



### THE BEAU OF THE DISTRICT.

This gentleman's assumption of superiority—self-posed and self-opinionated—is, in his estimation justified by the possession of a blanket which raises him above the naked condition of his neighbours, and of armlets which, locally, stand for "blood" or caste.

# WILD BUSH TRIBES OF TROPICAL AFRICA

AN ACCOUNT OF ADVENTURE & TRAVEL AMONGST PAGAN  
PEOPLE IN TROPICAL AFRICA, WITH A DESCRIPTION OF  
THEIR MANNERS OF LIFE, CUSTOMS, HEATHENISH RITES  
& CEREMONIES, SECRET SOCIETIES, SPORT & WARFARE  
COLLECTED DURING A SOJOURN OF TWELVE YEARS

BY

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WITH 41 ILLUSTRATIONS & A MAP

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## PREFACE

**T**HIS book deals with the wild, primitive bush people of West Central Africa. It makes no pretension to speak for any other part of Africa. With the ancient capital of San Salvador as centre, it treats of the Ba-Congo of Northern Angola, bounded on the north by the Congo, on the east by the Kwilu and Kwangu Rivers, down as far as S. Paul de Loanda, with the Atlantic on the west.

The subject of fetishism dealt with in this book is official. The information is at first hand, and is what we have seen or investigated with the aid of experts, priests, and participants.

For the first time the great secrets of the Nkamba fetish system are laid bare. It is the province of native women from which the men are rigorously excluded.

The book also shows *from the inside* the chief secret society, that of the Death and Resurrection.

A careful investigation of the origin, purport, and phraseology of Congo folklore has furnished us with valuable material on the ethics and the religion of the people. Where a literal translation of the idiom would produce unintelligible English, we have given the central thought. Here and there a predicate has to be inserted, or some word to complete the ellipsis so common in such national lore, but where there is always enough phrasing to give the clue to its meaning the original form has been retained.

We have preferred, in the majority of cases, the word "priest" instead of "doctor" to express the native word

“nganga,” simply because it is more correct to do so. The word “doctor” in Kisi-Kongo is “ngang’ a wuka.” Nganga is simply “wise-one” or expert. His sphere being especially that of priestcraft he is, in the strictest sense of the term, a priest. He is first and foremost a religious functionary.

The native word *ndoki* means either witch or wizard. In the original it is both masculine and feminine. We therefore preserve the Congo mode of thought in speaking of a man as a “witch.”

We have also preserved a good deal of native phraseology.

The illustrations are comprehensive, showing African life from East to West.

The book is the outgrowth of twelve years’ intimacy with the life and language of the people it describes, and of a very close study, on the spot, of the questions with which it deals.

G. C. C.

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