

## PREFACE TO THE SEVENTH VOLUME.

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I feel it to be my duty to allude to the prospectus issued by me in December, 1891, in which I described the period to be dealt with in this history as including the years of British rule up to 1841. It was in this year the union of the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada took place: a date, only a few years more than half a century from the present time, which may possibly be considered as too near to us to be treated dispassionately. Speaking at that time of my undertaking, I told those who had been good enough to give me their support that it would not "be possible to contract the history of the period to a less limit than four volumes."

This, the seventh volume of the history, is the third of the second series, and I am made to feel that it will be impossible to observe the limit I had imposed upon myself. It is plain to my own mind that five volumes, not four, will be required to carry out my purpose, and that I can only attain this result by careful compression of my subject.

I do not believe that any thoughtful reader of these volumes will attach blame to the writer because his narrative has been thus extended. Equally, I feel that no charge can be fairly preferred against me of having on any occasion introduced unnecessary matter, or that I have improperly dwelt upon events foreign to what my duty prescribed. In this respect Canada is in the peculiar position, that much which happened in the period embraced would remain unintelligible without acquaintance with the contemporaneous history of Great Britain and of the United States.

History cannot be regarded as the mere narrative of a series of incidents dramatically and pleasantly arranged, to furnish amusement for the hour and then pass from the memory, except so far as they may supply topics of conversation. My feeling