

PREFACE.

SEVERAL friends have asked me to write a sketch of my life and more especially of my adventures in the North-West. At first I hesitated before promising to comply with the request. There is a certain class of orators who, invariably, commence their public address by stating that they are "unaccustomed to public speaking." It may be true in many cases, but most certainly no public speaker was ever less accustomed to address an audience, than I am to write a book. Outside my limited correspondence, I never undertook to compose a page, much less a book. But, if any excuse were necessary, I feel that the kindness of the people I have met, the friendliness of all with whom I have come in contact, during the last eventful half-year, would render such excuse uncalled for. I look upon the writing of these pages as a duty imposed upon me by gratitude. When memory recalls the sad scenes through which I have passed, the feeling may be painful, but there is a pleasure in knowing that sympathy has poured a balm upon the deep wounds, and that kindness and friendship have sweetened many a bitter drop in the cup of my sorrow and trouble.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men," sang England's great Bard, but we never know when it is about to turn, or if that turn will be the ebb or the flow of happiness. "The veil of the Future is woven by the hand of Mercy." Could I have but caught a glimpse through its folds, some three years ago, I might not have the story to tell that you, kind reader, will find in this short work. I might not be, to-day, mourning the loss of a dear husband.

But who can judge of the ways of Divine Providence? For His own wise ends has the Almighty permitted such