

P R E F A C E.

THE well known and popular author of "Maple Leaves" in his Preface quotes the words of a youthful writer who says that "every book ought to have something of a Preface, were it only a note of interrogation". In the short Preface which I lay before my readers, the first point is to request that any inaccuracies, which must necessarily occur in a Work of this kind,—both from the difficulty of obtaining fresh specimens, as well as from the inutility of dried or preserved specimens as a reference, and the scarcity of any reliable works on this branch of Natural History,—may be overlooked. In collecting into a small compass extracts from the works of various explorers, with regard to the habits and haunts of the finny tribe, I have endeavoured to place within easy access of the generality of readers, as pleasing and at the same time as instructive a hand-book on the Fresh Water Fish of this continent as possible. Fishing, as a recreation in itself, to the business man as well as to the regular disciple of "Meek Walton", has been the theme of many a writer; but a knowledge of most if not all the species inhabiting our waters is so difficult to acquire, that the writer trusts his present efforts may not have been in vain, by carrying that knowledge into quarters where a more costly work could not gain admittance. At the present time, when the working of the *Fish and Game Protective Club* is being so nobly carried on, an additional interest will probably be taken in a study hitherto so neglected; and the thanks of the community at large are due to that society, for its untiring zeal in the sportman's cause. That this work then may be useful and instructive to all, is the desire of

H. BEAUMONT SMALL.

MONTREAL, 1st August, 1866.