

of wood and earth, and thatched with straw. An old tradition current in this country affirms that these ruins are the remains of the storehouses of the Queen of Sheba; further, that this princess got all her gold from these mountains, and that this gold was carried down the River Cuama (Zambezi) to the Ethiopian Ocean, and taken thence through the Red Sea to the coasts of Ethiopia above Egypt, where this Queen dwelt. Others believe that Solomon had these magazines built, and that here was obtained that gold of Ophir with which his navies were laden; that between Afura and Ophir there is no great difference. It is quite certain that around this mountain range much and very fine gold is found, easily conveyed by means of this river, as is still done by the Portuguese, and was done before them by the Moors of Mozambique and Kilwa; and further, that as in these days gold is carried to India, so in former days it might easily have been taken through the Red Sea to Ezion-Geber, and thence to Jerusalem.

Carl Ritter, in the first part of his *Erdkunde* (Berlin, 1817), thus sums up the more ancient reports, especially those of the Portuguese:—

“The most remarkable thing told of this district relates to the ancient buildings in the kingdom of Butua, in the country of Toróa, of which De Barros (Dec. I. l. X., c. 1, fol. 118 b.) gives a very minute description. As they will yet serve as a point of comparison between ancient and modern geography, we must by no means pass them over.

“In the midst of the plain in the kingdom of Butua, near the oldest gold mines, stands a fortress (*fortaleza*), square, admirably built, inside and out, of hard freestone. The blocks of which the walls consist are put together without mortar, and are of extraordinary size (*maravilhose grandeza*). The walls are twenty-five spans in thickness; their height is not so considerable compared with their breadth. Over the gate of the building is an inscription which neither the Moorish traders (that is, the Arab inhabitants of the coast) who were

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there, nor others learned in inscriptions, could read; nor does any one know in what character it is written. On the heights around this edifice stand others, in like manner built of masonry without mortar; among them a tower of more than twelve *bracas* in height.

“All these buildings are called by the natives Symbáoé—that is, the royal residence (*Corte*), as are all royal dwellings in Monomotapa. Their guardian, a man of noble birth, has here the chief command, and is called Symbacayo; under his care are some of the wives of the Benomotapa, who constantly reside here. When and by whom these buildings were erected is unknown to the natives, who have no written characters. They say merely that they are the work of the devil, because they are beyond the power of man to execute. When Captain Vic Pegado, with a view to comparison, pointed out the Portuguese masonry of the fort at Sofala, with its windows, vaults, &c., to some Moors who had been at the Ruins, they observed that the latter structure was of such absolute perfection (*limpa y perfecta*) that nothing could be compared with it. These buildings stand in 20 and 21 degrees S. lat., about 170 leagues due west of Sofala. Besides them is to be found no other mason-work, ancient or modern, in that region, seeing that all the dwellings of the barbarian nation there are of wood (*madeira*). In the opinion of the Moors, these buildings are very ancient and erected for the protection of the neighbouring gold mines, which are believed to be the most ancient in the country.’

“From all this De Barros infers that this must be the Agysymba of Ptolemy, founded by an ancient ruler of this gold country who was unable to hold his ground, as in the case of the ruins of Caxum (Axum) in the land of Prester John.

“Dos Santos also says that these are the only massive buildings in Kaffraria; that the Portuguese, however, were not allowed to ascend to Butua, on the heights of Fura, because the whole of Monomotapa was visible thence, lying

eastward along the rivers, and therefore on a lower level; and that the districts whence they drew their gold could also be descried thence.

“Battel (in *Purchas's Pilgrimage*) says that the country of the Abutua lies north-west of Monomotapa, stretching out in great plains towards the interior, westward, from the frontier mountain chain, whence the Zambezi and Manica flow eastward. The country falls eastward towards Monomotapa, and westward towards Massapa.

“As on the eastern coasts of Africa among the Arabs and Moors, wherever gold is to be found the Queen of Sheba is met with in the legends of the past as a mighty princess, and as the country of Fura is also called Afura, all this reminds one of Ofir or Ophir, and these (the same tale meeting us again at Axum), remind us of a castle of the Queen of Sheba, whose fleets are said to have conveyed her treasures of gold down the Zambezi to Arabia.”

A German explorer, named Mauch, devoted himself to the task of unravelling the mystery; with the result of discovering, in the year 1868, the ruins of the ancient cities or fortresses just described. His reports were forwarded to Dr. Petermann, of Gotha, who summed them up as follows:—

“The Ophir of the Bible from whence King Solomon, nearly 3,000 years ago, imported immense quantities of gold, ivory and precious stones, in Phœnician ships to complete the beautiful buildings in Jerusalem, has eluded search and baffled investigation for many hundred years. Some have sought it in East Africa and South Arabia, others in India or Sumatra, and others in the West Indies and even Peru; but all have come to the like conclusion that rich mines existed somewhere in Africa, from whence gold was obtained. When the Portuguese reached Sofala in the 16th century they found very rich gold mines, which had evidently been worked for uncounted ages, and by the side of these gold excavations they found buildings and ruins which, according to the traditions of the natives, owed their origin to the Queen of Saba (Sheba).

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The inhabitants of Sofala, according to Lopez, boasted that they possessed old books which confirmed the expeditions of Solomon to Ophir. The whole of the literature of the Greeks and Romans leaves us in ignorance as to their earlier intercourse of nations, and only so much is certain from the ancient Arabian writers that, after the fall of the Phoenicians, the gold-seeking Arabians carried on the digging in the middle ages; and in their expeditions from the Persian Gulf they went south, frequently visiting the coast of Sofala. The Portuguese rule in Sofala, at present, is but a shadow of what existed in ancient times, and their attempts made in our time to add to their possessions in the interior of Africa by force of arms have only ended in defeat. Rumours had, for a long series of years, reached from time to time the furthest advanced European settlements of the Cape Colony and the Transvaal, of the existence of extensive ruins of temples, obelisks, and pyramids in the far interior of South Africa, and the missionaries of the Berlin society had resolved to clear up the misty legends respecting these things, and to go to investigate, if possible, for themselves. Up to this time they have found this impracticable; but have, nevertheless, materially assisted the German traveller, Carl Mauch, who had already deserved so well, by his former explorations and labours, to carry into effect his long-formed determination to visit these primeval structures. Letters and charts from this indefatigable and distinguished traveller from the Zimbabye, dated 13th September, 1871, have been forwarded to me by the Rev. Messrs. Grützner and Merensky, stating that he had positively found very extensive buildings and ruins of high antiquity. Zimbabye is one of these old ruined cities, and, according to Mauch's astronomical observations, is situated in lat. 20 deg. 14 min. south and long. 31 deg. 48 min. east of Greenwich. It is exactly west from the port of Sofala and only about 41 German miles in a direct line from that place. This coincides with the statement of the writer, Dos Santos, to the effect that the Portuguese had found extensive walls of masonry

200 nautical miles west from Sofala in the gold country (*tracto do ouro*). In the neighbourhood of Zimbabwe, Mauch also found alluvial gold. The ruins consist of a tower and walls of heights up to 30 feet, 15 feet thick, and 450 in diameter; they are all, without exception, built of hewn granite, put together without mortar, which, in itself, is a proof that they must be very ancient. Drawings and specimens of ornamentation, &c., sent by Herr Mauch, leave little doubt that they are neither of Arabian nor Portuguese origin, but in all probability wrought by the Phœnicians, to which people the expeditions sent out by Solomon belonged. At all events, the ornamentation has nothing of a Portuguese or Arabic character, but indicates a much earlier time. The people inhabiting this district have only occupied it about forty years, and they consider these ruins sacred. Their belief is that white people have formerly inhabited the country, which appears to be the fact from the remains of dwellings and iron tools, which could not have been the work of the blacks. Mauch had at first been able to visit only one of the ruined cities, and examine it very cursorily. Three days' journey west of Zambabye lie other ruins, which, according to the statement of the natives, among other things, contain an obelisk. Mauch was in hopes thoroughly to explore the whole district, which is very beautiful, with an altitude of 4,000 feet above the sea level, well watered, fruitful, and thickly peopled by an industrious and peaceful race, the Makalaka, who engage in agriculture and cattle breeding, and possess rice and corn-fields, cattle, sheep and goats. An expedition, which, from Solomon's ports in the Red Sea, occupied out and home three years, would agree tolerably well, considering the then state of navigation, with a voyage along the eastern coasts of Africa."

The following letters, from the pen of the dauntless and scientific explorer, will, in the light of recent advances be read with interest, both in England, where the subject is now attracting attention, and in Africa, where it is the absorbing question of the day:—

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*Letter from the Missionary, the Rev. A. Merensky, to
A. Petermann.*

Botschabelo, 14th November, 1871.

Herewith I send you some slight notes which Mauch has forwarded to me out of the Banyai country. He has found the Ruins upon the Upper Tokwe. For many years past I had made enquiries among the natives regarding these primeval structures. In 1862 I was compelled by various circumstances to abandon the attempt to reach them.* This year I had

* In the *Transvaal Argus* of 20th October, 1868, Mr. Merensky relates this attempt as follows:—"In the year 1861 the Missionary Nachtigal and I were instructed by the Missionary Society to proceed on an exploratory journey northward from Sekwati's country, where I then lived. Our first care was to engage guides who knew the country. Having already heard in Germany that great and ancient ruins were to be found in the regions between the Limpopo and the Zambesi, we enquired about them. It surprised us to find that the existence of these Ruins was well-known to the Makwapa (Knopneusen or Knobnoses). Sekukuni, our chief and son of Sekwati, told us that he had himself, when a boy, seen the Ruins. According to his account there was an immense plain, many hours in extent, covered with the remains of gigantic antique structures. In consequence of this information we set out upon our journey. On reaching the country of the Baroka, beyond the Elephant River, we met with a chief of the Makwahe tribe (Knobnoses), who appeared greatly astonished at our knowledge of the Ruins, but at last gave us permission to proceed thither. We had about a dozen people of Sekwati's tribe with us, but engaged in addition some ten in Makwapa as carriers and guides. Other natives warned our people that in the attempt to push on to the Ruins we should all be murdered, because the Makwapa were in the habit of procuring different articles thence, and therefore kept them concealed from other tribes. We could not, however, ascertain what these articles were, and continued our journey. A guide of the Banyai tribe, close to whose territory the Ruins are said to be situated, told us much about this mysterious spot, and thus we gathered that the Banyai revere these ancient buildings: that no living creature may there be put to death, no tree destroyed, since everything is considered sacred. He also informed us that a populous black tribe, who were acquainted with the use of firearms, had formerly dwelt there, but on account of the increasing draught had, about fifty years before, gone northwards. We heard many

planned setting out with Mauch for the mysterious North, when I was prevented by a hostile inroad upon my Station. I rejoice that Mauch has found the spot: rejoice too that he was spurred on by the intelligence I had collected to make one more attempt in that direction. There must be other spots in the Banyai where ruins are to be found, and it is to be hoped that he will be enabled to visit them.

I had at an earlier period heard that Makwapa and Moselikatse's people were in the habit of seeking and finding *tsepe*—that is *metal*—near the Ruins. Mauch's statement confirms this. I imagine iron implements to be meant, such as were used in ancient times in the gold mines and there lost Gold has never been sought for by Moselikatse's people. I much fear it will be a difficult matter to dig inscriptions or the like out of the rubbish.

How often may these ruins have served for a temporary refuge amid the endless feuds of the native races! May not even the Portuguese have somehow made use of them? In any case the ancient Monomotapa will now for many years furnish material for research to travellers and to the learned.

1.—*Letter from C. Mauch to A. Petermann.*

Santscha, Lat. 20° 15' S., Long. 31° 37½' E., 4,200 feet absolute height above the sea.

13th September, 1871.

From Zoutpansberg I sent you through the Rev. Messrs. Grützer and Merensky my last maps and reports, and by a favourable opportunity have now the pleasure of forwarding you later intelligence. I can, however, only give you very briefly the results of my journey thus far, the relation of which

details regarding the form and construction of these ancient piles and the inscriptions they bore, but I cannot answer for their truth. We were at length compelled to return without having seen the spot, for the tribes we met with were suffering from a virulent epidemic of smallpox, and our people fearing contagion refused to proceed further.

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will, however, convince you how fruitful beyond expectation the journey will prove.

Having on the 30th July taken my departure from Albasini's, with fewer bearers, however, than I required, I met with an involuntary detention of several days from rain at Sewaas's (Umswazi's) where my goods got considerably reduced in apparently the most amiable manner possible. Through the same friendliness on the part of Umswazi, my companions on the Bembe were not fewer than forty in number, all of whom on account of the prevalent scarcity of game looked to me for food. On the 12th August we passed the Bubyee, on the 16th the Nuanetsi, and on the 18th August arrived at Dumbo's Kraal.

I now hired some of Dumbo's people, who subsequently stole from me three bales of calico and a variety of other articles, and then left me quite alone. The people of the kraal being Makalaka, I could not come to an understanding with them. I was again plundered to a considerable extent, but the booty was brought back the same day. At the kraal of Mapansule I encountered a band of Amaswazi warriors who would fain have detained me.

On the 3rd September discovered the first gold field, and on the 5th September discovered the ruins of Zimbabye, probably the Zimbaoe of the Portuguese. Several other points of importance, historical and economic, present themselves in immediate prospect.

After so many depredations my goods were now reduced to a few beads and copper rings. Owing to the extremely populous character of the country, with kraal set against kraal, my expenses are necessarily great in order to make friends with all. The advanced season of the year will not allow of my making more extensive excursions, and I must be content to take up my abode here during the summer months, if for no other reason than this, that I can on no account venture to proceed further until I am able to speak the native language. I am forced in the greatest possible haste to send people to

Zoutpansberg to bring back more goods; and they will have to make stiff marches daily to return within a month. But this costs money, and unfortunately not a little; and I shall be hard put to it to raise the amount required. I see no other means but that of drawing upon you and asking you to have the goodness to honour my draft. I confidently rely on being able during the summer months to wash gold enough to ward off want.

A traveller, named Adam Render, who represents me as being a distinguished chief and has warmly taken up my cause, will be my companion on my further journey.

Zimbaoe, known through Portuguese works, lies 11 English miles east from here and presents an immense fortress, consisting of two portions, of which the one, situated upon a hill some 400 feet in height with huge fragments of rock, is separated by a narrow valley from the second which stands upon a gentle rise. It has hitherto been impossible for me to make a plan of these two Ruins as the walls, in many places still 30 feet in height, are covered up, and formidable plants of the nettle kind would sharply repay any rash attempt to effect a passage. The walls are built without mortar, of hewn granite blocks, about the size of our bricks, enclosing an area of about 150 yards in diameter, and in excellent preservation except at three points.

In the southerly portion is a tower about thirty feet in height, cylindrical in form below and conical higher up. In the advanced wall are several black stones inserted, which I conjecture to indicate a burial-place. As already stated, the vegetation is so rank that but little can be observed on a hasty visit. Not until some future time shall I be in a position to give more detailed information.

Gold Field No. 1, of 1871. is only half-an-hour northward from here, and the people of the kraal are quite willing to engage in gold-washing at a fitting time.

I would fain write more to-day, but a stiff march from Zimbaoe hither in a furious south-east wind has caused me

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violent headache, and my messengers are anxious to start at the earliest hour to-morrow morning. You must for this time, therefore, please to take the will for the deed—my diary will prove all the richer for it. With the exception of the Bubyé, I have taken the width of every stream I have crossed.

Bembe (Limpopo) 22° 18' 49'' S. lat.—250 yds. wide, 3 ft. deep, 1,780 feet above the sea.

Nuanetsi.....	21	29	47	,,	—150 yds. wide, but little water.
Dumbo's Kraal...	21	4	19	,,	
Tokwe River.....	20	39	58	,,	
Pike's Kraal	20	15	34	,,	—31° 37' 45'' E. long.; 4,200 ft. above the sea.

11.—*Letter from C. Mauch to Rev. Mr. Gruetzner.*

Pike's Kraal, 13th September, 1871.

A good God has guided me wonderfully during the month of August and the early part of September. Zimbaœe, or Zimbabye, lies $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the south from the above point, my present abode, and consequently in long. 31° 48' E., and lat. 20° 14' S. From the inhabitants settled here I learnt that they have only lived here for about forty years: that previously the district had been left quite uninhabited, and that still earlier the Malotse or Barotse lived in the country and near the Ruins, but were compelled to flee northward. These last had regarded the Ruins as sacred, and even now people are said to come in order to worship there. To ascertain the object of this reverence was, however, on account of the superstitious fears of the inhabitants, impossible. On all hands it is accepted as certain that white men have formerly peopled this country, for there are constantly traces met with of dwellings and of iron implements which could not have been the handiwork of blacks. What has become of this white population—whether driven out, killed, or dead of pestilence—no man can tell. On a hasty visit to the very widely-spread parts of these Ruins I was not able (by the removal of rubbish and frag-

ments of stone) to light upon any inscriptions. I picked up no implements which would enable one to determine the age of the Ruins ; many, indeed all that could be laid hands upon, had been consumed by the present occupants of the country ; the Barotse are said to have touched nothing. Had these Ruins been founded by the Portuguese, they would certainly have given the place a Portuguese name, as was their custom everywhere ; they must, then, have found these buildings already erected, and possibly have somewhat altered them.

The Ruins may be divided into two parts : the one upon a granite rocky eminence of 400 feet in height, the other upon a somewhat elevated terrace. The two are separated by a gentle valley, their distance apart being about 300 yards. The rocky bluff consists of an elongated mass of granite rounded in form, upon which stands a second block, and upon this again fragments, smaller, but still many tons in weight, with fissures, chasms and cavities. The western side of this mountain is covered from top to bottom by the Ruins. As they are for the most part fallen in and covered with rubbish, it is at present impossible to determine the purpose the buildings were intended to serve : the most probable supposition is that it was a fortress impregnable in those times, and this the many passages—now, however, walled up—and the circular or zigzag plan of the walls would also indicate. All the walls, without exception, are built without mortar, of hewn granite, more or less about the size of our bricks ; the walls, too, are of varying thickness—at the apparent foot about ten feet thick, at the ruined top from seven to eight feet. The most remarkable of the walls is one situated on the edge of a precipitous cliff, and which, strange to say, is in perfect preservation to a height of about thirty feet.

In many places there remain beams of stone eight or ten feet in length, projecting from the walls, in which they must be inserted to a depth of several feet, for they can scarcely be stirred. At the most they are eight inches broad by three inches in thickness, and consist of a very compact stone with

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a metallic ring and of greenish-black colour. I found one stone beam, ellipsoid in section and eight feet in length, upon which ornaments are engraved. The ornaments consist chiefly of lozenge-shaped figures one within another, separated by horizontal bands of diagonal lines. Under a great mass of rock I found a broken vessel, shaped like a wooden Kafir-basin, of talcose gneiss, extremely soft, eighteen inches in diameter and three inches deep; one and a-half inch in thickness at the edge and half an inch thick in the bottom. Nothing else could I find, and the dense bush intermingled with plants of the nettle kind would allow of no closer investigation.

Best preserved of all is the outer wall of an erection of rounded form, situated in the plain and about 150 yards in diameter. It is at a distance of about 600 yards from the mountain, and was probably connected with it by means of great outworks, as appears to be indicated by the mounds of rubbish remaining. This oval has had but one entrance, which is three feet in width and five feet high and upon the northern side, that is, facing the mountain. It had, however, been at one time built up, although subsequently in part fallen in again. The cause of this was probably the brittleness of the wooden crossbeams, which had too great a weight to carry. In addition to this there are now two openings caused by crumbling of the walls. Inside, everything excepting a tower nearly thirty feet in height and in perfect preservation is fallen to ruin, but this at least can be made out that the narrow passages are disposed in the form of a labyrinth. This tower consists of similar blocks of hewn granite, and is cylindrical to a height of ten feet, then upwards to the top conical in form. At the foot its diameter is fifteen feet, at the top eight feet, and it shows no trace of any entrance. It stands between the outer wall and another close to and parallel with it, the latter having had a narrow entrance. This entrance has up to the height of a man four double layers of quite black stone, alternating with double tiers of granite. The outer walls show an attempt at ornamenting the granite—it represents a double

line of zigzags between horizontal bands. This ornament is twenty feet from the ground and is employed upon a third part of the south wall on each side of the tower, and only on the outside. Everywhere else there are only rubbish, fragments, and dense bush. Some great trees three feet in diameter lift their leafy canopies to nearly twice the height of those walls which are still preserved, and many trees of vigorous growth have enclosed the blocks within their own substance. From this we may infer something as to the age of the Ruins: namely, that the Portuguese, who had no fortified trading station here before the sixteenth century, must have found these buildings already in existence.

And now a few words about the neighbourhood in which I have to spend the rainy season. It is truly lovely; well watered, fruitful, and more than 4,000 feet in actual elevation. Below my straw hut a vigorous little stream of water flows down from the projecting granite into the valley where rice is cultivated. Shady trees and constant breezes moderate the heat; rice, ground-nuts, and corn are cultivated; sheep, goats and cattle thrive well. A glorious view into the broad valley of the Tokwe extends from south-west to north-west. I regard this country as really a favourable one; the population is not hostile towards whites, is active and industrious, but suffers from two chief evils—the most blind superstition and a predilection for poisoning.

* * * * *

Very shortly after these lines were penned, the devoted and self-sacrificing explorer's life ended. But not before he had succeeded in winning the respect and esteem of all South Africa, and in establishing, beyond a shadow of doubt, the wonderful auriferous wealth of the section of the country explored by him.

CHAPTER XIII.

HISTORY OF MATABELELAND.—THE CHARTERED COMPANY.



WHILE Carl Mauch was toiling and triumphing in the eastern part of the continent, Thomas Baines, F.R.G.S., another equally gallant pioneer was hard at work further inland, in the dominions of Lo Bengula, King of the Matabelies. No work on the gold regions of Africa would be complete without a reference to his labours and his life. He has done more than any other explorer, past or present, to establish the reputation of Africa as a gold land, while by his fine disposition, indomitable courage and steadiness of purpose, he endeared himself to his personal friends, amongst whom I am proud to range myself, as well as having earned the respect of all the African potentates and tribes with whom he had dealings. To this day his name, which is now a household word, is referred to with love; and sorrow is universally expressed at his untimely death, which occurred in Durban on the 8th of May, 1875. His latest work, entitled *The Gold Regions of South-East Africa*, is one of the most reliable of guides, while his labours and example have left on the minds of the natives an influence for good that will not soon be forgotten. In his death Africa lost one of her bravest champions, and science added another name to her roll of martyrs. Without encroaching on the above-mentioned book, I may say that, while in Matabeleland, he earned the goodwill and confidence of the natives, and succeeded in obtaining a mining concession from the king; but, owing to the half-hearted support of the company which he represented, the

right fell through by lapse of time, much to the regret of Lo Bengula and his councillors.

As this tribe and territory have come so prominently before the world of late, I cannot do better than set down as clearly as may be all that I have been enabled to gather of their history and present condition.

The Matabele country at present extends from the Macloutsi River on the south to within about forty miles of the Zambesi in the north, and from the Nata River and the Makari-kari in the west to the dominions of Ingongonyon, the son of Umzila, in the east, where are situated the ancient ruins described in the previous chapter.

The Zambesi, it is asserted by the Matabele, forms the north-west border of their territory, but there are some tribes scattered here and there along the south bank of the river who are not quite of that opinion, at any rate when the Matabele warriors are not about; whenever those gallants put in an appearance, however, politics undergo a change, and Lo Bengula is saluted as the king of kings. As a matter of fact his rule in the far north is an off and on sort of unsatisfactory affair. Frequent mention has already been made of the Matabele nation in certain sections of this work, more especially in connection with their attacks on and discomfiture by the Trek Boers. The result of the white invasion of retaliation was that Moselekatse fell still further back, *i.e.*, northward, and set out on another tour of conquest. This king's policy was in every respect as merciless as that of Chaka's, and as a result he gathered a nation of braves about him who adored him for the excitement he gave, and the spoil he took from the weaker but more industrious and intelligent Makalaka and Mashona tribes.

In the frequent raids made the full grown men and women were as a rule butchered, and the young children only of both sexes preserved, the girls to wed his warriors, and the boys to be trained until they forgot their original traditions in the more lurid glory of his hosts. If this volume were a romance

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I might well give reins to my imagination here, for the history of the period is rich in incident and adventure of the Fennimore Cooper description. The upshot of it all was that the dreaded king settled down from sheer lack of foes to contend with, and began to marry; he kept up the interesting ceremony with great determination and industry until his better half numbered about five hundred. All this time old age was creeping on him, and gout began to torment his royal and all-conquering toes. Ere long his constitution broke up, which is little to be wondered at, his mind and physical powers gave way, and he died an idiotic and unhappy wreck. His chief wife, whose name was Mandogasan, I believe, was the mother of a boy named Kuruman, while another, an inferior wife, bore Lo Bengula, the present king. Before Moselekatse's death the eldest-born prince was by some mysterious means spirited away, consequently when the throne was declared vacant the rightful heir was missing, and has never been heard of since. Umnombati, the prime minister, became regent, while a formal search was made throughout the whole of South Africa. At length, in view of the hopelessness of further waiting the kingship was conferred by the nation on Lo Bengula. At first he refused it and ordered still further search to be made, but after an interval of some months he took up the cares of state, which were of no light description. Of course, there was a good deal of plotting and counterplotting at this period, and many ranged themselves against him, amongst these was the royal regiment. But Lo Bengula was not to be turned from his course when once he had made up his mind. Collecting a small army as speedily as possible he made a sudden and unexpected dash upon his foes, and in a very short time by the generous application of cold steel succeeded in establishing his rule, which has continued to the present date (May, 1893). The foregoing preliminaries over, Lo Bengula settled down to his royal duties with great good will. Beef eating, beer drinking, and matrimony were amongst his chief amusements, the reception of reports from

various portions of his dominions comprised his duties, while the exercise of his regiments in deeds of peaceful daring served to lighten and amuse his spare moments. The amalgamation of his regiments of the Mashona and Makalaka children tended in no way to either the physical development or martial ardour of the nation. During the long interval of peace which followed his assumption of the royal office he chiefly exercised his men in the royal hunt. On more than one occasion he ordered them off to the hunting field for the purpose of bringing him a live lion. If the description of one of these hunts could serve any good purpose I would detail it here, but space is too valuable. After a time the Mashona tribes having somewhat recovered from the rough treatment of Moselekatse began to exhibit signs of turbulence, and the war parties of the king had enough to do in harrying, murdering and persecuting them. For several years this continued; in fact, more or less until the present date.

The country over which this drama of blood and oppression was enacted is of most marvellous beauty; a world of mountains, interspersed with open meadow lands through which the rivers flow as innocently as though they had never shone ruddy with the blood of slaughtered thousands, while the graceful foliage looks none the worse for having been nourished by the mouldering bodies of unnumbered multitudes of Makalaka and Mashona warriors and women.

The chief town or capital of Lo Bengula, which is called Bulawayo, is situated about twenty miles from the Gwai River, that is of considerable dimensions. A large circular wall, about three-quarters of a mile in extent, surrounds it; about sixty yards inside of this is another; between these two are situated the buildings; inside of this again there is a drill ground and cattle kraals, while about in the centre, protected by another palisade, are the royal quarters. There are four public entrances, around which large numbers of guards, courtiers and messengers are always congregated. The office of guarding his majesty is as a rule a matter of love, beef and

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beer, though, of course, there are regular detachments told off for the purpose. Lo Bengula himself is about fifty-five years of age, of goodly stature, and of much darker hue than the majority of royalties of Africa; this he doubtless inherits from his low-born mother. Although at times he condescends to wear a suit of clothes, he prefers to go quite naked, and in that guise looks what he is, a real savage king. Although he is a kindly father and faithful friend, he can, nevertheless, be as brutal and merciless as his Christian prototype Henry VIII. His family record would not make a good Sunday school book, for brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, cousins, &c., have been sent to their long account by his orders on the slightest pretence; in fact, he is not the kind of relative which one would wish for. His answer to friendly remonstrances from those white men who have access to him is that to be a king one must be felt and dreaded; and he is a king. All natives who address him do so with the utmost deference, and his every word is greeted with the most servile respect. Like his contemporary monarchs in Africa, he is high priest and principal rain-maker. The superstitions, customs, traditions and habits of the Matabele are so similar to those of the Zulus and the Swazies that I may refer readers to the sections dealing with those nations for further details.

In conclusion, I may state that the recent formation of the great Chartered Company has been, in my opinion, the grandest political move of the century in Africa. The brutalities, which I have but glanced at, and the bloodshed, which in the past has been of almost daily occurrence, cannot prevail much longer. Let negrophilists declaim as much as they may against the absorption of native territories by European powers; the fact remains that under white rule the bulk of the aboriginal population are protected and maintained in peace and security.

The conditions of the Chartered Company, together with its aims and its objects, are too well known to require any extended explanation at my hands. The fact that Lo Bengula

is no longer supreme ruler and arbitrator of the lives and destinies of his magnificent nation is a great gain. The brutality and cruelty which has hitherto prevailed is, by the very presence of the Chartered Company, checked; and I confidently look forward in the very near future to the development of the industrial capabilities of the nation, and to its elevation to a very much higher grade in the social scale.



CHAPTER XIV.

BAINES AND HIS TROUBLES IN MATABELELAND.



THE following letter from the able and vivid pen of Mr. Thomas Baines, whom I have already mentioned, will serve to convey some idea of the features of Matabeleland, and at the same time convey to non-travelled readers a faint conception of what African travel and African life is.

“The King has given me the country, with all facilities and privileges necessary for gold working; but carefully reserving to himself the territorial right, and I have as carefully explained to him that I do not wish to impair this right, but that, on whatever terms he allows me to occupy land, he will still remain king of it, and I shall look to him for protection. My privileges extend from the Gwailo to the Ganyana Rivers, and during the past year (1870) I have done considerable exploring within those limits, and have found extensive reefs and ancient workings. These—and, indeed, our whole track from Potchefstroom—I have mapped as carefully as my opportunities would allow, by compass courses, trochiameter distance, and stellar latitudes—the latter specially cool work when the stars serve from 12 till 2, and the thermometer is below 30°—in April or May. The map is $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch to a mile, and I intend to give a copy to the Surveyor’s Department here for public use.

“You know, of course, that one of the chief objects of our company is to secure to Natal as large a share as possible in the advantages of the Gold Fields, and now that the affairs of

Matabeleland are satisfactorily settled, I trust that this will soon begin to be accomplished. The King, Lo Bengula, is well disposed to white men, and is fully alive to the advantages to be derived from their visits to his country. Some of the regulations he enforces may at present seem rather hard and arbitrary; but I believe, as the confidence and friendship between him and the white man increases, and especially when he gets over the fear that was at first entertained, that the gold-seekers wanted to deprive him of his country, many of these will be relaxed, and made much easier to us. It must be remembered that the search for gold is a new thing to the Matabele. They were naturally suspicious of men whose object they did not understand, and they watched most narrowly every movement of the first adventurers. Even our staunch friend 'Oude Baas' (Hartley, a noted elephant hunter), did not dare to assist us until he was assured by our Matabele guide that I had in due form obtained the sanction of Um-Nombati, the head of the nation, during the interregnum, to explore the country for gold. Our success was in a great measure due to Mr. Hartley's personal knowledge of my name as an artist and traveller. I first made his personal acquaintance when he went up in 1869. He had believed me dead, but, being convinced of his error, at once offered to pilot us up to Matabeleland. I visited Matjen but declined to pay tribute, as not intending to work in his district; and passing Tati, Mr. Hartley introduced me to Mr. Lee, who held a farm and hunting-ground, by grant, from the late Moselekatze. I showed him an introductory letter from His Excellency the Governor of Natal, and from that moment Mr. Lee took up our cause. He said he had often told Moselekatze that when the Government sent a message respecting the Gold Fields, it would be sent in openness and friendship, and he only regretted the old chief had not lived to see the fulfilment of his words. We went on to the outpost at Manyami's and Mr. Lee followed next day, and told Manyami that he must send a special messenger in to obtain leave for me to enter, and that

when I did so all the chiefs must assemble to hear the Governor's letter. After several days two indunas or petty chiefs came down from UmNombati (the counsellor of the late king, with whose name I was familiar through the writings of Capt. Harris). I had a very good interpreter (W. G. Watson, of Durban), and in answer to their questions I told them I was come on friendly business in connection with the gold in the country, and had a letter from the Governor, but I would not go into details till Mr. Lee came. When he arrived he gave them a severe lecture for exceeding their duty by prying into my business instead of waiting till they had guided me to their chief, and letting me state it to him. He called Manyami; showed him the outside of the Governor's letter, with Her Majesty's name on the envelope, and the Royal arms on the seal (and also, in consequence of this, on the panels of the waggons), and explained as much as he considered they ought to know. He accompanied us about 100 miles to UmNombati's kraal, to which he insisted on going direct, and in half an hour the venerable old Regent sent for us. I had left Jewell and Watson at Kumalo, with a heavy waggon and tired oxen, and Mr. Lee, Mr. Nelson and I at once responded to the summons. We were received in a friendly, unaffected manner, and after the first greetings the old chief, who, in a bodily sense, was infirm and helpless, but in mind as vigorous as ever, adjourned to a sunny spot in the kotla or court of audience, and there Mr. Lee opened our business. He said we had been sent by a great company in London, where Queen Victoria lived, many thousand miles across the great water, to pay him a friendly visit, and to ascertain whether the report were true that there was gold in his country; and that I had also a letter from the Governor of the English in Natal, asking him to give me leave to travel, and to protect me in doing so; that I might acquire information and send it to His Excellency, so that he might be able to make laws for those who came to seek gold, if there were any, or tell them to stay away if there were not.

“The chief said he was glad to find the English the same people he had formerly known them. He had been twice sent by his king to the borders of the great water to the Governor of Capetown, and he thanked me for coming so far to bring the letter. He gave me leave to travel and explore, but requested my promise that I would not go out of his country by another way, but would come back and tell him truly what I found, so that he might know what to say to our Governor. I made him a suitable present—a musket, ammunition, and a railway rug—and next day he told me I might keep the gold I found.

“I sent down by Mr. Lee for a fresh span of young oxen, and while waiting for them received a letter written by order of some of the chiefs to the effect that UmNombati was considered imbecile; that his permission was of no avail; and that I could not be allowed to travel because they had bound themselves to let no one but Sir John Swinburne and his party do so. I rode over to the mission station at Inyati, where I found six men deputed to fetch me back. I asked the Rev. Mr. Thomas to interpret for me, and told them that having received permission from their great chief (UmNombati), I should not pay him so poor a compliment as to ask anyone else, but should hold the liberty he gave me valid till he himself recalled it.

“Jewell brought up the new cattle, and Nelson and I went in with one waggon, having made the old chief a parting present of a warm coat, and received from him a guide named Inyassi.

“My time was entirely occupied in looking after the waggon and the route, in sketching, making geographical observations, collecting botanical specimens, and hunting for food, and Nelson’s in prospecting the country. He found several reefs on either side of our path, and broke out occasional specimens with gold in them—sometimes visible to the naked eye and sometimes microscopic. In one place I believe he found alluvial gold, but it was infinitesimal. I constantly walked

ahead with the guide, hunting on either side of the road. One day I broke the leg of a wildebeeste at 400 or 500 yards, and chased him for a long distance. Inyassi asked for my rifle, as he could get nearer than I could; but he could not shoot, and I had to take it in hand again, and was well tired before I got a chance to bring the animal down. Another day I fell in with a herd of buffaloes, and got near enough for a good shot, but they looked so much like our span of black oxen that I felt great compunction in firing. I killed a fine cow and wounded some others, one of which turned out of the herd and took refuge among the nopanie trees and low bushes, I crept within forty yards, but could only see a portion of its black body without being able to distinguish the form. I fired as near as I could to the shoulder, and the creature, bleeding from mouth and nostril, rushed straight at me—with gory muzzle, flashing eyes, and sharp, black, polished horns. I was close enough to distinguish the malignant expression of every feature. One glance satisfied me. I turned at full speed, and swung myself round a clump of nopanies on the left, while Inyassi did the same on the right, letting the buffalo go straight as an arrow between us. Nelson came up, on horseback, but the buffalo had got clean away, and could not be found again. Shortly after, Nelson found a lioness sleeping on the sands, and after I had sketched her, we put two bullets into her shoulder. She reared, and sat on her haunches looking at us, her white teeth showing and her white chest also forming a capital mark—but though my Wilson rifle loads very quickly, I could not succeed in getting ready in time, and she fell into the reeds.

“We searched in every direction, sometimes skirting the edge of the reeds, sometimes climbing overhanging trees from which we could look down upon them, sometimes crossing the river to get a view from the other bank, but though the dogs—little Jack especially—did their work gallantly, we could not find her again. We made the boys fire shots whenever we thought there was a chance, standing ready, if there was any

advantage, to follow it up with our rifles. But they were afraid to come even in line with us, armed only with the miserable tools miscalled firearms, which sometimes—‘when much enforced, gave a hasty spark, and—straight were cold again’; but more frequently did not give a spark at all, to say nothing of a discharge, and I rather wished I had the manufacturer or the purchaser of them on the spot to make them shoot a lion with the weapon they had provided for us.



Lions.

“Finding this getting tedious, I went in, sometimes followed and sometimes preceded by an impudent little fellow named Maatchaan (a small stone, or as we might translate it, a little brick), and beating through every pathway in the long, over-arching reeds and grass, we at length came to a clump from which the dogs seemed to be driven, a low growl being just audible among their angry voices. I urged them in again, and this time the deep bass of the lion’s growl was solemnly heard as they scattered out with confused yelps. I fell back two or three steps to the line formed by the people, and Nelson, who

was on higher ground than I, saw a lioness (which he considered not to be the same) retreating from the other side of the reeds. We followed for some time in vain, and making a circuit round the country came suddenly on a rhinoceros in the long grass. I put a bullet into his shoulder, and as he turned, repeated the dose. He made off at once, and young Maatchaan, armed with my stocked Colt's revolver, gave chase at a speed which soon left us far behind, firing the miniature pellets into the neck or shoulders of the immense beast.

“I took my horse (kept only for great emergencies) and rode on in front between thirty and forty miles, till I overtook Mr. Hartley and the other hunters at the Imbeela River, and from this time we again had the benefit of his local knowledge in pointing out where reefs or quartzose country were likely to be found. We went on to the Ganyana river, in $17^{\circ} 45' S.$, our furthest waggon camp, and from this I rode about thirty-five miles N.W., to the kraal of a Mashona chief, named Maghoonda; he keeps three or four cattle, but is on the border of the fly country, and dare not let them go in that direction. He gave me, as usual among the Mashonas, a bowl of maasa (sour milk mixed with thick paste from Kafir corn-meal), and a little dish of meat boiled in a little water, forming soup or gravy to the maasa, and then (according to the statement of my guide) they discussed the propriety of sending me to a better world before my time, but at length concluded that it was safer to let me enjoy the present.

“It is the custom of the Mashonas to claim from the Portuguese and half-caste hunters, the tusk that touches the ground of every elephant they shoot. I had told Dr. Livingstone, ten years ago, that Englishmen would not submit to this, and now the question was settled. It never came to the English at all, but was proposed to their Matabele servants who rejected it with scorn—‘Our master and king, the great Umdelagasi, never took a tusk from an English hunter, and shall you Mashonas, who are only our dogs dare to attempt

that which he refrained from?' They took me three or four miles north-east to a quartzose valley, in which were several holes from three to six feet wide, and from three to ten feet deep, but said they had forgotten what sort of metal used to be extracted. A Mashona jumped down into one, and picked me two or three pieces of quartz, and I wondered whether his ancestors had ever done the same for King Solomon, and furnished material for tales of geni and demons for the Koran and the Arabian Nights. In returning, I saw other extensive diggings. Mr. Hartley told me of more, and Nelson went prospecting daily, coming once upon a full-maned lion feeding on a dead elephant, of which I made a sketch from his description for the *Illustrated London News*.

"Our camp was broken up, and we reached the Sarua or Salagazaan River, named to commemorate the exploit of killing a little old woman. There we were met by a party of warriors, of whom half-a-dozen with white shields stood out to the front to show that they were friends. They brought a letter requesting one of the hunters to come to Inyati to explain some annoyance which had been experienced in the Transvaal by messengers who had been sent to look for Kuruman, a missing Prince of the nation. We were told verbally that all white men would have to come out of the country. We answered that they could see we were on our way, and they then went on to combine business with pleasure by doing a little marauding among the Mashonas further north, where I believe they killed seventy men and women, and took a few cattle.

"We crossed a small rivulet called the Simbo, a tributary of the Umvuli, where we broke our disselboom (pole). Having repaired this, Mr. Hartley showed me an extensive reef with old workings, and persuaded his head man, Inyoka (the serpent), to take me over the old diggings. In many of these were large thorn trees eight inches thick, showing that they must have been abandoned forty or fifty years ago, but not proving for them a high antiquity. I suppose they were

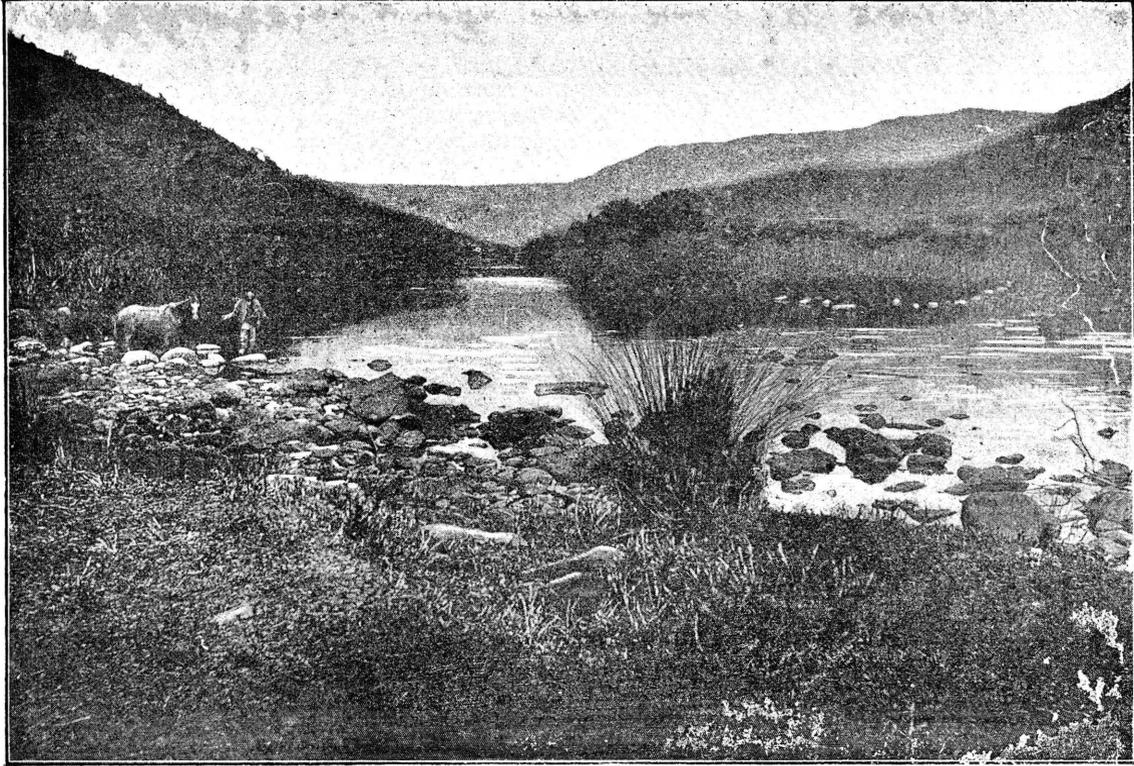
worked by the Mashonas when the Portuguese colonies on the Zambezi were prosperous, and the gold either carried to those settlements or sold to traders visiting or residing more or less permanently among the native tribes—in fact, Mr. Hartley found the ruins of a house between Imbecla and Umvuli, and an old man in his service says a white man lived there in his father's time. Mr. Nelson, my mineralogist, was away prospecting at this time, but after his return he examined this reef, and advised me to take possession of it in presence of our guide; and we did so, naming the granite kopjies near it 'Hartley's Hills.' Three good stellar observations subsequently taken placed this in $18^{\circ} 11' 39''$. Sir John Swinburne had built a hut and sunk a couple of shafts about seven furlongs south, on the Umvuli.

"We again received a summons to come out of the country, and as we toiled on with our weary oxen the army overtook us. We had killed an eland, and gave over to them what meat we could spare; and when we got into difficulties in the UmNyati River, Setlaasi, the chief who—except in professional matters, such as killing Mashonas, &c.—was a very good-hearted fellow, set his men to help us through. The oxen were outspanned, and 150 warriors, laying down their arms, manned the trek-tow, and after a little cargo had been discharged, succeeded in starting the waggon, and hauled her out with a run, chanting the while in unison. They had an intense desire to taste coffee and sugar, so I made them a great brew, and kept kettles of hot water ready. Setlaas and I had the first cup, then he diluted it and served it to his officers and men—the latter getting it warm, but exceedingly pure. However, we sweetened it a little as it went round, and afterwards I gave strips of calico for head bands to the men—150 in number.

"Reaching Inyati, I rode to UmNombati, the chief and regent of the country, who had removed to Inthlathlangelo, and I found I had been accused of having dug the holes, which in reality had been dug by Sir John Swinburne, but several native friends had given evidence in

my favour, and now my guide added his testimony, and I was completely cleared. I was requested to go out of the country while the successor to Umzelegasi was being chosen, but I was also told that if I only went a little past Inthlathlangela they would be satisfied, as they were too friendly to me to drive me much further. However, I had to go to Tati for supplies, and spent the summer on Mr. Lee's farm, meanwhile making a visit of friendship to Lo Bengulu, who had been requested to accept the dignity of king. He refused for a long time and made every effort to find his elder brother Kuruman, but at length evidence, satisfactory to the nation, was brought forward that Kuruman had been killed at Thaba Induna, and Lo Bengulu accepted the offer, and was installed in the dignity and power of his late father—10,000 warriors being present at the ceremonial, while 1,500 remained disaffected. Mr. Lee was invited to be there, and was asked whether he accepted Lo Bengulu as his king; he said he coincided in the choice of the nation, and was told that the grants made to him by Umselegasi were confirmed. He brought forward the affairs of the company, and the king told him, 'Yes, Mr. Baines can have the northern gold fields.'

"In April, I started from Mr. Lee's place, and reached the king's new town of Gibbe klaik, where he received me in the most friendly manner, and desired me to make my request. I asked for the country between Gwailyo and Ganyany rivers, and he gave me liberty to go in and explore and dig for gold; to erect houses or machinery; to use the roads and exercise all privileges necessary for that object; telling me that all details were my business, and included in his general grant. He asked particularly after Mr. Nelson, who had gone down to Natal to lay the specimens, &c., before Mr. Behrens, the agent of our company, and to convey information to His Excellency, the Governor, and requested me to remain a few days and go down with him to a new kraal on the Limpopo side of the water-shed, in a warmer situation than the bleak site of Gibbe klaik.



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“ We were happy to receive the new missionary, Mr. Thompson, who at the king’s request held service in my tent on Sunday—Mr. Watson interpreting, which he does very fluently, and reading from the English scripture, translating (or rather reading it into Zulu) as he goes on. Mrs. Thompson also became a great favourite with the king’s wives and sisters.

“ Of course, we had to give presents. Mine was a salted hunting horse, valued at £75, though by paying in beads I bought him for a trifle less—a saddle, bridle, and rifle, making it up to £100. This was our entrance fee, besides blankets, beads, clothing, &c., occasionally.

“ We went on to Inyati, and thence to Emampangene to buy goats and corn. We were nearly a week going thirty-five miles—the waggon axles even sinking into the swampy ground. We actually ploughed up with the wheel a great burrowing frog that thought himself perfectly safe till next season, but when he came to the surface, we cooked and ate him, like a chicken.

“ Watson was a great adept at setting spring guns for wolves, *i.e.*, hyænas and jackals. He digs a hole in the ground so that the creature has to put his head in for the bait, and in tugging at it he discharges a gun which shoots him through the head. Sometimes he gets away, but generally wounded, and it is to be hoped the sudden alarm bears fruit to repentance and makes him a sadder and a wiser wolf. Other things are taken with snares and springs—even an eagle (a Bateleur) was caught one night thus. At Emampangene we saw a man who professed to be ‘the Son of God’ (as Watson translated it), who exhibited wondrous feats of strength and endurance—the principal of which was dancing, or rather jumping, by the action of the ankles and muscles of the foot alone, keeping all the rest of the body rigid, and only once now and then indulging in a few *ad libitum* capers as a relief to the monotony of the performance. I believe he was in reality the son of a man who lives in a mountain not far from Inthlathlangela, and who by shouting from a cave with peculiar echoes, contrives to pass

for something supernatural. It is certain that some rocks and particular places are held sacred, and the Mashonas go to them to perform some act of worship, and some of the Matabele follow their example—though to them generally, their king is their God, and they know no other. Still there seems to be some kind of religion natural or acquired among them. My cousin, Mr. Richard Watson, of Sydenham, heard a Matabeli mention God, and to try him, he asked, ‘Where is he?’ The reply was ‘Here—all around us—everywhere—the sky is his roof and the earth is his floor.’ ‘But’ continued Watson, ‘I do not see him.’ ‘No,’ said the Kafir, ‘but you may see his things—the oxen on the hills; the corn in the fields; the water in the rivers; and other things everywhere.’ I fancy, however, such advanced views as this are rare.

“We kept along the high lands to the south of our former road, crossing the Umvungu and Gwailo about twenty miles higher up, and came into it again near the Quaequae. I generally walked ahead with the guide, sometimes finding a quartz reef, and sometimes shooting a buck. At Sebague, we turned out in force to hunt buffaloes, and in a clump of mopanies, about a mile down the river, we came upon a herd. At first, however, I only saw one, and I gave him a shot in the shoulder; this forced him to turn back into the bush, from whence another immediately came trotting out towards me. I had a Wilson breechloader, which is very quick and handy, and was ready to give him a shot in the shoulder also, but Jewell coming up to support me, delivered his fire and helped to turn them out. I now closed with the first bull, whose shoulder appeared to be broken, and after two or three shots succeeded in breaking his hind leg; leaving Jewell to dispatch him, I ran on after the other shouting to the men to turn him in front. I got one shot into his ribs and then lost sight of him for a moment, but the men had headed him, and before I could get up to the chase again, they had overturned him with a broadside. Still he was not dead, although unable

to rise, and his dark eyes glared upon us from under his massive horns most expressively as we gathered round. Jewell gave him an eleven to the lb. ball from his Westley Richards, under the ear, but I believe that the bullet split upon the hard bones and scattered itself, instead of penetrating to the brain. I took my sketch book from the boy who carried it, and who had orders not to run after wounded beasts nor mix with the chase to the detriment of aforesaid book, which orders, of course, he always forgot in the excitement of the fray, and being anxious that Jewell should get a photograph I sent for the trek oxen to haul the carcasses home. The second was a fine old bull, with a splendid pair of horns—the first a young one.

“I also observed the latitude of our camp, and marked it on a tree. I have done this in several places in order to make definite points of departure. We remained some days here and made a trek tow out of the hides. Watson shot some wolves, and we turned out at night to shoot a lion, but though he only retreated slowly, he would not give us battle and we could not by any means get sight of him for a fair shot.

“We crossed the Bembesi, called Bembesi-enia, or the ‘other Bembesi,’ to distinguish it from one of the same name at Zwong Endaba; here also I found quartz reefs and hills with the ruins of the stone kraals and huts of the Mashonas upon their summits, the inhabitants having been massacred by the Matabele in former years; then again we crossed the Umnyati (or Buffalo) with its castellated granite hills around the drift; the Umgesi, so named from a famous Mashona chief Umgesa, who governed the country from Umnyati to Umvuli; and the Umgesana, or little Umgesi, sometimes called Umgwasaan, from a word signifying to stab—but I believe the former to be the correct name. Next came the Umzweswie, a very picturesque little stream, the drift overshadowed with tall trees, amid which the spreading soft wooded pao pisa (of the Portuguese), mosaaawe (of the natives), or *Kigelia pinnata*, with its long inedible fruit like great polonies or cucumbers pendant from cord-like stalks

three feet long, while near it grows a kind of strychnia called the Kafir orange, bearing a hard-shelled fruit filled with seeds embedded in a pleasant orange-like pulp; then turning to the left and north out of the hunter's road, we crossed the Umvuli, at Kigelia drift. The natives, who now seemed to think the acquisition of a pretty pebble a certain means of getting a pipe of tobacco, picked up several bits of quartz, agate and coarse jasper. We passed the unfortunate holes 'dug in the king's country when there was no king to give permission,' and reached our first location at Hartley Hills. I made a trip, about twelve miles down the river, and saw several reefs, but did not succeed in killing anything, and at once set about erecting a house for the accommodation of Mr. Nelson and the workmen I expected him to bring up from Natal. My plan was two rooms of fourteen feet square, and ten feet high to the wall plate, a six-foot passage between, and pitched roof to give plenty of air and room in case any one should be attacked by fever. We went round the forest and selected mopanie poles, which Watson, with a gang of Matabeli cut down, while Jewell and I saw to the digging of the holes to insert them, and in a few days we had the satisfaction of seeing the walls in frame, the gables and ridge poles, and some of the principal rafters in place—not forgetting a tall straight pole in an open space in front, from which the Union Jack floated daily.

“While we were thus at work, one morning, we heard heavy guns at a distance, and our friends Molony and Leask arrived on horseback about noon. We went to greet them, but all our cheerful hopes were dashed, as by a thunder-stroke, by the news that not less than seven of their party were dead of fever, and nearly all were more or less affected, Molony himself being ill, and Leask almost the only one in tolerable health. Mr. George Wood had lost his wife and his child; Mr. Jebbe, a talented German explorer, was dead, having previously, in his delirium, destroyed his papers.

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Mr. McDonald, Toris (a half-caste waggon-driver), and poor Willie Hartley—a gallant young hunter, who bade fair to rival the fame of his well-known father—had also succumbed. They invited me to visit their camp, nine or ten miles to the S.E., and next morning I set out on foot, Mr. Wood kindly sending a horse to meet me. It was a sorrowful sight to witness the weakness, both of body and mind, left by the fever among so many dashing hunters, whom I had known but a few months before in the full pride of health and strength, ready for chase or battle with any beast, no matter how fierce, how swift, or cunning. It was almost impossible for me to gather the details of the fatal season with anything like correctness, because their memory had been so disturbed, that they could not give me a consecutive account, and, of course, I did not like to press them on so painful a subject.

“George Wood returned with me next day to Hartley’s Hill, and all the waggons were afterwards brought on, crossing the Simbo River and camping at Constitution Hill, about a mile north of us—the latter name being because Mr. Leask, who gained the brevet rank of doctor, made the invalids walk to the hill once a day. Those who could rode out now and then, and began to shoot game as they gained strength; but we subsequently heard that Mr. McGillewie, with Jennings’ party, and Mr. Saunders, remained ill for a long time.

“Jewell and I took my waggon, and one belonging to poor Willie, and went south-east, crossing the Zinlundasi, and the sources of Umzweswie, Umgesi and Umnyati rivers, and then passing over the Watershed, 4,700 feet high, as nearly as I remember, or perhaps 4,470. On the way we enjoyed a fine view of the mountain called Inthaba-wahella, and the plains beyond and below us, then descending by small spruits, running to the Saabi or Sabea River, we crossed the Kitoro, also one of its tributaries, and winding among granite hills, with Mashona villages perched on them in almost inaccessible situations, where they had been placed for fear of the Matabele, we came to the village of Umtigesi, whence men came out to

guide us to the plateau about half-way up the hill, we outspanned not very far from the grass and pole house formerly occupied by George Wood. The people came readily and unsuspectingly out to meet us from all the villages, but had Matabele been seen not accompanying English waggons, they would have run like the coveys of their own hills to the securest shelter.

“ We could not open the market for a long time because Mr. Wood had bought largely, and having satisfied their present demand for beads, they had enhanced the price ; and it was not until evening that I bought the chief’s goats for supper thereby fixing the price and opening the traffic.

“ I got a good observation at night, and I think the latitude was $18^{\circ} 47'$. The next day was a busy one, large crowds came with corn, but goods were sparingly bought, and pack oxen only promised. Umtigasi came himself, and generally sat with me to see that his people kept order, while Jewell and the people purchased corn, but sometimes the chief would mount on the waggon-seat, and, flourishing a sjambok over his unruly followers, drive the idle and disorderly to a distance.

“ The Mashona men wear their hair long, just as you see it on the old Egyptian monuments. They tie little tufts of their crisp wool up in bandages of red bark till they look like the cockscombs of our own clowns, each of these tufts they saturate with the oil of the ground-nut or Mashambana till they force the ringlets to a length of nine or ten inches, or even a foot. These are parted in the middle, put back over the ears, and confined by a snood, giving an effeminate look to the features. Grease and charcoal are liberally applied, and the dandies carry a small pillow (or rather a three or four-legged stool) on which, when they sleep, they lay their necks to keep their well-oiled heads high off the ground. They remind me very much of the Damaras, on the West Coast, only that the Damaras use red clay instead of charcoal.

“ The Mashonas are clever smiths. They seem to keep a supply of smelted iron at the mountain Wabella already

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mentioned (which is also called Coedza, the giraffe). This they bring to their smithy, and, raising a sufficient heat in a charcoal fire by means of a clever pair of goat-skin bellows, the smith picks the metal out with a green withy, and laying it down on a flat stone, makes his 'hammerman' deliver heavy blows with another stone, weighing, perhaps, 50 lbs., and then he follows up his work with an iron hammer of 3 lbs. to 6 lbs. *with a handle*—a most unusual thing among savages. Hoes, axes, assegais, barbed and bearded in the most cruelly-ingenious manner, arrow heads, and keys for musical instruments, as well as walking-sticks, rings, beads, and personal ornaments, are made very neatly. Wire is drawn by forcing the small end of the bar into a hole formed by two grooves made in the faces of two blocks of iron, placed face to face in a hole in a stout tree, and wedged closely into contact. A lever is used to draw the iron through, and the blocks are then wedged more and more closely to reduce it, and when necessary blocks with smaller grooves are substituted.

“Their cassanses or musical instruments, consisting of a number of iron springs arranged on a hollow key-board as big as a quarto volume, and tinkled with the thumb-nails, are very ingenious and well-arranged. They have a regular scale; I can play part of 'God save the Queen,' on them, but cannot get through the whole of it. They have various recognised tunes, which are very popular, and I have known Portuguese on the Zambesi who can play them most melodiously. The sound is increased by enclosing the key-board in a calabash hung round with loose discs of shell, which jingle slightly.

“The Mashona pack oxen are trained to carry burdens laid upon their back without being girthed. When they are offered for sale, a huge sack of Mashambana nuts like a great mattress, bulky but light, is laid on them, and they are required, without being led, to walk up to the purchaser without throwing the pack off.

“We returned to Hartley's Hill, where we found Watson

had shot a crocodile—a very bold act, as the Matabele suspect that a man doing so intends to use the liver for witchcraft against the lives of his neighbours. I had great difficulty in persuading the Kafirs to haul it ashore, though I went into the water myself to make the line fast. Jewell and I travelled twenty-two miles down the Umvuli to the N.W., where I shot a waterbok and wild pig, and we saw some ‘sea-cows,’ but they were so wild we could not approach them. We saw several reefs and old workings, and ruins of Mashona villages. Some of these I named ‘Waterbok Reef,’ ‘Jewell Reef,’ and ‘Mackenzie Reef.’

“ Mr. Hartley arrived at our house some time after, and was greatly affected on hearing of the loss of his son. I was also much disappointed at finding that our mineralogist (Mr. Nelson) had not returned, and that I should have to take upon myself his work without having his skill to qualify me for it.

“ Mr. Leask offered to guide us to Willie’s grave, and we set out one morning, I having my sketch-book and Jewell his photographic camera; but we came across elephants’ spoor on the way, and Mr. Hartley—sacrificing his private feelings to the welfare of his fellow-hunters—gave the word to follow. They took us eleven miles up the Umvuli, then crossed to the south, and passed within a mile of Willie’s grave; it was a hard trial for the father to pass the spot where his dead son lay; but he pressed bravely on, and after twenty-five miles of travelling we caught sight of the elephants. Hartley shot two, and Molony, Leask, and Giffard one each. Subsequently we went out again and found the grave, about twelve miles E.S.E. of Hartley’s Hill. After Mr. Hartley had been left a little space alone beside it, I made a sketch and Jewell photographed it. There was no stone there, and only a heap of bushes were laid over the mound, while the initials ‘W. J. H. 19/5/71,’ were cut on one of the trees above it. I am afraid that when a few years of grass fires shall have passed over the spot, there will be no sign of the brave young hunter’s resting-place.

“ Afterwards Mr. Hartley took me about twenty miles

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N.N.W. to see the ruins of a Portuguese house he had found and which had been inhabited about forty or fifty years ago. We saw very extensive reefs and old workings, but next morning, while we were looking for the house, we came on elephants' spoor again and turned away to track it. Presently, a piece of grass kicked forward indicated the fact that the elephants had begun to run, so we galloped on through bush and brier in hot haste, but they had gone into the 'fly country,' and we dared not follow them. We saw more reefs and workings as we returned to camp.

"I spent several days in digging about three feet deep in our reef at Hartley's Hill, and with Mr. Hartley's assistance found several specks of gold in stones which I have preserved. Mr. Hartley also very kindly sent his head man Inyoka and the same Mashona who had guided Herr Mauch, and showed me several other workings. Then Mr. George Wood arrived, and invited me to his camp, very near Maghoonda's village, where I was in 1869, and showed me where the Mashonas, no doubt gained by the inquiries I had then made, had resumed their ancient industry, and had commenced picking out quartz, laying it in piles with dry branches alternately and firing it; then, when sufficiently burned, crushing it on a stone with a round pebble, as the Hottentots grind coffee or a painter does colours, and afterwards washing the grains of gold out. He gave me some of this in a quill which he had bought from them. I am preserving it as a valuable evidence, for if they with their imperfect means can get gold, what can we do with proper appliances? We also saw extensive reefs, both in going and returning.

"As Mr. Hartley had commenced his homeward bound trip, I broke up our establishment and followed. We shot a sea cow on the Umgesi, and at Umnyati I cut a specimen of the bark of the baobab, which is said to be as good as quinine, in cases of fever. I have sent it to Dr. J. D. Hooker, at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, to be tested.

"We went out again on the spoor of elephants, and came

across the edge of the shales and slates, but I cannot say much about gold quartz, for we came in sight of a herd of about 150 elephant cows and calves, and another of about 40 bulls. It had been agreed that the whole herd should be driven till it was weary, and then the hunters should kill all they could, but the rule was soon broken. It was a magnificent sight. I had the pleasure of being in at the death of seven out of eight that were killed, and of being chased by one. Mr. Hartley's Mashona took me to some rich reefs and workings down the Bembesi and Sebaque rivers, but I shot a rhinoceros, a buffalo and two pigs, and the people lived so well they made a conspiracy to go no further, and concealed their knowledge of reefs further on. However, I can find them for myself when I want them.

“ At Inyati we were most hospitably received by the Revs. Sykes and Thompson, and their wives—the latter had actually grown a crop of English wheat during his first year's mission. He accompanied us to the king's village. Mr. Hartley and I went to see the spot he had chosen for a mission station, to be called Hope Fountain. I am happy to say my agent Mr. Lee, was mainly instrumental in procuring the grant of it from the king, who now for the first time has the principals of a Christian mission society explained to him. Inyati was given to Moffat, and the missionaries there are called Moffat's children; but the ground here, however, is given to the London Society to hold as long as they use it for mission purposes—when they cease to do so it reverts to the king. Mr. Thompson seems to be in favour with the white men here, and he is right in cultivating their friendship, for if he can improve the standard of morality among them, he will be doing good work for them and the natives they live among. Every man responded to his invitation to service, and we had eighteen or twenty each Sunday in my tent. The grand old psalm tune, sung by so many powerful voices, brought the Kafirs far and near to listen. Some of them I think expected we were going to get up a war dance. In the native services Watson read to the Matabelle, and I to

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those who understood Dutch, Mr. Thompson conducting the service in English. By our aid the people were fairly attentive.

“The king has been greatly occupied with business lately; two large marauding parties have returned with about 8,000 head of cattle, and the reviews and dances, and distribution of cattle, occupied several days. About 100 to 200 Mashonas, men, women, and children, have been killed, yet the king, though sanctioning all this, considers he is doing no wrong. He is a good natured fellow, takes great interest in my sketching, and takes kindly notice of Lee’s little boys. The other day he gave his army a bull to eat alive to show their ferocity; they had got it down and were cutting its shoulder out when it escaped, and after nearly killing Mr. Grant, it gored one of my horses (value £45), which died in two days.

“The king has made me an unofficial visit, and I showed him a bag of quartz, pulling out a single piece in which a speck of gold was visible, Mr. Lee explained how little gold there was to so much stone, and how great was the labour of extracting it.

“Mr. Lee asked if he were fully satisfied with the manner in which I had acted on the privilege he had given me, and he said yes, he was perfectly satisfied, and would not withdraw his favour till I should myself do something wrong to forfeit it; in fact, Mr. Lee assured me that so far as the king’s favour was concerned, I was perfectly safe.

“On the day when he came officially, the king asked whether I had found gold. I answered in the affirmative and he formally renewed the privilege he had already given me to dig for gold, guarding only against my setting up any claim that would deprive him of his territorial rights, which, of course, I do not want to injure. I told him I should look upon him as king of the country, and as my protector in it. In return he gave me the gold of the country, and the privilege of working it freely, but he would not bargain for a price lest it should seem like conveying away his claim to the sovereignty of his country. I thanked him, and told him I

would each year make him such a present as I thought he would be pleased with (this I expect will be a salted horse, saddle and bridle, and a rifle, to the value of £100). We managed to get up a couple of dinners, the first by Mr. Kisch, the second by Mr. Hartley and myself, and invited the king and his sister, who were highly pleased. We even mustered wine enough (thanks to Mr. Carter) to drink toasts with, and had songs *ad libitum*.

“I suppose you have heard that the Portuguese Governor from Quillimaine has constituted himself and other officers a diplomatic deputation to the Transvaal for the purpose of settling their respective boundaries. Indeed it is high time, for the Transvaal on paper claims Matabeleland as far north as the Changani River, and Portugal claims down to the 26th degree of south latitude; so that we are like Sir Boyle Roche’s bird in three countries at once, only as neither the Transvaal Government nor His Excellency of Quillimaine dare send a representative to assert their claims, and the Matabele are all we have to deal with.

Now that we are opening the gold-fields, His Excellency thinks he may as well furbish up an old cession by the Emperor of Monomotapa, 300 years ago, and he writes me a letter to tell me that as I am in the district of Sofala, in the province of Mozambique, I cannot explore without permission of the King of Portugal. I have answered that I am not in the province of Sofala, but in the country of the Mashonas, conquered by Umzelegazi, and given to me by his son Lo Bengulu, and that my duty is to go on working, leaving the question of boundaries to the Governments of our respective countries.

“On reaching Potchefstroom I met his Excellency and saw the published map on which he relies, and on this I showed him that the country occupied by me on account of our company, is not in the district of Sofala, nor in Senna, nor in Tette, but is marked there with the tribal name, Mashonas: Mozambique is far away to the north of Tette, and we are perfectly clear of the Portuguese country,

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unless his Excellency should be allowed to stretch his claims as far as he likes, and draw a red and blue line over the map of Africa. He told me they had 3,000 fighting men at Tette, and they were going to extend the district to Ganyana. I said, 'Well, we will not quarrel; Ganyana is my northern boundary.' 'Then,' said he, 'we will extend it to Umnyati.' I told him the Matabele were a warlike people, and would probably fight. He said they did not wish to fight if they could help it, but would convince Lo Bengulu by diplomacy. I told him if he could convince Lo Bengulu, by diplomacy, that this country did not belong to him, he would do more than I considered likely. He said the Emperor of Monomotapa had ceded all the country as far as the Hottentots, 300 years ago, and it belonged to the Portuguese by right of conquest. In reply, I said the Portuguese had never occupied the country in such a manner as to give them a right to it, and the few solitary traders who had gone in, had abandoned it fifty years ago, and it was now, in fact, derelict. Beside which, if he relied on right of conquest, Umzelegaze had conquered it, and Lo Bengulu who held it in his father's right, had given it to me, and, further, I thought a living Lo Bengulu better than a dead Monomotapa. I find that the Chevalier Duprat does not coincide with these claims, which are so easy to extend on paper; he considers that the Portuguese line runs from the coast up the river Doro, to the foot of the Drakensberg, thence along the foot of the Berg to where the Limpopo breaks through and thence in a straight line to Zumbo. This last is only an imaginary line named almost at random, because little was known of the natural boundaries.

"I think, however, that the frontiers as laid down on the map previously referred to, could most conveniently be retained, *i. e.*, Sofala on the east of the continuation of the Drakensberg, Senna on the north of this last, and Tette on the north of a spur which seems to turn westward and send several small tributaries down to the Zambesi; the land granted to us

lying on the west of the Drakensberg or coast range, and on the south of the mountains last named. There is one ray of comfort, however: I believe his Excellency does not intend to do more than protest, and I have no wish to interfere with this amusement, so long as it pleases him and does not hurt me."

The Baines concessions fell into abeyance and were succeeded in 1888 by those obtained from King Lo Bengula by Messrs. C. D. Rudd and Cecil J. Rhodes. Following upon this, arose the British South Africa Company and the Matabele Treaty of 1888, by which the whole of the vast territory north of the Transvaal and Bechuanaland, east of the German Protectorate and west of Portuguese East Africa was recognised as within the sphere of exclusively British influence and protection—an event of vast magnitude, pregnant with far-reaching and momentous possibilities for Africa and the world.

The British South Africa Company has already achieved great things. It first of all formed a body of pioneers and by its means constructed a road through the entire territory from the Maclontsi to Hartley Hills in an incredibly short space of time. Forts were then erected in the Salisbury and Victoria district; a splendid body of mounted police, called the Mashonaland horse, enrolled; a complete system of Administration set up; townships laid out; mining regulations drawn up, and now at the two principal townships many handsome and imposing buildings have been erected, stores, hotels, clubs, banks, &c.

The actual position of the mining industry at the present time (May, 1893) will be best gathered from the following telegram received from Dr. Jameson, the Company's administrator in Mashonaland, who has recently returned from a tour of inspection of the various mining districts:—New finds are occurring daily. Crushings everywhere successful; wonderful development proceeding in every district; reefs certainly improve as depth increases. Fifty ounces of alluvial gold

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have just been brought into Salisbury. In the fields recently discovered near Fort Salisbury the reefs proved to 60 feet and 40 feet, are as rich as at the surface, and remain the same width. There are 600 tons of grass. In the district of Lo Mogunda further prospecting shows that the reef is very good. Three additional properties have been taken up. In the Mazoe district Mandora property at 30 feet wide is rich; Bentinck 30 feet shaft, reef 4 feet wide, a fair sample yields $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces per ton; Alice second shaft, the reef is of the same width and richness as the first; extensions are being pegged out on most properties; Johannesburg Syndicate's stamp battery for the Vesuvius mine is on the way. The Umtali commonage reefs which were recently found have proved at 30 feet depth phenomenally rich, 18 inches broad. Nakapasa, the new find in the district of Victoria shaft at 12 feet proves the reef to be 6 feet wide, and it pans well right through. Development at Cotopaxi and its extensions is very satisfactory, and the ore a very good quality: a new good reef named the Matabele has been found. A company has been formed for the transport of goods from Beira up the Pungwe River to Fontes Villa, the commencement of the railway, from which place the railway has now been extended 50 miles. Advices from Beira of the 11th May, report that active progress is being made with the line, which will be open at or about the end of June.



CHAPTER XV.

THE GOLD FIELDS OF TO-DAY.—BARBERTON.

DESPITE the labours of Mauch and Baines, and the reports of others, such as Mohr, Hübner Elton—together with my own notes which were published from time to time in the Colonial papers—the bulk of the settlers in South Africa refused to either believe in, or seek for, the hidden treasures of the wilderness. Such being the case, it is not to be wondered at that the outside world took but little heed of the oft-repeated announcements of new gold discoveries. This apathy on the part of the colonists was to be traced, in the first place, to poverty and inability to go afield, and in the second, to the almost ceaseless war scares. In 1879, the grim reality burst on the country, in the invasion and conquest of Zululand by Imperial forces. Close following this came the Transvaal war of independence; and after that came, as a natural consequence, a trade depression of terrible severity. Confidence was destroyed, and distrust reigned between Boers Blacks, and British. Zululand, despite the so-called “settlement,” was in a disturbed state, the Transvaal was crippled, and Natal nerveless and hopeless. But the very severity of the stagnation proved its cure, for men were driven in sheer despair to seek for some means of earning a livelihood. So shouldering their packs, they started off northward and westward. Very soon the results of their explorations became apparent. Finds in bewildering number were announced in

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all directions, and a wave of enthusiasm swept over the country. Farmers left their ploughs, clerks their desks, clergymen their flocks, and husbands their wives. "Gold! gold! gold!" was the cry of the streets, of the market places, of the firesides; tiny syndicates, with scarcely any capital, were formed and dissolved with magic rapidity. Rumours of wonderfully rich discoveries, at almost regular intervals, stimulated the excitement, while the stream of adventurers kept up, until the wilderness became no longer a lone place.

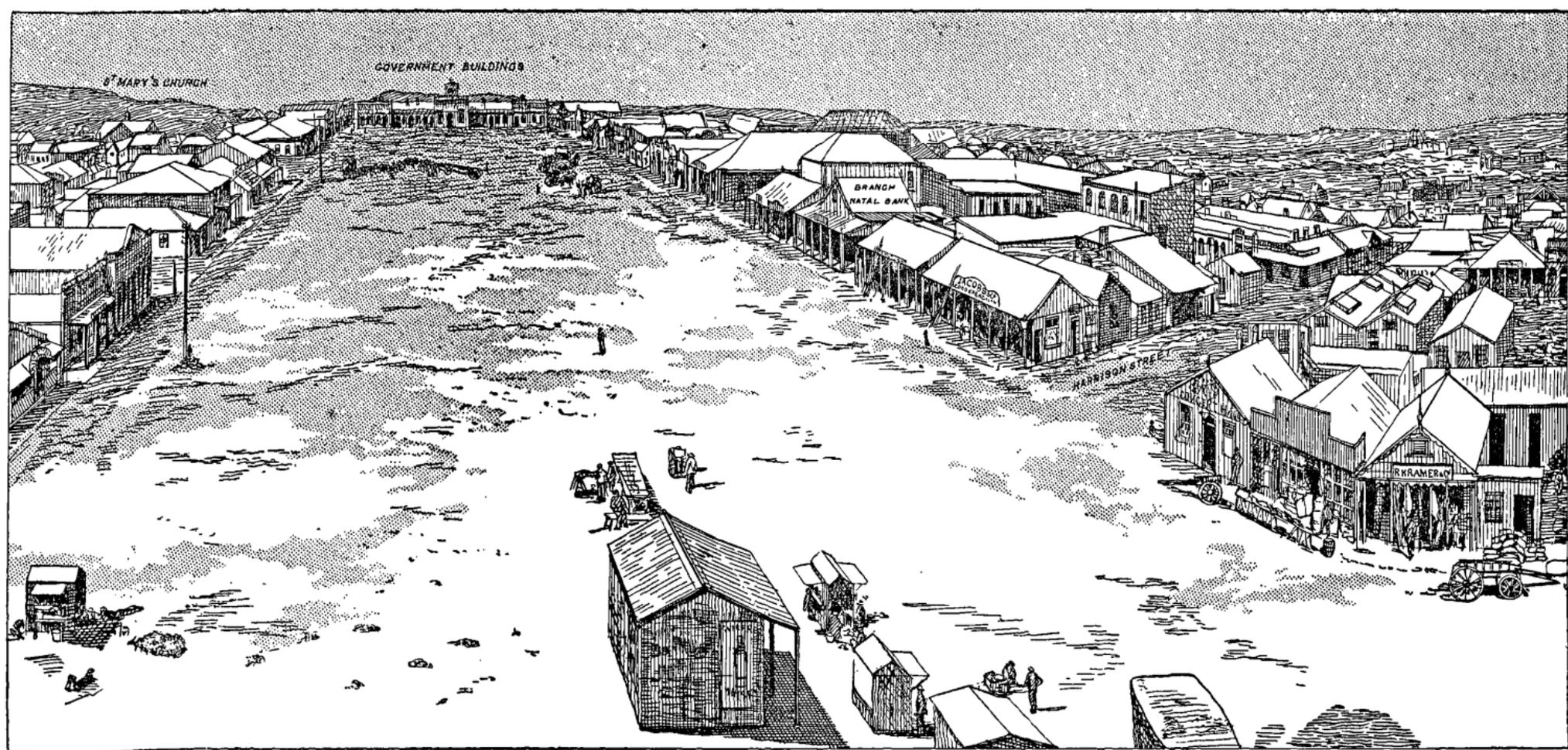
The eastern districts of the Transvaal Republic attracted the first rush, which took place in 1884-5. Alluvial gold, it was said, would be found in vast quantities in the valleys of the Kaap and Queen rivers. This hope, however, was soon swallowed up in the grander certainty of reef discoveries. The first mining camp of importance was established on lands owned by Mr. G. P. Moodie. Towards the close of 1884, over one thousand diggers—most of them inexperienced men—were assembled in this locality, and busily engaged in developing the reefs; but owing to the transfer of the property to a company, whose conditions were considered unreasonable, bitter disputes took place between the diggers and those who represented the Company. Many of the men left in disgust, and scattering in all directions, soon established the fact that the whole region was exceedingly rich in gold. At first but little capital was forthcoming, and as a result, a reaction similar to that which succeeded the war took place, but the inherent value of the region soon asserted itself, and Moodie's sank into comparative insignificance when the famous Sheba Reef came to light. Midway between the old centre, which was called Moodie's Camp, and the new discovery, the town of Barberton sprang up, and in the course of a twelve-month assumed the appearance of an old-established settlement.

Still further and further afield went the diggers, and still the news of fresh discoveries filled the newspapers, until men were bewildered by the extent of their finds and crippled by the constant outlay, for reef digging, unlike alluvial washing,

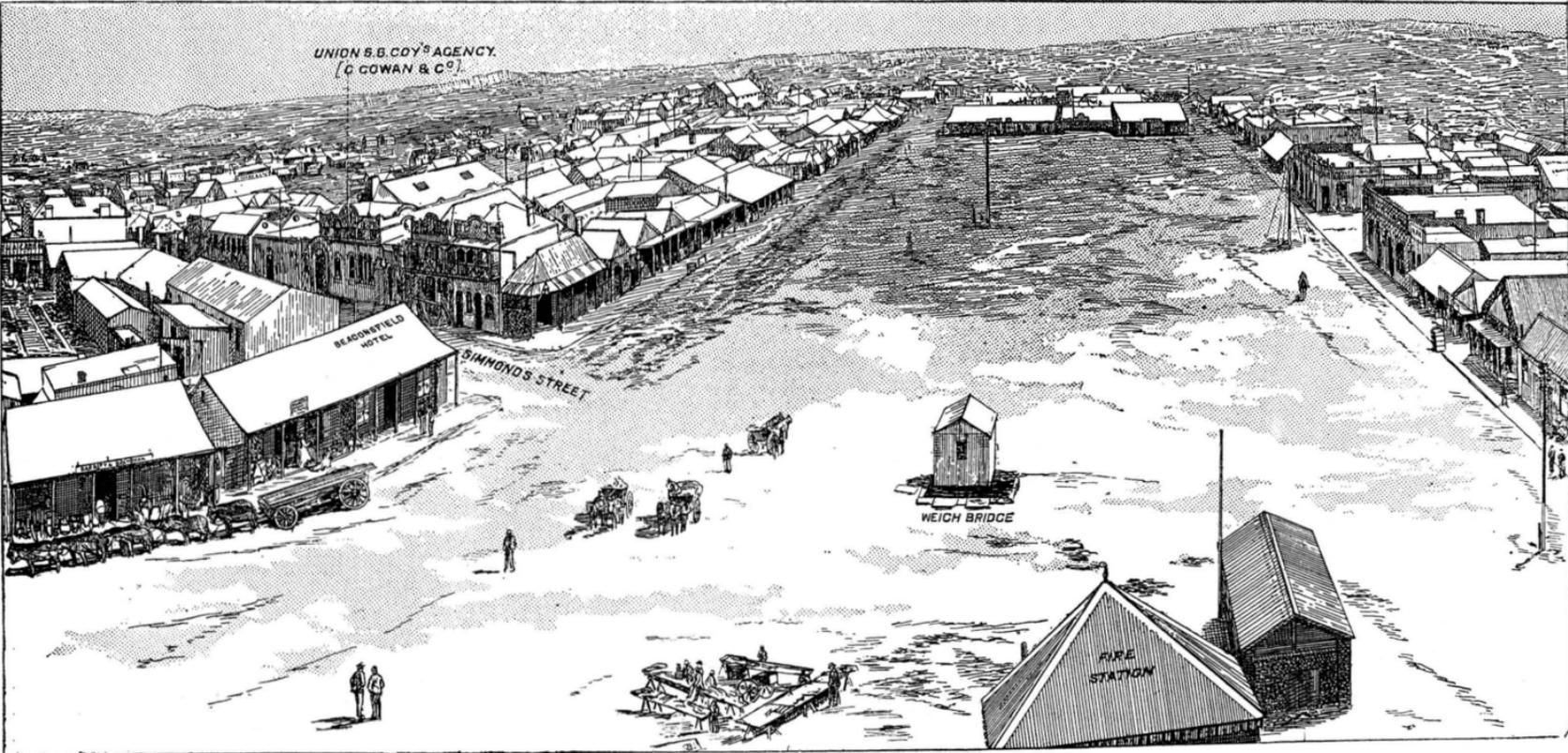
requires heavy initial expenditure. The region in which this drama was enacted, may be described as lying to the eastward of the Codwaan plateau, which presents a precipitous krantz or cliff to it. One thousand five hundred or two thousand feet below the crest of this cliff lies the Valley of the Kaap, so-called from a "cape" or headland that overlooks the river. Viewed from the heights, the valley of De Kaap presents a basin of about forty by thirty miles. Rising tier upon tier, the mountain barriers, with their crest in many cases swathed in mist, carry the eye far into cloudland. Deep below, amongst volcanic cones and rocky ridges, flow the Queen and De Kaap rivers, while stray clusters of trees serve to relieve the monotony of the hills. Outcrops of white quartz or "blow," as they are locally called, occur on nearly every hillock, while the tents and houses of the gold hunters, which are to be seen nearly everywhere, impart an appearance of life and motion to the place.

The town of Barberton, which has a European population of 1,882 stands slightly to the south-east of the valley, on elevated ground. Close behind it the hills tower to still greater altitudes, and are dotted here and there with the tents or the workings of the miners. As far as I could ascertain, about 400 stamps are at work, and the output of gold is daily increasing. The total output in 1891 was 66,598 ozs. Hotel accommodation is good, while quarters at private boarding-house and other lodgings are to be had at reasonable prices. There are three banks, two exchanges, a theatre, and several other places of amusement. Two newspapers are published regularly, and all the latest journals from England and the colonies are to be had. Regular mails are delivered, and the health of the town is good.

I do not consider it advisable to attempt any detailed description of the several properties and works. To do full justice to the subject would take up too much time, and answer no good purpose.



PANORAMIC VIEW OF JOHANNESBURG, No. 1.



PANORAMIC VIEW OF JOHANNESBURG, No. 2.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE WITWATERSRANDT FIELDS.



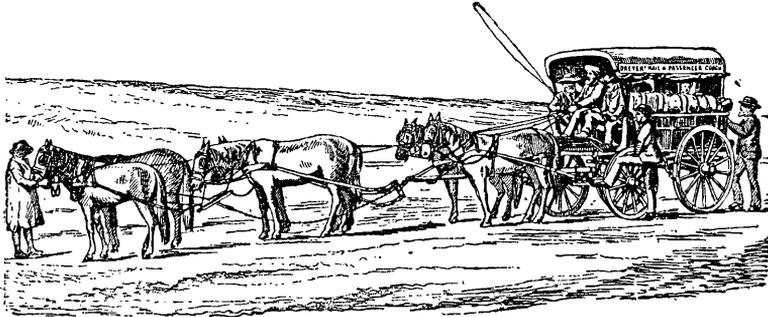
THE district of Witwatersrandt is a most peculiar and interesting one; it is here that the, at present, most promising Gold Fields of South Africa are situated. The "White Waters Range" lies about thirty miles to the southward of Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal, and a like distance northward of the charming little township of Heidelberg. As early as 1854, gold was said to have been found in the district which is composed of open bleak ranges of grassy and barren-looking hills, of slight elevations; in fact, a better idea of the region would be conveyed by describing it as a rolling prairie, seamed here and there with water-courses and gullies, washed out by the summer floods.

In December, 1885, the firm of Struben Bros. having great faith in the future of the place, erected a five-stamp battery on one of their farms in the vicinity. The successful results of this and other ventures culminated in a rush in 1886.

Since then, constant discoveries have been made between Pretoria and the Vaal River, and a heavy mining population has collected. During my first visit, in the latter part of 1887, the digging population of the district was estimated at about 10,000, 7,000 of which were located in and about the Witwatersrandt. It has continuously increased, until in the closing days of 1890, it numbered 30,000. The census of 1890 gives the European population as 10,331. The town of Johannesburg sprang up, and, although its foundations were laid in the closing months of 1885, it is now a large, prosperous and well-built centre, possessing solid buildings, established

trade and commerce, and social institutions worthy of a borough of a hundred years.

On the occasion of my last visit I favoured the Natal route, because my starting point was Durban, the seaport of Natal, After an enjoyable railway ride of 189 miles, we arrived at Ladysmith, which at that time was the temporary terminus of the line, in the uplands of the colony, and taking seats in the post-cart, which is a commodious covered four-wheeled spring waggon, drawn by four—and sometimes six—well-fed



Post and Passenger Car to Gold Fields.

horses, set off in a westerly direction towards the frontier of the Free State. After a drive of thirty miles, during which we changed horses three times, at stations where refreshments were to be had at extremely reasonable terms, we commenced the ascent of the Drakensberg at Van Reenan's Pass, or "Poort" as it is called. Rising by steady stages to higher latitudes, we were regaled with the most bewitching scenery; but the climax was gained when, winning the summit, we turned and looked across the very scene which Piet Retief and his followers revelled in, in the old emigrant days. Instead of a lone, wild Eden of beauty, our eyes now rested on a wide stretch of meadow and hill, dotted here and there with prosperous homesteads, sheep-runs, cornfields, and orchards; here and there the long dark line of the railway track peeped out, stretching for miles upon miles over the hills, while further to the north the fresh-turned earth revealed where the labourers were hard at work pushing on the track to the coal-

fields, twenty miles off. Since then, that line has been opened and the fuel resources of the Colony tapped. Close at our feet could be seen the winding and ascending road, where in a few years the railway will doubtless be cleaving its way. At the time of my visit, however, traffic had to be carried by ox-waggons of the primitive sort, and the only reminder I had that I stood in Africa, and not in England, was the long teams of toiling cattle who, in their yokes, patiently drag the lumbering waggons up the incline.

Taking a last look at Natal, we turned our faces towards the open prairies of the Free State and at an elevation of 8,000 to 10,000 feet above the sea, sped on through the dry and bracing air towards Harrismith, the frontier town of the Republic, which is as English in appearance as it is in name. Good accommodation is to be had here, at Durban—and even London—prices; luxuries such as liquors, cigars and literature, are, as I have elsewhere said, about 15 per cent. dearer than in England. Next morning betimes we started off with fresh teams and a half-caste driver, whose brawny hands had for twenty years held the ribbons and guided the destinies of the Royal Mails from one Republic to the other.

With a horizon of blue distance relieved on the eastward by the rugged crests of the Quathlamba, we travelled on and on across the plain over a road which, thanks to Nature and not art, was smooth and good. Heading northwards, we drove for sixty miles or more with scarcely a sign of cultivation, saving now and again when a Boer homestead would heave in sight, with its orchards of apple and apricot trees, its green cornfields and its thickets of Australian blue gum trees.

In the open spaces, now and again, we startled a herd of wild deer, who, after gazing at us for a moment with their great black and expressive eyes, would lay back their heads and gallop off to safer and more secluded pastures. As we approached the vicinity of the Vaal River, a stray Boer, mounted on a rugged but well-bred horse, would pull up, and without removing his ever-lighted pipe from his lips, yell an