

reformers, his zeal and enthusiasm sometimes led him to extremes.

The Libel Case, 1835, A.D.— Halifax was not yet incorporated. Its business was managed by the magistrates, who levied the taxes, and expended the money as they saw fit. Everywhere there existed neglect and mismanagement and corruption. Everybody was dissatisfied, but who would lead in the work of reform? And now there appeared a letter in the "Nova Scotian," signed "*The People*," attacking the magistrates in the strongest terms, and accusing them of robbing the city annually of \$4000.

The magistrates prosecuted Howe for libel. The lawyers told him that his case could not be defended; he must settle as best he could, or pay a heavy fine and go to prison. Regardless of the maxim, "He who pleads his own case has a fool for his client," Mr. Howe undertook his own defence. He studied law for a week, and then addressed the jury in a six hours' speech. Contrary to the charge of the judge, the jury gave their verdict, "Not guilty." Howe was carried home in triumph, and the people kept holiday that day and the next. In the following year Mr. Howe was elected to the Assembly as member for the county of Halifax.

CHAPTER XV.

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

1836, A.D.— Mr. Howe was now the acknowledged leader of the popular party in the Assembly; and he gave all his energies to the work of reform. In this work he had good help from many who were strong and true. Of these were Lawrence O'Conner Doyle, Herbert Huntington, and William Young. The first movement was to open the Council doors. The Assembly passed a unanimous vote against the practice of the Council in sitting with closed doors, and offered to meet any expense incurred in making