

PREFACE

A PREFACE is useful, if it be useful at all, in conveying to the reader some fuller notion of the nature of the book he holds in his hand than the brevity of the title-page permits, so that he may have guidance as to whether it be worth his reading or not.

This book, then, while quite complete in itself, is written as supplement and complement to "Ten Thousand Miles with a Dog-Sled," and forms therewith a survey of the interior of Alaska under the totally different aspects of winter and summer. In winter one travels with the dog team almost wherever one wishes; summer travel is confined to the waterways with which interior Alaska is so liberally supplied; so that a book on river voyages may really deal with the whole country so far as the summer is concerned.

Since this book may have readers its predecessor had not, it is well to explain that it is a sober attempt to describe the country and its people, without any ulterior ends whatever. It has no drum-and-trumpet purpose; it does not boost and boom; it is no "Nation in the Making" book, no "Frontier Wonderland" book; it owes no inspiration to chambers of commerce or allegiance to railway propagandists, official or otherwise. It does not "leap from crag to crag with loud and jocund shout" along the Yukon River nor sound the loud timbrel o'er