

SIXTY YEARS IN UPPER CANADA

the written sketches of localities, letters of private individuals, municipal records, and other sources of original information than in the parliamentary proceedings of which I have had knowledge and to which I have in a great measure confined myself.

I have felt that my story is incomplete, from the fact that the field to be gone over by the explorer and narrator is too extended for limited time.

It was not commenced until two or three months of my eighty-first year had elapsed, and even now I am conscious that I have scarcely passed the threshold of my subject.

My aim has been to cover what may be termed the Mowat period. It will be noted that men who came on the scene since that time have been purposely left to other notice.

That period of our provincial history is unique, and ought to remain unbroken in a narrative of the time in which Ontario recommenced its growth. Whatever contemporaries may have said as to his methods, the fact remains that the work was done, and well done; that Oliver Mowat built up a state out of a comparative wilderness, and gave to it laws, steadily enforced, which were necessary to its existence and its growth. To engage in this glorious work—for such it was in the hands of a man who saw the immediate future clearly, and used that knowledge to make way for its coming—was a noble finish to a long public life, and must make his *régime* as memorable as that of any who have preceded or may follow him. It seems fitting that the work of such an era should stand alone in its treatment by the critic. The term of Mr. Mowat's premiership, extending from 1872 to 1896, covered what may be regarded as the high tide of Liberalism in Ontario, for it witnessed