

# **THE POWER-HOUSE**

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The power-house by John Buchan

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**JOHN BUCHAN**

**THE  
POWER-HOUSE**



BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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# The Power-House

BY

JOHN BUCHAN,

1st. Baron Tweedmouth

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TO  
MAJOR-GENERAL  
SIR FRANCIS LLOYD, K.C.B.

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MY DEAR GENERAL,

*A recent tale of mine has, I am told, found favour in the dug-outs and billets of the British front, as being sufficiently short and sufficiently exciting for men who have little leisure to read. My friends in that uneasy region have asked for more. So I have printed this story, written in the smooth days before the war, in the hope that it may enable an honest man here and there to forget for an hour the too urgent realities. I have put your name on it, because among the many tastes which we share one is a liking for precipitous yarns.*

J. B.



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## PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

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WE were at Glenaicill—six of us—for the duck-shooting, when Leithen told us this story. Since five in the morning we had been out on the skerries, and had been blown home by a wind which threatened to root the house and its wind-blown woods from their precarious lodgment on the hill. A vast non-descript meal, luncheon and dinner in one, had occupied us till the last daylight departed, and we settled ourselves in the smoking-room for a sleepy evening of talk and tobacco.

Conversation, I remember, turned on

some of Jim's trophies which grinned at us from the firelit walls, and we began to spin hunting yarns. Then Hoppy Bynge, who was killed next year on the Bramaputra, told us some queer things about his doings in New Guinea, where he tried to climb Carstensz, and lived for six months in mud. Jim said he couldn't abide mud—anything was better than a country where your boots rotted. (He was to get enough of it last winter in the Ypres Salient.) You know how one tale begets another, and soon the whole place hummed with odd recollections, for five of us had been a good deal about the world.

All except Leithen, the man who was afterwards Solicitor-General, and, they say, will get to the Woolsack in time. I don't suppose he had ever been farther from home than Monte Carlo, but he