

‘LORD STRATHCONA

From him there came, across the sea, tales that must have quickened the pulses of the boy. For it was told how this uncle had traversed the continent, had crossed the Rocky Mountains, and had been the companion of Simon Fraser, who discovered the famous river called after his name. He had in time entered the service of the Hudson Bay Company, and was Chief Factor at Lesser Slave Lake. His romantic and adventurous life formed the subject of many discussions and conversations in the Scottish home, and the mind of the growing youth must have turned impatiently from the prosy existence in the little old town to contemplate that wild, free life of which he had heard so much, and of which his uncle wrote—in that land of boundless prairies and great mountains, mighty lakes and rivers—inhabited by roving tribes of Indians—where men ranged free, and hunted, and fished and sometimes fought, to their hearts' content. It was a life of action, of possibilities, and of achievement that must have held a powerful charm for the boy.

But his mother had no such feeling. She was not content that her clever son should be nothing more than a fur-trader. Her ambition was that he would enter into one of the professions and attain eminence in it. She wished Donald to be a lawyer, and, in due course, we find him in the office of the town clerk of Forres, trying to master the intricacies of the legal world.

But it was not to be. Fate, or Providence, had in store a greater destiny. Donald was not satis-