



## INTRODUCTION.

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**I**N the course of occasional visits to Canada many years since, I became intimately acquainted with some of the principal partners of the great Northwest Fur Company, who at that time lived in genial style at Montreal, and kept almost open house for the stranger. At their hospitable boards I occasionally met with partners, and clerks, and hardy fur traders from the interior posts; men who had passed years remote from civilized society, among distant and savage tribes, and who had wonders to recount of their wide and wild peregrinations, their hunting exploits, and their perilous adventures and hair-breadth escapes among the Indians. I was at an age when imagination lends its coloring to everything, and the stories of these Sinbads of the wilderness made the life of a trapper and fur trader perfect romance to me. I even meditated at one time a visit to the remote posts of the company in the boats which annually ascended the lakes and rivers, being thereto invited by one of the partners; and I have ever since regretted that I was prevented by circumstances from carrying my intention into effect. From those early impressions, the grand enterprise of the great fur companies, and the hazardous errantry of their associates in the wild parts of our vast continent, have