page and preface, a theory which is rendered more than probable by the fact that the table of titles of the perpetual acts included in the volume, extends only to the sixth year of the reign of George III., which corres-

ponds exactly with the announcement of the title page and proves that the inclusion of the subsequent acts was an afterthought. A certificate from Richard Bulkeley, Secretary of the province, dated the 13th day of May, 1767, informs us that this edition of the laws of the province, as prepared and collated with the records, by John Duport, Esq., with the revisal and marginal references to acts of parliament and authorities in the law, by Mr. Chief Justice Belcher, was begun by order of the General Assembly on the special recommendation of the Hon. Lieutenant-Governor Franklin, and continued and perfected with the approbation and by order of His Excellency the Governor, the Right Honorable Lord William Campbell. The dedication on the opposite page to His Excellency, the Right Honorable Lord William Campbell, Captain General and Governor-in-chief in and over His Majesty's province of Nova Scotia and the territories thereon depending, is "humbly inscribed," after the manner of the times in which it was done, by the aforesaid Jonathan Belcher, "with all due respect, by His Lordship's most devoted and most obedient servant." This Jonathan Belcher, first Chief Justice of the province, and a member of His