

## INTRODUCTION

best years of his life, "always travelling with an hungry heart," with the great South Sea ever a day's journey in advance. Tired at last, he gave himself up to establish on the rock of Quebec a station from which his successors might fare forth. In his search for the South Sea he had been the first great explorer of Canada, and this series of "Trail Makers of the North" appropriately begins with his undaunted name.

As the new world opened out, the search for the Orient took a second place. Even in the days of Champlain, his partners thought chiefly of trade with the natives, and in the next two centuries a series of great fur-trading companies, English and French, took toll of the country, and pushed ever farther west and north. Among these, too, there were great-hearted dreamers, men who "yearned beyond the sky-line where the strange roads go down," and of such was Alexander Mackenzie. His great voyage to the mouth of the mighty river which bears his name was made in 1789; four years later he had pierced the Rockies, and come out upon the shores of the Pacific; first of white men to cross the continent by land, the Highland Scot had made true the dream of Champlain.