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KING SOLOMON'S MINES.

BY

H. RIDER HAGGARD.

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A

Dedication.

THIS FAITHFUL BUT UNPRETENDING RECORD
OF A REMARKABLE ADVENTURE
IS HEREBY RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY THE NARRATOR,
ALLAN QUATERMAIN,
TO ALL THE BIG AND LITTLE BOYS
WHO READ IT.



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INTRODUCTION.

Now that this book is printed, and about to be given to the world, the sense of its shortcomings, both in style and contents, weighs very heavily upon me. As regards the latter, I can only say that it does not pretend to be a full account of everything we did and saw. There are many things connected with our journey into Kukuanaaland which I should have liked to dwell upon at length, and which have, as it is, been scarcely alluded to. Amongst these are the curious legends which I collected about the chain armour that saved us from destruction in the great battle of Loo, and also about the "silent ones" or colossi at the mouth of the stalactite cave. Again, if I had given way to my own impulses, I should have liked to go into the differences, some of which are to my mind very suggestive, between the Zulu and Kukuana dialects. Also a few pages might profitably have been given up to the consideration of the indigenous flora and fauna of Kukuanaaland.* Then there remains the most interesting subject—that, as it is, has only been incidentally alluded to—of the magnificent system of military organisation in force in that country, which is, in my opinion, much superior to that inaugurated by Chaka in Zululand, inasmuch as it permits of even more rapid mobilisation, and does not

* I discovered eight varieties of antelope, with which I was previously totally unacquainted, and many new species of plants, for the most part of the bulbous tribe.—A. Q.