

PREFACE.

THE present history of a portion of the County of Halifax, Nova Scotia, was prepared a few years ago by the late Mrs. William Lawson, who had long been well known as a contributor of verse to the papers of the day. It was written rather hastily, in order to compete for the Akins Historical Prize of 1887, which was awarded to it by King's College, Windsor. This unavoidable rapidity will account for the necessity of several changes which have been made before sending it to the printer, and also for any defects which still remain. The alterations have been made chiefly with a view to gain better order and more accuracy.

Mrs. Lawson, formerly Mary Jane Katzmann, was born and lived for many years in the neighbourhood of Preston, and her mother's family likewise resided in the same place. She therefore had an opportunity, such as few others have had, of collecting the chronicles of the surrounding district. This she did to a certain extent in a series of articles entitled "Tales of Our Village" which appeared in *The Provincial*, a magazine which had been edited by her about forty years ago. In that series, however, names of persons and places were not mentioned, and the stories were interwoven with much material which was avowedly fictitious. Afterwards when the Akins Prize was offered, she was stimulated to write a more extensive and accurate history, with the present result. He who desires an ornate account, will consult *The Provincial*; he who wishes to have only such information as is authentic, will find it in this volume.

In writing the history of townships like Dartmouth, Preston, and Lawrencetown, the author, owing to the narrowness of the field, has frequently to treat of subjects which would not be touched in a more comprehensive account. This necessity of dealing with minutiae leads to the introduction of tales and other minor traditions, which often have greater interest than a less particular narrative, as the details of a novel possess more charms than a discription of the plot alone or a mere *résumé* of the story. The annals of Dartmouth and its sister townships,