

**LORD LAWRENCE:  
A SKETCH OF HIS  
PUBLIC CAREER**

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Lord Lawrence: A Sketch of His Public Career by L. J. Trotter

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A Sketch of his Public Career.

BY

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## P R E F A C E .

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THE following pages are the fruit of a suggestion thrown out by one of the speakers at the Mansion House meeting held in February last, on behalf of a national memorial to the late Lord Lawrence; a meeting memorable for Lord Derby's ungrudging praise of one whose life "offers absolutely no one topic of detraction to an enemy." On this occasion Lord George Hamilton suggested that some account of Lord Lawrence's great public services should be written and circulated in "as cheap a form as possible," in order that a clearer knowledge of his claims to public reverence might serve to stimulate and swell the flow of subscriptions to the Lawrence Memorial Fund.

On that hint I set to work, as one who had steadily watched the career of the dead statesman from the time of Lord Dalhousie to the end of his own life. Of his pre-eminent services during the first twenty years of that period I had already given some account elsewhere. From these and other materials to which frequent reference is made in this little volume, I have compiled a careful and I hope a readable sketch of one who—

“cared not to be great,  
But as he saved or served the State.”

If it reads too like a mere panegyric, that is not my fault. There are spots in the sun, but who can see them with the naked eye? A condensed memoir of such a man leaves no room for microscopic fault-finding. “Malice itself”—said Lord Derby—“never fastened on his career the imputation of one discreditable incident or unworthy act.” Of Lord Lawrence may truly be affirmed what the poet wrote as truly of the Duke of Wellington—

“Whatever record leaps to light,  
He never will be shamed.”



If one or two passages in his career may still be open to some controversy, the following pages, in which his own words and actions have been left for the most part to speak for themselves, will at least show how strong a claim he has bequeathed to the gratitude of a generous nation.

In dealing with his public services, it was impossible to avoid laying stress on that part of his general policy which has been the most widely and persistently assailed; I mean his policy towards Afghánistán, the policy which he upheld to the very last in spite of the clamours of a powerful party bent upon reversing it at any cost. His steadiness in upholding that policy through good and evil report was a cardinal merit in a well-spent and noble life. It brings out into bold relief the wise, clear-headed statesman, the "*justum et tenacem propositi virum*," who will neither recant nor keep silence to please the multitude or the men in power. And, as men's passions calm down under the teaching of events, it will be found to shed new lustre on the memory of one "who never sold the truth to serve the

hour," and who fought a losing cause as fearlessly as he had once fought for the safety of our Indian Empire.

In this brief record of simple greatness I have said little about Lord Lawrence's private worth. The task of writing a full biography, of showing to the world how good as well as great was the man whom we have lately lost, has already been undertaken by a competent pen. Meanwhile the present sketch, if it be worth anything, should help forward rather than hinder the end which all well-wishers to the subject of that biography must have at heart.

L. J. T.

*Blackheath,*

*April 12th, 1880.*

PS.—To Mr. W. S. Seton-Karr, who was Lord Lawrence's Foreign Secretary during the last year of his Indian rule, and his intimate friend during the last nine years of his life, my thanks are due for his kindness in helping me to revise the proof-sheets.

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# LORD LAWRENCE:

## A Sketch.

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### CHAPTER I.

JOHN LAIRD MAIR LAWRENCE, born at Richmond in Yorkshire on the 4th of March 1811, was the eighth of twelve children whom Letitia Knox bore to her husband, Alexander Lawrence, a veteran who had seen much fighting and borne many hard blows in Indian and other campaigns in the East. Alexander's father was a mill-owner of Coleraine in County Derry; and his wife Letitia, the daughter of a clergyman in Donegal, traced back her descent to the great Scotch reformer, John Knox. Thus from one parent, if not, indeed, from both, John Lawrence derived that mixture of Scotch and Irish blood, which has stamped a character of its own upon the Protestants of Northern Ireland.