

from the mass of history wherein it lies embedded, the story of these offices. We shall endeavor to present the origins, growth, and final pattern of the local patronage. We shall examine individual offices, tracing the history of each, noting the size and character of its revenue, the attendance required, the risks if any, and the security of tenure. An appended chronology and civil list will aid the narrative.

Something will necessarily be sacrificed to clarity and brevity. Little of the rich political and social context can be introduced, and much that is of human interest will have to be omitted. Of these matters the author hopes to write at large in some later work. It is his present wish that this rather austere little book, whatever its defects, may at least be helpful and may save his colleagues time, trouble, and confusion.