

that is terrible. I remember when Monsieur Sarcey went over this very place with me he stood in the middle of that square"—and the head-master pointed to the beautiful space outside the window, surrounded by the stately buildings, and in the midst of which a fountain was playing—"and he said, stretching out his arms in astonishment, 'Do you allow them to wander over this *vast* domain alone?' 'Why, yes,' I replied, 'and for miles beyond.' '*C'est magnifique!*' he uttered; '*c'est magnifique!*' And then again," continued the head-master, "I am very particular as to the house-master. It is not every man who is capable, however good a teacher he may be, of superintending a house full of boys. It requires a man of singular tact, and of special character and disposition. I very carefully select certain masters whom I consider fit and capable persons for the very delicate and difficult position of heads of houses."

In reply to a question as to whether he had abolished corporal punishment, Dr. Haig Brown replied—

"Flogging with us is very rare, but it is not altogether abolished. There is an amusing tradition in the school that in 1818 Dr. Russell, the then head-

master, abolished corporal punishment, and substituted fines in place of the old-fashioned school discipline. But this the boys bitterly resented, as they thought that flogging was very gentlemanly and that fines were most ungentlemanly. Now, before you leave you must come and see the chapel."

In a few moments I stood within the lovely building. The rain had ceased. The wild sunset flamed in upon the empty church—an emptiness so eloquent of life. Suddenly a distant sound, "somewhere far off," floated in through the open window. I strained my ear to listen. Yes, I thought I could not be mistaken. It was the "Adsum" being called—"Adsum! Adsum! Adsum!" And in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the chapel windows grew dim and misty, the sunlight faded from off the wall, and I no longer heard the voice beside me. My memory went back to a long past day, and I saw a little pallet, and raising himself upon it was that splendid, courtly gentleman, Colonel Newcome—the most beautiful character, surely, that ever lived in or out of fiction. He hears the Master's voice, and he replies, "Adsum, here I am!" And his spirit came again unto him, and he was as a little child.

THE MYSTERY OF MASHONALAND.



It is recorded that King Solomon brought to Palestine by the way of the Red Sea, 992 B.C., a quantity of gold, weighing about 3,330,000 lbs. Where did he get it? In those early days the Red Sea was the great waterway of Arabian commerce; its surface was covered with speeding argosies from India, and China, and Africa. The Arabians were the great ocean-carriers; the frequent references in the Bible and in old records to Arabian gold being to gold carried by Arabians not mined in Arabia. As a matter of fact, there was very little gold in Arabia itself. Where, then, did they get the gold they took to Palestine, and Syria, and Egypt, and old Rome, as we know that they did?

The answer to these questions seems to be furnished in the discovery of the remarkable mines in South Africa, which were brought prominently to notice by the Mashonaland Expedition, and which have since been thoroughly explored, measured, and studied by that archæological expert, Mr. J. Theodore Bent.

Now, it is to be remembered that when the Portuguese reached Sofala, on the Mozambique coast, towards the close of the fifteenth century, they found the Arabs in possession of the coast line, and engaged, among other occupations, in the export of gold, which

they obtained from the natives. These Arabs preserved traditions of wonderful mines and mighty buildings in the interior, stories which they communicated to the Portuguese, but which the Portuguese had not the curiosity or enterprise to go and investigate. And here arises another point of interest. The word Sofala is held by some to be a derivation from the Greek word Sophira, which is merely Ophir, with the prefix S. Again, the great river which waters this magnificent and mysterious country is called the Sabi, or sometimes the Sabia—a name which is strangely suggestive of Sheba, whence came the great Queen who brought 120 talents of gold to Solomon. It is possible, then, that in Mashonaland we may locate both Ophir and Sheba, but our present purpose is merely to report what has been actually discovered there of pre-historic date.

Thirty years ago, or more, Karl Mauch, the German traveller, brought home stories so marvellous of gigantic ruins which he had found in the "desert" of South Africa that they were generally discredited. He said that 4,200 feet above sea-level he found on a granite hill the ruins of an ancient building. The walls, built of small hewn blocks, with twenty feet beams of dark stone projecting, he reported to be in places thirty feet high. But his story was received as a "traveller's tale," as was also his report of a gold-field in Matabeleland, eighty miles long by two or three miles wide. Mauch's reports however, were confirmed by what

Thomas Baines learned in his travels a few years later, and by the discoveries of somewhat similar remains in the Transvaal, by Mr. G. C. Dawnay. Even in the Kalahari Desert, as it is called, relics of departed greatness and of a pre-historic civilisation have been noted, and reported by Mr. Farini in his interesting book, "Through the Kalahari Desert."

What was the object of these ancient settlements? To what race did they belong, and to what age may they be ascribed? To answer these questions was the object of Mr. Bent's recent expedition, for it was clear enough that such massive structures as the reported ruins indicated could not have been the work of the primitive races who now people South Africa.

To reach Zimbabwe, which is about fifteen miles from one of the line of fortified stations belonging to the British South Africa Company, known as Fort Victoria, involves a "trek" of about 1,500 miles from Cape Town. The nearest coast place is Sofala, some 400 miles away only, but the intervening ground is unhealthy, and almost impassable for waggons. Yet Sofala was doubtless the shipping port of the gold-miners of old, and it would be interesting to know what method of transport and line of route they adopted.

Fifteen miles only from Fort Victoria—but it took Mr. Bent, who was accompanied by his wife and by a cartographer, seven days to traverse the distance, as they had to cut a road, fill up game-pits, and construct bridges. These ruins it is now usual to characterise as the Great Zimbabwe or Zimbabwe, to distinguish from other smaller ruins scattered over the country, vaguely referred to by travellers also as *Zimbabwes*. The name means "The Great Kraal."

Great Zimbabwe is situated in 20° 16' 30" south latitude, and 31° 10' 10" east longitude. Central Mashonaland consists of an elevated plateau, ranging from 3,000 to 5,000 feet above sea level, the surface of the plain being broken here and there by little granite hills rising from 400 to 1,000 feet above their base. Great Zimbabwe is on the edge of this plateau, and is about 3,400 feet above sea level. To the south and east of the ancient city the country breaks away gradually towards the west more rapidly; and towards the north it goes on rising gently, until a height of 5,000 feet is attained. It is a breezy upland, where wet weather is not unknown.

As only one of a long chain of ruins stretching up the whole course of the Sabi river, and associated in some now unknown way with similar ruins in Matabeleland, the Transvaal, and elsewhere, these remains afford evidence of an occupation which must have extended over several centuries. The curious thing is that all the settlements seem to have been abandoned simultaneously, as if under the impulse of some great terror or some sudden calamity. All the gateways at Great Zimbabwe, as well as those in another ruin at Matindela, eighty miles off, were found carefully walled up as if for a siege; and Mr. Bent could trace in the Zimbabwe walls a gap through which a forcible entry had been effected. What tales of fury and massacre might not these stones tell!

Who were the avengers and who were the victims in those long forgotten wars, and in those sieges of which a few dumb boulders are now the only witnesses? It is more than probable that the assailants were negroes—it is thought they were the ancestors of the present Abantu races, who swept down from Abyssinia, and annihilated the civilised settlers and miners who had come from far Araby.

Great Zimbabwe covers a large area of land. The ruins consist of a large circular building on rising ground, with a network of smaller buildings extending from the acclivity to the valley below. Four hundred feet above is a great fortress, perched on the brow of a precipice, and protected by huge granite boulders. The lower circular building is built of small uniform blocks of granite broken with the hammer, but bearing no marks of chisel and no evidence of mortar. The encircling wall is in parts 30 feet high, and 16 feet thick, and the small stones are laid together with a regularity indicative not only of accurate knowledge, but also of abundance of slave labour.

Three entrances were found on the north side, carefully protected by buttresses, and just inside what appears to have been the principal entrance is a small space floored with reddish cement. From this entrance five passages lead to the interior buildings; one to the left goes down some cement steps through a doorway (where are evidences of a door having been replaced by stone-work, probably at the time of the siege), and into a long narrow passage conducting to the sacred enclosure.

Within that enclosure stood two towers. The remains of the largest tower now measures 32 feet in height, but the original structure would be many feet higher. This tower is described by Mr. Bent as really a wonderful structure, of perfect symmetry and with courses of unvarying regularity. But it is solid, and was thus neither a dwelling nor a fortification, but simply a religious symbol. It is known that the ancient Arabians worshipped a tower which they called *El Acara*—a great cut stone. This sacred tower of the Arabians corresponds with the *Penuel* of the Midianites destroyed by Gideon.

With regard to the sacred enclosure, which the exploring party found overrun with luxuriant tropical vegetation requiring some days' work to clear away, we are informed: "The inner wall in front of the tower had been decorated with courses of black slate; a curious conduit about one foot square, and regularly constructed, runs right through the thickness of the outer wall at its thickest point. Similar and equally inexplicable conduits we found about the temple on the fortress. Then there is the raised platform approached by the cement steps, and a gateway just in front of the tower, covered itself with a thick cement, into which a monolith had been stuck; this platform must have been for the king or officiating priest. The whole of the sacred enclosure had been most carefully protected by gates and buttresses. It is sunk a little lower than the rest of the building, and the outer wall is here at its strongest and thickest; it

is, moreover, decorated on the outside with a pattern which stops abruptly at the place corresponding with the termination of the sacred enclosure in the interior, and the summit of the wall for this portion only had been decorated with large monoliths placed at equal intervals."

Two of these monoliths are standing, and are over 13 feet in height; a third lies prostrate. The enclosure was further occupied by buildings within circular walls, conforming to two Arabian customs, mentioned by historians, of combining their temples with fortifications, and of building their temples in a circular form. Flights of steps led up to the tops of the wall, which formed a fine, broad, paved promenade.

These walls are fine structures, with even and well-defined courses. A decoration of a sort of herring-bone pattern has been let into the stone-work of the sacred enclosure, implying the possession of no ordinary skill in the builders and decorators.

Portuguese travellers have referred to these ruins, but there is strong reason to suppose that no Portuguese ever visited them. Thus De Barros describes the fortress as square, and other writers are either so vague or so inaccurate as to show they were only describing from hearsay. If Karl Mauch was not the first European to have seen them, he was the first to describe them, and to associate them with gold-mining. But when he was at Zimbabwe, part of the ruins were occupied by natives, who held here a feast and sacrifice every two or three years. Traces of that occupation and of these festivities still remain, but the whole place seems to have been completely abandoned to nature for many years before the Mashonaland Expedition broke the spell.

Probing among the ruins adjoining the large circular building we have described, Mr. Bent found a long wall connected with a confused mass of chambers, and the foundations of two round towers. This building had three intricate entrances, one protected with an ambuscade and one approached by steps. But the walls here are squared, not rounded, and point to a somewhat later date of construction, when less care was exercised. From this building down to the hollow, there is a continuous mass of ruins on the slope, mostly circular in form, and all more or less connected. All along the valley for about half a mile circular buildings can be traced, and down the opposite valley for about a mile may be traced a wall, evidently thrown hurriedly up at a time of danger. The whole of the buildings in the valley and on the slopes must have been capable of accommodating a large population.

One of the most interesting of Mr. Bent's discoveries was that of the fortress on the hill above the circular building. This fortress occupies a position of great natural strength, protected on one side by gigantic boulders, and on another by a precipice from 70 to 90 feet high. On the only accessible side was built a wall some 13 feet thick and 30 feet high, with a flat causeway on the top, and capped with a series of small round towers. The approach to this fortress is by a flight of steps up the precipice, protected at

every turn, however, with traverses and ambuscades. So elaborate are the defences, that "the useless repetition of walls over a precipice itself inaccessible, the care with which every hole in the boulders through which an arrow could pass is closed, prove that the occupants were in constant dread of attack, and lived like a garrison in the heart of an enemy's country."

Within the fortress are the remains of another temple, in better preservation than the one below. It is supported on an elaborate system of under-walls filled up with large stones, and is approached by a staircase of considerable architectural merit, and the walls of it are ornamented with carvings of birds. An altar stood in the midst of this temple, supported on a cement floor.

In two caves beneath the temple, Mr. Bent found numerous fragments of bowls of soapstone, decorated with hunting designs and pictures of animals. The bowls themselves are of excellent workmanship, but the figures on them are mostly grotesque. Fragments of pottery of excellent workmanship were also found; also an assegai plated with gold, and a spear-head of copper. Some iron bells, too, were unearthed; but as these are similar to what are seen in many parts of Africa, they cannot be identified with the original settlers, and may have been left there by later native visitors after the place became a ruin. No signs of any kinds of coins were discovered, nor any traces of either burial or cremation.

It was in this portion of the ruins that the object of the settlement was revealed. Underneath the temple is a gold-smelting furnace of cement, with a chimney also of cement, and near by lay a mass of rejected quartz "casings," from which the gold-bearing quartz had been extracted by heat. Near the furnaces were found a number of small clay crucibles which had been used in the smelting process, and in most of these were actually visible the small specks of gold which had adhered to the glaze formed by the heat of the process to which they had been subjected thousands of years ago.

There is no gold-reef in the immediate vicinity of the fortress, but there is one within fifteen miles. The fortress, therefore, was built for strategic purposes, and the people lived under its shelter, bringing the quartz here from the distant workings to be treated.

Mr. Robert Swan, who accompanied Mr. Bent, carefully tested all the "casings" found at Zimbabwe, but they yielded so minute a trace of gold that he concluded they had been rejected as too poor for treatment. He then searched the neighbourhood for old workings and gold-reefs, and he found one gold-bearing, though not rich, reef. Since then, however, rich gold-reefs have been discovered some twenty miles to the north-west, and it is inferred that it was from them that the ancient inhabitants of Zimbabwe obtained their gold. It is reasonable to suppose that the settlers must have obtained a large quantity of the precious metal both from the alluvial and the quartz reefs, or it would not have paid them to remain so long and to erect such buildings.

More recently still, gold has been discovered at or

near Fort Victoria, within fifteen miles of the ruins, and other gold-fields have been discovered in Mashonaland, which show that millions of tons of rock and earth must have been overturned by these ancient miners. No doubt they had abundance of slave labour, and the crushing stones which have been found near some of the old mines show that the slaves must have been chained in rows close to the workings. There are even in the watercourses evidences of the culinary operations of these lost people.

Were they the subjects of the great Queen of Sheba? And was this Ophir? These questions are of special interest, but it is for experts to answer them. It is

not our purpose to enter upon a course of historical speculation. Whether this be Sheba or not, it is certain that the ruins and all which belong to them are not of African origin, and could not have been placed here by any known African race. The art and the religion are both foreign to the country, and the fortifications are those of foreigners working in a hostile country. Both art and religion are Arabic; and Mr. Bent concludes that there is little room for doubt that the builders and workers of Great Zimbabwe came from the Arabian peninsula. But when they came, how long they remained, when, why, and how they went, there is no record even in tradition.

MR. CHURCHILL'S PAPER.



CHARLIE CHURCHILL stood at the garden gate, saying good-night to his cousin—he had been trying to say it for some twenty minutes past, and had not quite succeeded yet. Every time he was ready with the words Lottie started off

on some fresh topic, and it was delightful to stand there under the trees, with the prettiest girl in the circle of his acquaintance looking up with soft, speaking eyes into his dark face, that seemed darker still in the gathering twilight; it was gratifying, after a long absence, to come back and find Lottie Lester as fresh and piquant at three-and-twenty as she had been at nineteen, with perhaps an added charm, a shade more gentleness and womanly softness in every word and gesture.

Mr. Churchill was not in love with his cousin Lottie; there had been, indeed, some tender passages between them, in a past that looked very dim and distant to them both now, but a great many things had happened since then, and while her cousin was away in London, doing the hard grinding work that an ambitious young journalist must do if he means to succeed, Lottie had become engaged to the Rev. Francis Clayton, the popular minister of the Independent Chapel at Mildenham.

How came it, then, that Miss Lottie was free to hold long conversations at the garden gate with a dangerously fascinating relative like Charlie Churchill?

Well, after all, cousinship counts for something; one cannot help having a sisterly or brotherly regard, as the case may be, for one's relations in that degree, and then—which is perhaps the more simple and correct explanation—Mr. Clayton was away just at that time.

It was September, a lovely warm September, and the minister had joined a party of old college friends and departed for some unknown region, whither Lottie duly followed him with letters and fond constant imaginings.

She was very fond of her good, clever, wonderful Frank, but all her attachment did not prevent the demure young woman from taking a certain pleasure in Cousin Charlie's home-coming.

It was very nice, she admitted to herself, that he should come just when Frank was away and everything was so dull; for her girl friends were gone too, and she had been left lamenting the perverse fate which had led her father and mother first to drag themselves and their reluctant daughter to the seaside in July, and then to stay obstinately at home when everyone else was out.

Everybody who was anybody in Mildenham went for a summer or autumnal holiday; the inhabitants of the quiet shady old place, set in the heart of green meadows and dense woodlands, talked about the misery of remaining in town during the hot season, just as Londoners might, and from June to the end of September there was a constant coming and going.

It was just when Lottie was beginning to feel herself deserted and aggrieved that Aunt Churchill had walked in one morning with the unexpected news that her son Charlie was coming home for his holidays. He had gone somewhere abroad last year; had not been at Mildenham, his native place and the home of his widowed mother, for more than a flying visit during the last three or four years; and it would be nice, as the old lady said, and as Lottie cordially agreed, to have him at home for a few weeks, and to be able to show him how Mildenham had extended and improved in his absence.

"You said you had something to tell me, something very important," pouted Miss Lottie, pulling the bunch of scarlet geraniums in her belt lazily to pieces, and dropping their petals one by one. "If you are going to tell me at all, why not to-night?"

"Because I would rather keep the secret a very little longer, and, profoundly as I trust you, my dear coz, you might—you know you might—be tempted to