

**TALES OF A
NOMAD; OR,
SPORT AND STRIFE**

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Tales of a nomad; or, Sport and strife by Charles Montague

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CHARLES MONTAGUE

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TALES OF A NOMAD

OR

SPORT AND STRIFE

BY

CHARLES MONTAGUE

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AND NEW YORK: 15 EAST 16th STREET

1894

TO
RIDER HAGGARD,
THIS WORK
Is Dedicated
BY ITS AUTHOR,
IN TOKEN OF ESTEEM AND ALSO OF ADMIRATION
FOR HIS GENIUS.

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PREFACE.

A FRIEND when conversing with the Author made the following observations: "I am sick of experiences of sport and adventure conveyed in the form of transcript from diary—why cannot people give us the grain without the husk, and thus avoid making us the victims of tedious prolixity? You have had the experience, why don't you give us some of it in a condensed form? We don't want to know why the favourite horse went lame on the near fore—how you cured the cook when he had a fit of colic—what you did when you were cooped up for a month by the rains—your adventures on the day you went out shooting and didn't see anything to shoot at—why you didn't get your letters by the mail—why the groceries gave out—your manœuvres for a month when you were not in touch with the enemy—and the precise dates, places, and distances which are of no interest to us. We want to know just the pith of your experiences, and nothing more."

My friend's words echoed my own sentiments. If a man has geographical facts to reveal like

Livingstone and Stanley had, then detail becomes interesting ; but when a man has only personal adventure to communicate, why the less of detail the better.

Thus encouraged, the Author put certain experiences into shape, in the hope that they might interest sportsmen and travellers, and would ask his readers to charitably overlook the faults of style and diction.

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TALES OF A NOMAD.

CHAPTER I.

A RIDE FOR DEAR LIFE.

A FRONTIERSMAN'S VARN.

THROUGH plains covered with sparse thorn-bushes the Olifants River wends its way. Here it is about fifty yards wide, and is fringed with reeds on either bank. It is the dry season, and the current, which at times would sweep away men, horses, and waggons, has dwindled down till at almost any point a lad of twelve could cross with ease and safety.

The withered vegetation, the bushes devoid of leaf and grey with thorns, display the effects of drought and of nightly frosts; but everywhere the broad-bladed twitch-grass, perennially green, abounds in quantity sufficient to keep cattle and horses in excellent condition throughout the winter.

To the eastward the rugged, forbidding-looking ranges of mountain which here constitute the frontier of Matshila's-land, stand up in clear relief against the unclouded sky. Every crag, bush and rivulet are as distinct to the naked eye at four miles distance as they