

PREFACE

SOME years ago, at the conclusion of a game of chess, Sir Sandford Fleming told me that he had been repeatedly urged to prepare for publication his reminiscences of sixty odd years in Canada. He did not feel equal to the task himself, but said that if I thought a biography would be of sufficient interest to justify the trouble, and would undertake it, he would be glad to give all the necessary particulars. Thereafter as occasion offered we talked over various incidents in his long and eventful life, and he placed in my hands a series of diaries running back to the year 1845, when he set out from Glasgow in the sailing ship *Brilliant* to seek his fortune in the New World. We were both rather busy with other matters, and as a result the biography progressed very slowly, but it was finally completed a few weeks before his death. Sir Sandford had taken the keenest interest in the completion of each chapter, and I had hoped that he would live to see the printed book. All references to him were therefore put in the present tense. Now that it has become necessary to add the irrevocable words that close the volume, it seems preferable to let the rest of the narrative stand as it was. Apart from all other considerations, I had rather think of the kind old friend with whom I spent so many delightful hours, and to whose wealth of human experience I feel so deeply indebted, as a living than a dead personality.

OTTAWA,
September, 1915.