

LORD STRATHCONA

it when it has gone. But those who are ready, perceive it at once and catch it on the wing. More than that, they not only are ready and waiting for "something to turn up" but they make it turn up. They hammer at circumstances till they shape them to their will. They do not whine and wail and cry out against their lot but set themselves to change it. As Wendell Phillips says, "Common sense plays the game with the cards it has. Common sense bows to the inevitable, and makes use of it. It does not ask an impossible chessboard, but takes the one before it and plays the game." That was Lord Strathcona's policy. And in his old age he was justified in pressing it home to the youth of the land. His own life was a splendid illustration of his text. For surely no one had a poorer chance than he! When he left his native land behind him he seemed to be leaving every chance of a great career. He had no money, and no influence, and no social position. He went into a wilderness. For half a lifetime he labored in obscurity, in a bleak and desolate country. But when the opportunity came he was ready and at every stage of his history it found him ready. Even in the narrow life of the fur-trader he reached the top. When he came to the front great doors opened and he was ready to enter in. No feature of his remarkable story is more noteworthy than this—the readiness with which he responded to every call. It seems almost miraculous that the boy "Smith" should become the "Lord" Strathcona. Yet there is no sign of miracle. He was ready for opportunity. That was all. While