



CHRISTIANIA.

PREFACE.

THE only cure for the Arctic fever is the discovery of the North Pole. A goal at once so definite and so encompassed with mystery is sure to command human effort until it shall be reached, and never was mankind nearer to this consummation than at the present time. The operations of Arctic heroes, beginning with Sebastian Cabot and ending with Fridtjof Nansen, have gradually broken down the barriers that have stood for ages between restless man and his ambition. For many years Great Britain has stood foremost in the history of Arctic exploration, but Norway has lately proved a formidable rival in the person of Fridtjof Nansen, whose crossing of the great Greenland plateau in 1888 drew attention for the first time to the fertility of resource possessed by this strong-nerved Scandinavian.