

PREFACE

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE was one of the most energetic and successful of the discoverers who have traversed the vast wilderness of British America. He did his work single-handed, with slender means, and slight encouragement, at a time when discovery was rare and the country almost *terra incognita*. The long and difficult route, so recently traversed by the Red River Expedition, was, to Sir Alexander, but the small beginning of his far-reaching travels. He traced the great river which bears his name to its outlet in the Polar Sea, and was the first to cross the Rocky Mountains in those latitudes and descend to the Pacific ocean.

Being a man of action, and not particularly enamoured of the pen, his journal¹—full though it be of important and most interesting facts—is a bare and unadorned though valuable record of

¹ For a sight of which apply to the British Museum, London, or the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh.