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INTRODUCTION.

The documents included in this *fasciculus* not being part of the ordinary transactions of the Canadian Institute, their publication by the Institute calls for a word of explanation.

During the winter session of 1878-1879 Mr. Sandford Fleming, one of the earliest members of the Institute, communicated to the Society two remarkable papers—one on “Time-Reckoning,” and the other on “The Selection of a Prime Meridian to be Common to all Nations, in Connection with Time-Reckoning.”

These communications were of such world-wide interest, the questions discussed were of such practical importance, that the Council of the Institute thought it desirable that they should be brought officially under the notice of as many leading learned societies as possible, both on this continent and in Europe; this seemed all the more desirable inasmuch as the suggestions made by Mr. Fleming could only be carried out by the united action of the civilized nations of the world, and such action could be best secured through the intervention of the national scientific societies.

The Council accordingly addressed a memorial to the then Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne, requesting him to transmit Mr. Fleming's communications to the Imperial Government and to the representative learned societies of Europe and America. His Excellency kindly acceded to their request, and in forwarding the papers to these scientific societies, he invited them to communicate to him their views upon the proposals discussed in the papers. The replies received have been placed by His Excellency at the disposal of the Institute, and are included in this volume.

In publishing these replies, and the other documents which accompany them, the Institute is influenced by the desire to preserve a full and permanent record of the history of this interesting scientific movement, from its first practical discussion before the Canadian Institute in the winter of 1878, until the virtual