

## PREFACE.

IN the preparation of this book an attempt has been made to keep steadily before the learner the important fact that upon physical or geological structure, together with the character of exposure to climatic influences, depend all or nearly all the phenomena of our earth; in other words an attempt has been made to give a scientific direction to the study of geography, itself so scientific a subject.

The material has been obtained from many sources, and is the latest and best. For Part I. the latest works of Sir Charles Lyell, Sir J. W. Dawson, Professor Geikie, Professor Dana, Professor Huxley and others have been especially consulted. In Part II. the statistics have been drawn altogether from the latest official documents; the descriptive portion comes from many sources, including numerous books by competent authors dealing with particular countries, the eminently scientific works of Dr. A. R. Wallace, articles in Encyclopedias and magazines, and official publications; from the last mentioned has been procured almost all the information regarding the possessions of Great Britain,—Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India, as well as Canada itself.

The seeker after accurate information about countries and regions beyond the influence of the active modern life of central and western Europe, North America and the British colonies generally, soon becomes aware how little is really known of by far the greater part of the earth's surface.

As this book is intended for Canadian schools, naturally the space in it devoted to Canada is altogether out of proportion to Canada's relative importance in the world. This is particularly the case with the Maritime Provinces, including Newfoundland; but so great is the ignorance regarding these provinces, even among intelligent people of the inland portions of the Dominion, that a comparatively full description of them was deemed a necessity. The United States, so closely connected with us by ties of blood and intercourse, also required a detailed description. To the "mother-land" a greater space was at first proposed to be given, but so much had to be said about the "Greater Britain" in various parts of the globe, that the relative prominence actually bestowed upon the United Kingdom in the description of Europe was regarded, on the whole, as sufficient.

It is to be regretted that the requirements of a school-book, in reference to size, have in many cases necessitated

a more limited description than could be desired; but it will be found that the general description of each continent, or part of a continent, in giving a comprehensive view of the whole, and thus rendering necessary only the filling in of minor details as each country passes under review, has reduced to its smallest proportions an evil in itself unavoidable. By this means, also, repetition has been made unnecessary.

Lists of capes, islands, etc., etc., that form so large a part of our ordinary text-books on geography, and that are so destructive to the interest and utility of the subject, will not be found in this book. Such things can best be learned by looking for their position on some good wall-map as they are met with in the course of ordinary reading; they thus are associated with some items of interest and become a part of ordinary intelligence. Neither will any "questions" be found appended—those insults to the intelligent teacher!

In the Appendixes will be found much valuable information that it was not deemed advisable to insert in the body of the book; this should be taken up concurrently with the study of the countries referred to.

The author earnestly hopes that teachers will persistently and systematically apply to the study of each particular country the principles laid down in Part I.; and also that they will not limit their own knowledge to what is contained in this book, but that they will read widely so as to be able to give additional information, to illustrate still farther, and to correct whatever may be found inaccurate.

Scarcely any book has been written which its author would not change in some details, if, with his acquired experience, he had to do the work over again. The present book is no exception to the rule; but whatever in this case might be done in respect to word or expression, in contraction here and expansion there, the principle and plan would remain unaltered.

The author's lack of training in reading proof, and the scarcity, even in our capital city, of competent professional proof-readers, will account for some of the "clerical errors" that will doubtless be discovered,—defects which can be easily remedied in a new edition, but which, it is to be hoped, the character of the book in other respects will cause to be overlooked.

THE AUTHOR.