

## PREFACE.

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"THE only great thing left undone in the world" So the conquest of the Arctic regions was described by Sir Martin Frobisher when, in 1576, he set sail in his three cockle shells, valiantly determined that the "great thing" should at last be accomplished.

But it has taken all the bravery of hundreds of brave men through nearly three-and-a-half centuries of time to achieve even the partial conquest of those grim solitudes of perpetual snow and ice, amid whose fastnesses the secrets of the polar regions have been so jealously kept.

For even now, although the actual race to the north and south extremities of the world is over, much remains for science to do in those vast icy wastes that lie within the Arctic and Antarctic circles; and there is room yet for the exercise of heroism as great as that which has been shown in the efforts of men towards the supreme tasks which have at last been accomplished.

Lavish indeed has been the expenditure of life and treasure upon polar problems, and many and varied have been the motives which have prompted it.