



(Mills, photographer, London)

Mr. Rhodes, from a photograph taken in 1901

To Mr. Rhodes' Last Home

By George Ralling

SOME two years ago it was my privilege to contribute to the pages of GOOD WORDS a description of Mr. Rhodes' home in the Cape Peninsula, namely, Groote Schuur. Having been one of the very few who were privileged to accompany the remains of the late great statesman and universal philanthropist to their last home on earth, in the wilds of the Matoppo Hills, I have jotted down a few notes about the wondrous journey of nearly 1500 miles which we made, and which was, in some respects at least, unique beyond dispute.

It is impossible to enter into anything like detail of this wonderful progress through the

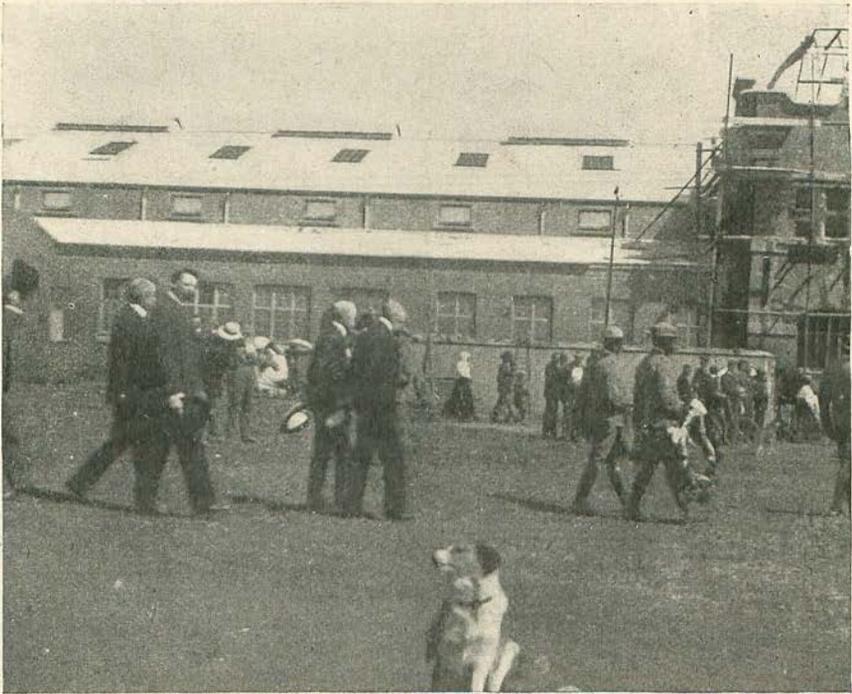
country which Mr. Rhodes loved so well; for which he sacrificed so much, even unto death; and in which it is no figure of speech to say he had for years been the uncrowned king. There are, however, two or three simple outstanding points in this progress; and upon these I will touch as briefly as is consistent with their importance.

It was most fitting that Capetown should have been the place of Mr. Rhodes' death, and the first great centre of population in South Africa to do homage to his memory. It was impossible, of course, that the body could remain in the little cottage by the shores of False Bay, where his last hours

were spent. It was almost equally impossible that the city's tribute could have been paid at Groote Schuur—Mr. Rhodes' beautiful suburban home now dedicated for ever to the uses of the Premier of the South African Sovereignty which, ere long, shall take its place beside the Australian Federation and the Canadian Dominion. The house is situated several miles out of town; and it need hardly be said that it is impossible for a population of say 90,000 to make a pilgrimage that distance. It was wisely decided, therefore, to bring the body into town, though this was not done until many thousands of suburban and city people had visited Groote Schuur and looked upon the coffin which contained all that was left of him who had so long dispensed a princely hospitality within the walls of Groote Schuur.

Quite fittingly, again the stately and beautiful vestibule of the Houses of Parliament, which lie in the heart of the city, was selected for the resting-place of the body

whilst it remained in town. It was in this building that most of Mr. Rhodes' political work was done, while at the head of two separate ministries in the Cape Government. At a given time the doors were thrown open and for four hours a living stream of mourners—for we have all been mourners in South Africa since Cecil Rhodes died—filed past the catafalque. No word was spoken. The occasion was too deep for words. The people even trod more softly than usual, lest they should, as it were, make a breach upon the solemn stillness which so well expressed their loving admiration for the great dead whom they were to see no more. There was no distinction in this crowd between old and young, white and black. Race differences were for the moment sunk in the universal depth of grief which marked this wonderful throng. In the afternoon the body passed in procession through the principal streets of the city, to the Anglican Cathedral of St. George, where the archbishop in the name



The Mourners approaching the Drill Hall, Buluwayo

Dr. Jameson
Dr. Smartt

Colonel Rhodes
Mr. Arthur Rhodes

of Christianity performed, with dignity and feeling—he was for long years a personal friend of the deceased and one of his greatest admirers—the last offices for the dead in the liturgy of the Church of England. The service was attended by all the high officers of state and city, from the Governor downwards, who make up the body politic of the colony, as well as by representatives of all the other British colonies. A yet more exalted personage was represented. On the coffin lay the wreath sent by her Majesty Queen Alexandra, which bore the simple legend, "From the Queen," but which expressed, as we know, the grief of that royal and tender-hearted lady, and which spoke, too, for the women of the Empire.

The service over, there was another almost royal progress through the streets to the railway-station, where the coffin, laden with wreaths and covered with the Union Jack, the white silk ensign, presented by the Loyal Womens' Guild, and the Rhodesian flag, was placed in a car prepared as a mortuary chapel; and amid a further great demonstration of a city's grief, was despatched upon its long journey to the Matoppo Hills, its final resting-place. At almost every station along the railway to Kimberley, which was the first principal stopping-place, crowds of people, young and old, Dutch and English, and native, bore silent but eloquent testimony to the hold that Mr. Rhodes had obtained upon the country people in South Africa, and wreaths and other floral emblems were received at almost every station in the dead of night as well as by day. It was at Kimberley, however, that a demonstration was to be witnessed which was in most respects as remarkable as, in some respects of deeper significance than, that at Capetown. Until Mr. Rhodes entered directly into the politics of the colony, of South Africa, and of the Empire, which step led up to the annexation of Rhodesia to the Crown of England, Kimberley was his home. There is not a child of school age in Kimberley, probably, who does not know Mr. Rhodes by sight. There is certainly not one who does not love and reverence his name. If any doubt had ever existed on this point, it would have

been resolved by the experiences of the siege. The instant Kimberley was threatened in the early part of the war, Mr. Rhodes, carrying his life in his hand—as he did once before at the famous Indaba in the Matoppo with the Matabele chiefs—made speed to reach the Diamond City. Almost immediately afterwards exit became impossible, even in the inconceivable possibility of his wishing to escape the perils which surrounded those whom he was proud to call his people of Kimberley. Aided and supported in every way by his old and tried friend, Dr. Smartt, then, as now, Commissioner of Public Works in the Cape Colonial Government (one of the chief mourners) and others who were also in Kimberley, he organised and put into motion the schemes for relief which saved Kimberley, not only from the point of view of human life, but from financial ruin. How many scores of thousands in money came out of Mr Rhodes' own pocket, nobody will ever know. Not a little of his life was spent in doing good by stealth, and still less of it is known to fame. It may be a military heresy, but we in South Africa believe that if Mr. Rhodes' protest had not been made to Lord Roberts, the relief of Kimberley would not have been effected so early as it was, and might never have come to pass.

However these things may be, all Kimberley attended that part of the funeral ceremonial which took place within the limits of the Diamond City. This ceremonial was simple to the point of utter pathos. A great outdoor public memorial service had preceded the advent of the train, and there had been special services in all the churches in Kimberley. There was, therefore, no religious ceremony when the coffin, in its funeral car, was drawn up on the platform of the railway-station. A military band alone gave, what I am obliged to term, vocal expression to the deep-wrought sorrow of the miners and their families. And not the miners only. Almost all races and all colours have their representatives in Kimberley; and, just as was the case in Capetown so in an even greater degree in Kimberley, race distinctions, social dis-

inctions, distinctions of age and sex were submerged in the universal grief which centred in the one silent yet speaking spectacle they had come to see. The funeral car had been so altered that the sides could be opened and closed at will,

witness the departure of the train. A more touching and pathetic sight it has never been my lot to witness. Like most of the people of Capetown I had become, to some extent, inured to scenes of grief on a huge scale, but beneath the quiet strain of this solemn



Natives at Mr. Rhodes' funeral

and at Kimberley, as at other stations, the coffin, with its covering of flags and flowers, was exposed to view. At six in the morning the people of Kimberley began to arrive at the railway-station. Two thousand diamond miners, with their wives and families, headed the procession, and, as two by two they filed along the platform, they took a lingering look at the coffin, and passed on to line the sides of the railway in order to

procession I felt the floodgates of my own sorrow break down and I became a woman.

On leaving Kimberley, the train approached what is, of course, Mr. Rhodes' own peculiar country. Bechuanaland has been, we know, annexed to the Cape Colony; but unless my history fails me, there is a strip of land some miles in breadth on each side of the line through Bechuanaland which was ceded to the

British South Africa Company in acknowledgment of their enterprise in saving the trade route to the north, and laying down the railway over which we were then travelling. A glance at the map will show your readers Mafeking, which was the railhead

sidings, the grief that I have been describing was in evidence.

It was, however, at Buluwayo that perhaps the most striking and suggestive testimony of love and reverence for Mr. Rhodes was to be displayed. If Capetown was



Sealing down the granite slab with cement

until Mr. Rhodes laid down the section between that point and Buluwayo. The country between the two points is almost entirely occupied by natives, though the white population is steadily settling at certain places. It is wonderful to pass through the really pretty English-looking railway-stations, where a small parcel of white people hold their own amid hordes of natives. At each of these stations, as well as at sundry modest

Mr. Rhodes' political home, if Kimberley is a living monument of his commercial genius, Buluwayo and the Rhodesia it represents is for ever a standing testimony to his statesmanship and his profound sacrifice of himself. At Buluwayo, as everywhere, the arrangements for the celebration of the obsequies were as perfect as could be imagined. The body was received at the railway-station by the Administrator and the whole population, and by them con-

veyed to the spacious drill hall, the laying of the foundation of which was the last public ceremony that Mr. Rhodes performed in Buluwayo and which, like his own life-work, is unfinished. In due course, all Buluwayo defiled past the bier, which at night was illuminated and presented a spectacle of unique dignity and beauty. Next morning there was a memorial service in this building, and it was attended by at least a thousand white people, representing civilised Buluwayo, a spot which, less than ten years ago, was occupied by Lobengula, the blood-thirsty Matabele king and his equally blood-thirsty impis; a place wherein a white man showed his face at the peril of his life. The service ended, the body, escorted by old pioneers, was conveyed along streets lined with grief-stricken people to the utmost borders of the town and thence despatched upon the penultimate section of its last, long burial journey. Its resting-place that night was at Mr. Rhodes' own farm in the Matoppos, which home consists of a cluster of Kafir huts, modernised and civilised only by their furniture. The actual resting-place of the remains was in a large hut open at the sides, used by Mr. Rhodes as a summer-house, but put to even more useful and dignified use as a council chamber, where he was ever willing to receive and listen to the prayers of his native friends—for I can call them by no other name—the indunas of the Matabele. Throughout the night the bier was guarded by men who bore arms for queen and country in 1893 and 1896, a small remnant of gallant forces, the majority of whom have either fallen in the field, have otherwise passed to their account, or are scattered over the world.

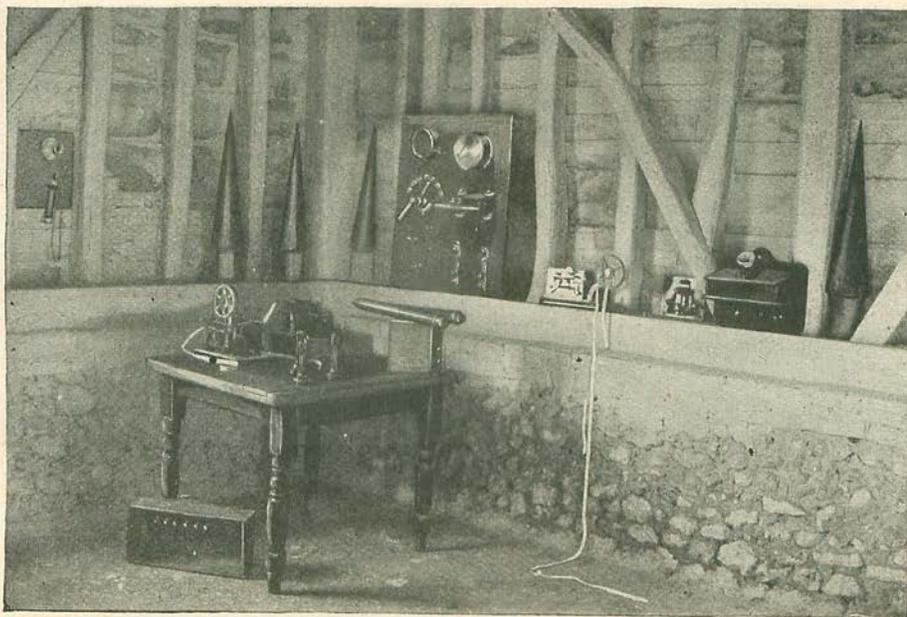
It was not until noon next day, April 10, that the coffin with its contents was placed in its three-foot grave, facing north, hewn out of solid granite in the Matoppos, and covered by a slab of solid granite out of the rocks near by the tomb, and conveyed by almost untold labour to the site. The scene

will never fade from the memories of those who were privileged to witness it, as the last rites were performed with great dignity as well as great feeling by the Bishop of Mashonaland. Apart from the crowd of something like a thousand white people who had made the long and terribly toilsome journey of twenty-five miles from Buluwayo, there were a hundred native indunas, and at least two thousand natives present at the ceremony. These men paid Mr. Rhodes' body the honours of a king, a fact which is unique in native history. The service itself was perfectly simple. It consisted of the Old Hundredth, the concluding part of the Burial Service; a short, striking address by the Bishop of Mashonaland, who personally officiated throughout, and who concluded his remarks by reading Kipling's poem for the first time in public in South Africa; and by the singing of the Doxology—a fitting acknowledgment of the beneficence of the Almighty even in a time of grief like this.

The group actually around the bier was small. It was composed of Colonel Frank Rhodes and Mr. Arthur Rhodes, brothers of the deceased; Dr. Jameson, his ever-faithful friend, Dr. Smartt, Mr. L. L. Michell, his friend as well as his great financial man of affairs; Sir Charles Metcalfe, Bart., who has been for years another of Mr. Rhodes' friends, as well as the engineer entrusted with all his great railway and similar undertakings. Only a few of the hundreds of floral and other tributes shared the grave with the remains. These included the Queen's wreath, Dr. Jameson's wreath, touchingly and truly inscribed, "Friendship": and some fresh violets (Mr. Rhodes favourite flower) from Dr. Smartt and Mr. Michell, which were the last tributes thrown in ere the grave was closed. As Kipling so suggestively puts it, valley and hill were "washed" in sunshine; and, the scene so simple, so touching, yet so impressive and imposing, has left an indelible mark upon the memory of every one who was present.

the heading of "Fiction" Cardinal Newman's famous work, "Apologia pro vitâ suâ," and added injury to insult by running the last three into one word thus: "Provitassua."

A picture of King Lear on his death-bed for instance was unfortunately labelled, "There is life in the old dog yet"; many visitors, however, were perfectly content with the



The shed from which the movements of the Orling-Armstrong Torpedo are controlled

So far as classification is concerned the error was no worse than that of the Curator of the National Library at Berlin, who, having received a French work dealing with prison life entitled, "Impressions Cellulaires," decided that it should be placed under the heading of "Vegetable Physiology," a mistake that recalls that of another Teutonic colleague who indexed Murgers' "Vie de Boheme" under Topography. After all, however, these mistakes are not much if any worse than the following musical item on a British programme, "Dance of the blessed parts in the Englishmen's Fields," by Gluck—the "Dance of the Blessed Spirits in the Elysian Fields," taken from Gluck's "Orfeo," being the actual composition for which the above stood proxy.

The great musician Hallé was wont to refer with considerable gusto to divers errors that appeared in the catalogue of the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition of 1856.

description and the remark, "How true!" was passed many times daily opposite the work of art. Another picture representing a madman sitting unclothed on the bare ground with his arms clenched round his knees was called, "Portrait of Lord John Russell." Hallé used to relate that after contemplating the so-called portrait of the great statesman for some considerable time an old man was heard to remark with becoming gravity, "Probably when he was out of office."

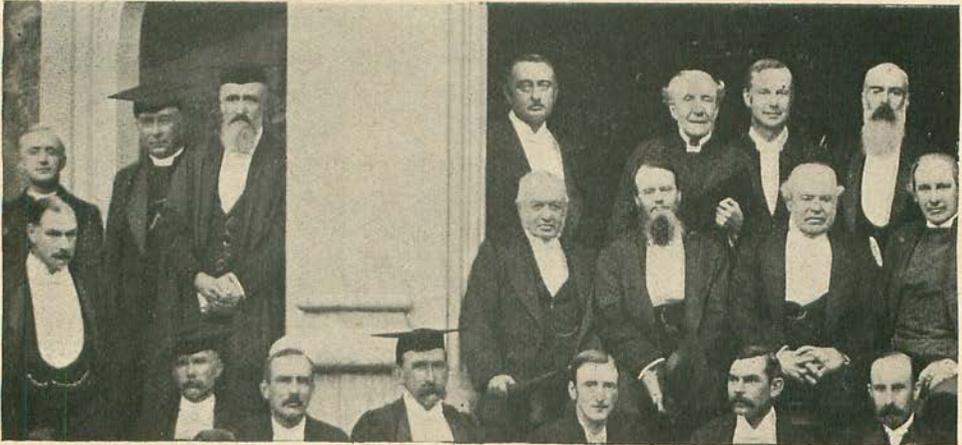
H. M.

A Reminiscence of Mr. Rhodes

To Rhodesians the death of Mr. Rhodes has caused a void that will never be adequately filled. To Englishmen generally he was an idea—the Imperial Idea, vague and visionary; to us he was an ever present personality. To the ordinary Londoner he was about as accessible as the Llama of Thibet; to the meanest Bulawayan he was a

guide and a counsellor—a chieftain amongst his clan. To this accessibility, more than to his success and to his great abilities, must be traced that popularity which never deserted

“speak to me?” I looked and knew. There was no mistaking that flat mask-like face, whose breadth in fact seemed to exceed its length, and that broad unwieldy figure. For



(Hills and Saunders, photographers, Oxford)

Back row.—Rev. Canon Ashley, Rev. G. H. Davenport, Mr. Rhodes, Rev. J. Simpson, Rev. Dr. Joy, Rev. L. R. Phelps

Second row.—Rev. Canon Cornish, A Provost, The Lord Chancellor, Bishop of Salisbury

Part of the group taken at Oriel College, Gaudy Commemoration, 1899. Mr. Cecil Rhodes is seen on the right hand side of the pillar

him even in the hour of failure and distress. I think I may truly say that the Chartered Company never had the support of the rank and file of the Rhodesians, yet strangely enough the head and front of this organisation was never included in the general condemnation. It was quite an ordinary thing for a man who fancied he had been injured by the Company to say that he would see Cecil John about the matter, and that “he would make *them* disgorge.” And this singling out of Mr. Rhodes from the mass of his associates was not so unreasonable as would at first sight appear. For he was generous where generosity was anything but a ruling trait, and straightforward when truth was at a most decided discount.

It was at the close of the Matabele rebellion, at the first fancy dress ball held in Bulawayo, that I met Mr. Rhodes. My partner at the ball in question was a well-known nurse, and she nudged my arm saying, “Do you see who is coming to

awhile he chatted with my companion then turned to me.

“I do not seem to remember your name or face,” he said. “Have you been long here?”

“Not many months,” I answered.

“What do you think of the country?”

“I have hardly had time to judge,” I answered, “but it looks a good country.”

“Some people say it is a good country to leave,” he remarked, with an emphasis on the some to indicate that he was not of that number.

Any one living in Bulawayo could never quite lose sight of Mr. Rhodes, for his personality permeated the very air of the place, and nearly every person one met had some anecdote to tell either of his generosity or power, or even peculiarity. An intimate friend of the writer had been wounded in the Jameson Raid by a bullet which had lodged in his hip, and never having been extracted had to a certain extent crippled him for active work. The Chartered Company’s officials made him

an alternative offer of a desk in the company's office at home, or a civil billet in Rhodesia. Unfortunately for himself he chose the latter. He found, however, when he arrived in Bulawayo that the civil billet turned out to be that of canteen corporal in the camp. He was not elated by the prospect and consulted Mr. Rhodes.

Mr. Rhodes listened to his curt recital of his wrongs in silence, and when he had finished asked him whether he knew anything about farming. My friend, who is nothing if not truthful, replied that he did not.

"Do you know anything about book-keeping?"

"No."

"Or secretarial work?"

Yet another negative.

The Colossus burst out laughing.

"You are rather a difficult person to help," he said, but not unkindly. "You don't seem to be much good at anything." The majority of persons he had to do with by their own accounts were past masters at

the first thing he mentioned. "Care to go to Kimberley?" he asked after a pause. My friend answered in the affirmative at last.

"Then," he said, drawing a telegraph form towards him. "Send off this."

The telegram was addressed to Gardiner Williams and ran as follows.

"Have you a job for a nice young fellow? Say yes."

In due course the answer came back. "Yes."

"There is a pass for you by coach and by rail. Have you any money?"

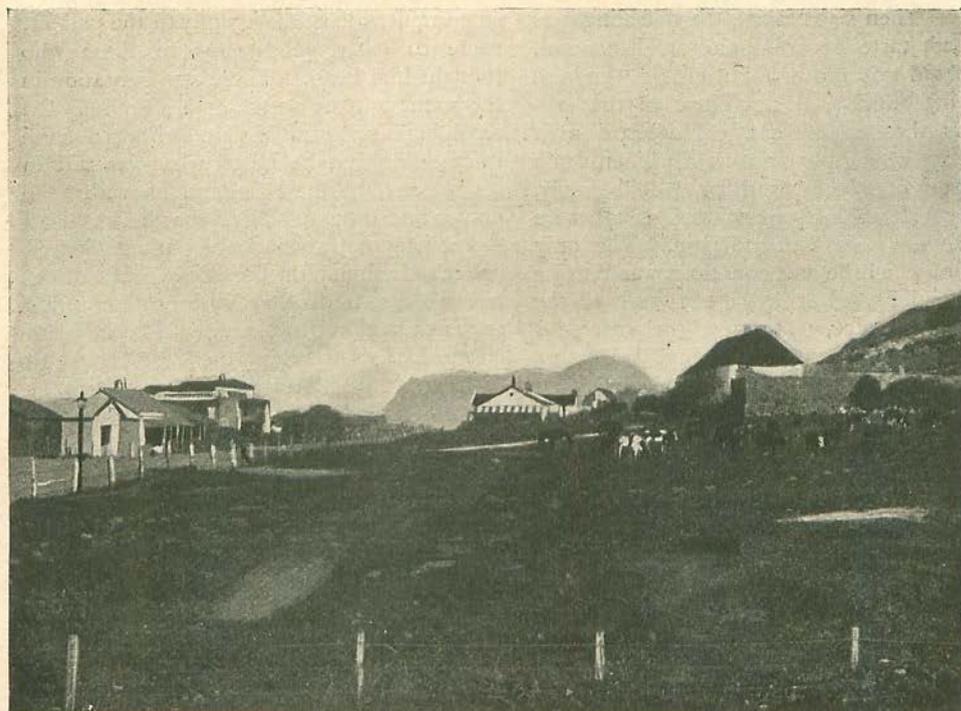
"Two or three pounds."

"How much more do you think you will want before you begin to draw your salary there?"

"About £5," said my friend modestly.

"Oh, you will never make a fortune," said Mr. Rhodes scornfully. "Here are twenty-five pounds for you. And mind you do not ask me for anything else," he added warningly, with an intimation that the interview was at an end.

INOKA.



Muizenberg, near Capetown, where Mr. Rhodes died