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"A first class writing man, a first class hunter and explorer, most entertaining." -New Outlook
"He has challenged our preconceptions about the Arctic." -American Review
"A man of action who is at the same time a man of letters...eminently successful." -M.S.T.A. Quarterly Review
Vilhjalmur Stefansson (1879 1962), of North Dakota, was an arctic explorer and ethnologist. Because of his studies of the Eskimos, his discoveries of land, the application of new ideas and new methods of exploration, Stefansson was considered the foremost polar explorer of his day, and one of the few great explorers of all time. During a period of three or four years Mr. Stefansson has produced a creditable list of books about the Arctic. In some respects his service in publishing the results of his Northern studies has differed from that of earlier explorers. He has challenged our preconceptions about the Arctic. Hunters of the Great North gives details of Northern life such as have doubtless come within the experience of all Arctic explorers, but which are new to the average American reader. In short, it is an elementary text-book of the Arctic. Stefansson lived among the Eskimos of the Mackenzie River, studying their language and adopting their mode of life, and spending ten winters and thirteen summers in the polar regions. Among Stefansson's most famous discovery was that of a race of blond Eskimo on Coronation Gulf. Stefansson writes: "In the present book I have tried by means of diaries and memory to go back to the vivid impressions of my first year among the Eskimos for the story of what I saw and heard." In describing his confrontation with a polar bear, Stefansson writes: "I heard behind me a noise like the spitting of a cat or the hiss of a goose. I looked back and saw, about twenty feet away and almost above me, a polar bear. I had overestimated the bear's distance from shore, and had passed the spot where he lay. From his eye and attitude, as well as the story his trail told afterward there was no doubting his intentions: the hiss was merely his way of saying, 'Watch me do it!' Or at least that is how I interpreted it; possibly the motive was chivalry, and the hiss was his way of saying Garde!
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