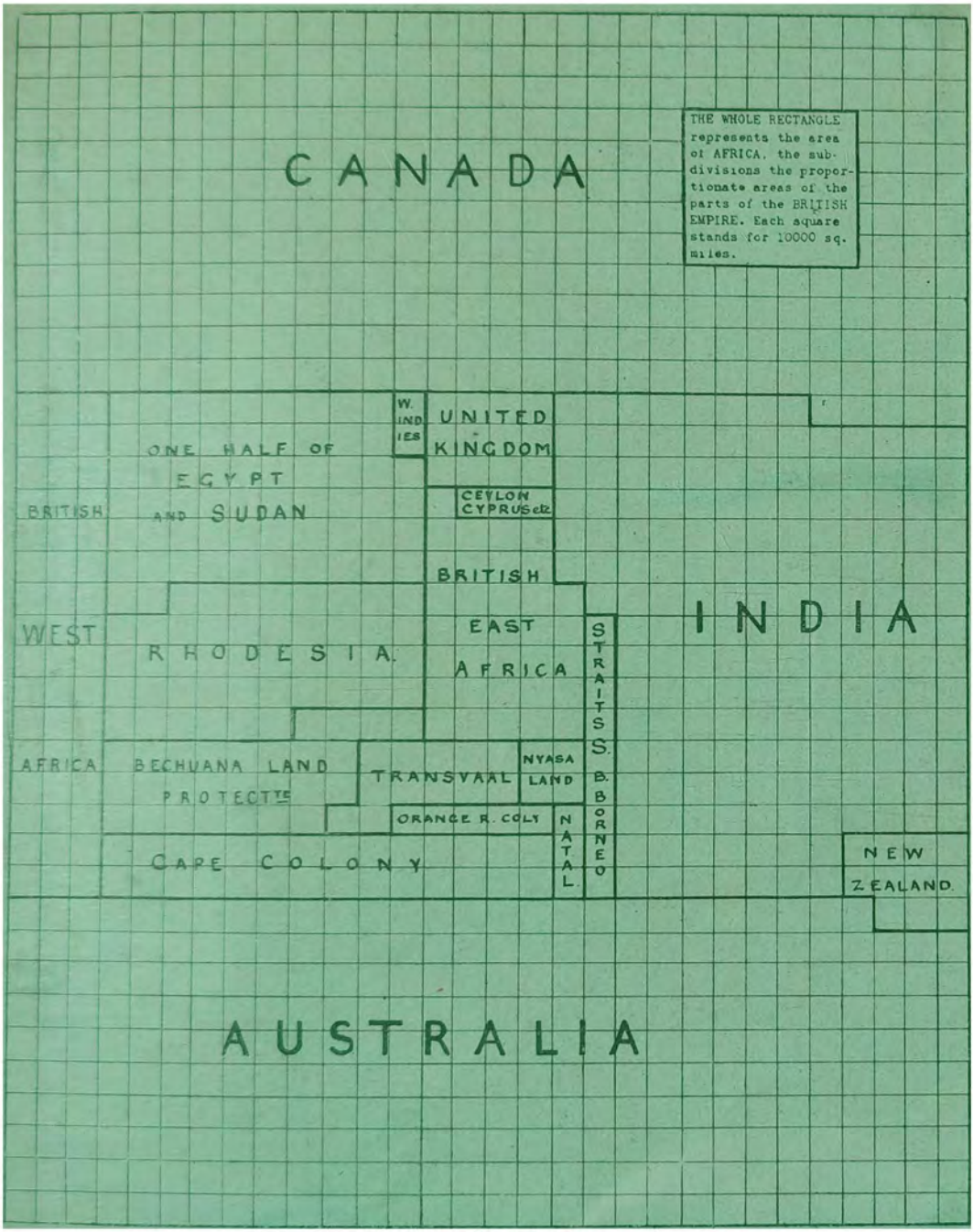
GOLD · FROM · THE · QUARTZ

BY · THE · REV.
W · A · ELLIOTT

LONDON · MISSIONARY · SOCIETY.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UNITED KINGDOM
ONE HALF OF EGYPT AND SUDAN
CEYLON CYPRUS etc
BRITISH
BRITISH EAST AFRICA
INDIA
WEST
RHODESIA
STRAITS S. B. BORNEO
AFRICA
BECHUANA LAND PROTECTE
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NYASA LAND
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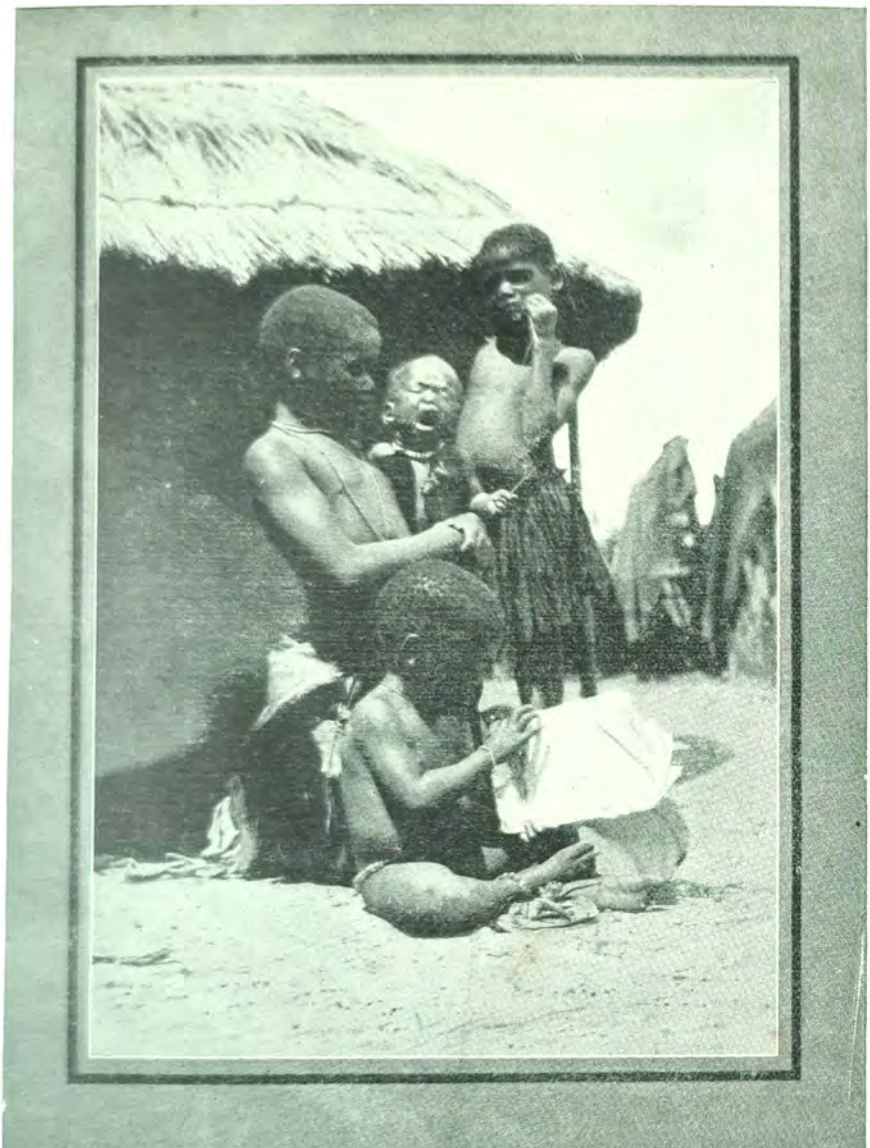
GOSPEL BOAT (Amoy)	In China.

GOLD FROM THE QUARTZ



"WOZANI SI FUNDISE" ("COME AND TEACH US!")

GOLD FROM TH QUARTZ

By
THE REV. W. A. ELLIOTT

WITH SEVENTY-FIVE ILLUSTRATIONS AND TWO MAPS

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1910

To my four Boys.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FOREWORD

IN order to a clearer understanding of the following pages, let it be remembered that:—

1. The continent of Africa is larger than China, India, Europe, and the United States. (*See also end paper.*)

2. Rhodesia is a small part of Africa, a little larger than France and Germany combined.

3. Southern Rhodesia is a small part of Rhodesia, nearly as large as the United Kingdom with a second Scotland added.

4. Matebele Land is a part of Southern Rhodesia nearly as large as Scotland, Ireland and Wales. (*See also end paper.*)

5. Matebele Land is as high above the sea as the top of Ben Nevis.

6. In Southern Rhodesia the sun shines straight down the chimneys twice a year, making brilliant sunshine on the hearth.

7. In Southern Rhodesia it rains (intermittently) from October to March; it does not rain from April to September.

8. In Southern Rhodesia Christmas is the hottest time of the year; frost and bitter cold may be enjoyed (?) in and about July.

9. Africa is the most wonderful Museum and Zoological Gardens in the world: and contains specimens illustrating man in probably all stages of his development.

10. The languages of the MaTebele and of the MaKalanga are members of the Bantu group of languages; the study of them is "an education in itself." MaTebele means the Tebele people. MaKalanga (or MaKaranga) means the Kalanga people. BeChuana means the Chuana people.

CHAPTER I

PREHISTORIC

TIME was when wild animals were the only inhabitants of the country now known as Southern Rhodesia. Then the sunny veldt teemed with elephants and antelopes, with lions and wolves and innumerable other creatures. Hills and trees carried a dense population of monkeys, coneys, lizards and snakes. The rivers were the home of hippopotami and crocodiles, and the air was alive with birds, beetles, and moths. Of course this was many thousands of years ago, long before there had come into being, in the icy northern seas, certain islands afterwards to be called Great Britain and Ireland.

The first people to appear in this land were funny little sallow brown folk (Bushmen), easily to be mistaken for mere animals. Whence they came, and how they came, no man knows. Certain old tales say that they were always there ; that when the first man " broke off in the reeds " (was created), the Bushmen were already living along with the game. They did not count as men in those old legends. Adults were not bigger than average girls and boys in England, and all were as deficient in beauty as in size. They clothed themselves in smearings of red and yellow earth, and never by any chance indulged in the luxury of a bath.

Their language was a queer racket of clicks and clucks and other nearly inarticulate sounds. Numbers did not trouble the Bushman

children. Separate names for one, two and three were all these little folk had or needed. Four was two-two, five was three-two, ten was two-two-two-two-two.

Huts they had none, gardens none; yet were no hunters like the Bushmen. More wary than their game, more patient and more courageous, they did not fear to attack elephants and lions. Indeed, the king of beasts himself had a wholesome dread of his little two-legged enemy, who, with tiny bows and flint-tipped arrows smeared with poison, always got the better of him. Tradition speaks of men with eyes in their feet: surely these were they, for once on the track of game they sped along with unerring certainty, guided by marks and signs which no ordinary eye could distinguish.

Of formal religion the Bushman had none, but necessity laid on him the yoke of brotherhood; the wild veldt was free to all, and the game struck down by one was shared with all. A light-hearted merry creature was the Bushman in those early days; faring hardly and feasting luxuriously by turns, taking things as they came; free and passionately loving his freedom he knew no care.

Now in process of time came others more masterful than the Bushmen, who broke their rule and drove them from their ancient hunting grounds. Hordes of stalwart black and brown men poured down from the north, wave on wave as beats the ocean on the coast, and in the course of time occupied the whole land. They too were skilled hunters, and they hunted not only the lion and the elephant, but the tiny Bush-folk as well. No man knows their names nor the year of their coming. But they came, and in these days are known as Bantu, and are divided up into nations and tribes, speaking many languages and having many customs. Some of them are called MaKaranga (MaKalanga or Ma-

Kalaka), BaSuto, BeChuana, AmaZulu and MaTebele. All the black folk in South Africa, except Bushmen and Hottentots, are children of those same hordes which, at different times in the dim past, before Britain became Britain, came pouring down into the happy hunting-grounds of the Bushmen.

A noble folk were the new-comers, tall and well formed, strong and brave ; their colour darker than that of the Bushmen, and richer. An imperial race were they, and imperially they took of the best, driving the little Bush people into the dry deserts, whither the Bantu cared not to follow. This took centuries to accomplish, and indeed was never fully accomplished, for the Bushmen linger still in their fastnesses among the victorious Bantu, sometimes even making friends with them and living at peace.

The Bantu were very superior persons ; they built huts, lived in villages, herded cattle, and in a primitive way cultivated the soil. These things did not the Bushmen, therefore were they dispossessed. Now the land being broad and the people few, the Bantu spread throughout South Africa and increased exceedingly.

After very many years there came to them who lived in Mokaranga (the country of the MaKaranga) a discovery which was destined to make their land famous, and to fill it with sorrow and death. How the discovery came about none can tell, for those were the days of early twilight in the dawn of the African story. Perhaps some little brown child playing in the warm sunshine found bits of heavy yellow stuff in the stream where he paddled. They pleased his fancy, and presently he found more. These bits of heavy yellow stuff became the playthings of the little folk, and attracted the attention of their elders. Perhaps the elders found that they could hammer the stuff

into strips, and bend it round their fingers and wrists, where it looked quite pretty. All these things they did till it became the fashion for women and men to use the yellow stuff wherewith to make themselves more desirable in each others' eyes. How many generations passed away in this childish use of gold no man knows ; but truly whilst Bantu children counted it amongst their toys, in civilization it had already begun to eat out the heart of men, honest folk becoming knaves, and cowards brave in the race to obtain it.

In those days there came to Mokaranga a people called Sabaeans. They were fond of wandering, fond of trading like the British of later centuries, and like them fond of this same gold. They traded down the east coast of Africa, just as their cousins the Phoenicians traded in all the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea. Pushing southwards, these Sabaeans came to the mouths of the Zambesi River and to the part now called Sofala, and there found black people wearing ornaments of solid gold. Then did the simple-minded Bantu begin their long education in the weird ways of the white men. A trade sprang up, which resulted in the enrichment of the strangers and the impoverishment of the natives.

The impoverishment of the Bantu came about on this wise. The Sabaeans brought pretty bright things of small value, but vastly attractive to the childish fancy of their black customers, for which they obtained solid gold, to be sold in the markets of the world at a full round price. The immense profit did not of course satisfy the trading spirit, it simply begat desire for greater gain. The Sabaeans saw that the men of Sofala were a peaceful race, easily to be overcome, and this they told in the market-places of Sabaea, where the news kindled great excitement. Syndicate and companies would be formed after

the manner of men, to obtain concessions, to "protect," and to occupy so desirable a country.

Now the black men had contented themselves (knowing no better) with obtaining the yellow stuff from the rivers of the land. This did the Sabaeans also, with superior apparatus and more effective methods. But being adventurers, they were of an inquisitive turn, and must needs ask, "Whence comes the gold?" The natives knew nothing but that the stuff lay heavy in the rivers whence they took it. Sabaean energy, however, soon found the gold-bearing rocks, and there mined the metal by the toil of their Bantu slaves.

After the lapse of very many centuries, those same mines are again being worked by men of our own land and nation. The ruins of the towns, forts and temples built by these Sabaeans are to-day being uncovered, and made to reveal their long-buried secrets.

CONICAL TOWER, ZIMBABWE (PROBABLY THE WORK OF THE SABAEANS).

Among the customers of the Sabaean traders were Solomon, King of Israel, and Hiram, King of Tyre. When therefore Solomon set to build a temple at Jerusalem, and wanted much fine gold, he turned to the Sabaeans and did much trade with them. Then was there great activity in Bantu land, and all hands were called to the work of

getting gold. Slaves were driven, writhing under the hissing lash, old mines were deepened and new ones opened. Gold! Gold! Gold! was the wearing cry; labour was abundant, and life cheap.

It was the same sickening story of agony and shame that was to disgrace century after century of the Christian era: the black man exploited that the white man might profit.

But there came a day when Nemesis overtook the invader. Fresh hordes of black men from the north came pouring down over the land, sweeping everything before them. The Sabaeans fled never to return, and the much enduring Bantu were left to make common cause with their kin from the north. The buildings of the Sabaeans became theirs, but they had not learned to dwell in them. The mines became theirs, but they were unable to work them. A few only among the native Bantu had in any degree attained to the civilization of their masters. The families of the Sabaeans remained with their Bantu mothers, and in some cases, perhaps, fatherhood proved stronger than fear.

Slowly the years passed into centuries, and slowly the Bantu adjusted themselves to their new conditions. Then as ever the strong men came to the front and became chiefs. The export of gold ceased, and the land had rest. Sabaea had enough to do to look after itself, and Sofala-Ophir was forgotten.

Let it be clearly understood that all hereinbefore written, while probably near the truth, must not be taken for veracious history. These things are still in the crucible of the student. They are PREHISTORIC.

CHAPTER II

MUNUMUTAPA

CENTURIES fled away, Sabaea and Sofala were forgotten, Egypt and Assyria crumbled into ruins, Greece and Rome rose and sank; but the Bantu folk steadily wrought out their destiny as best they could. The strong men among them ruled and founded a kingdom which grew in power and wealth, and all men obeyed the king, called in the Karanga tongue the Munumutapa.

It was in the sixteenth century A.D. that Portuguese adventurers, like the Sabaeans of old, came into touch with the MaKaranga and their chief. Stories of rich gold mines in the far interior came to their ears. Indeed, the traditions thereof had never died away.

The Portuguese, finding the coast trade in gold too slow, determined to possess themselves of the mines. They were a very religious people, anxious, while they traded with great zeal, to convert the pagans to their own faith. Both Portuguese and pagans would thus benefit, the one materially and the other spiritually.

Accordingly expeditions, religious and commercial, attempted to penetrate to the residence of Munumutapa, but for a long time without success. On December 26, 1560, however, a Jesuit father of noble birth, Gonçado da Silveira, reached the Royal residence, journeying from Sena on the Zambesi. In some sort he came as ambassador of the Portuguese Viceroy, believed by the MaKaranga to be a king of

enormous wealth and power. He was well received, according to full Karanga etiquette. But he created no small surprise, and perhaps some suspicion, by politely refusing the king's proffered gifts of gold dust, ivory and female companions. All other white men who had reached the Karanga court had eagerly accepted such presents—Who was this ?

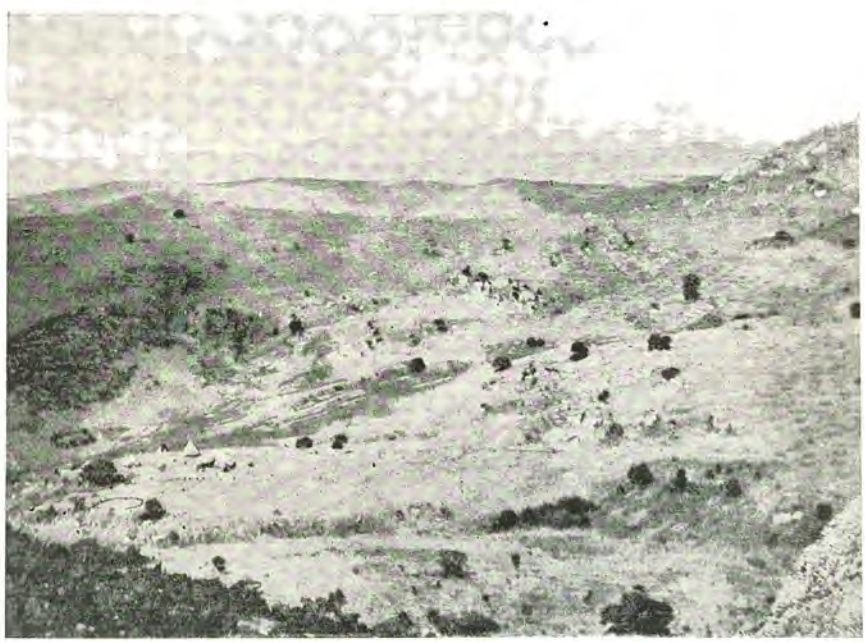
Now the MaKaranga were a most courteous folk, and unfortunately

VIEW IN THE INYANGA MOUNTAINS, IN THE LAND OF MUNUMUTAPA.

the missionary was not aware of the extent to which their courtesy could carry them. Simple politeness required them to agree to everything a guest might desire or say. Anything to give pleasure ! When therefore the missionary preached to king and court, and found ready acceptance of all that he taught, his surprise and pleasure were equally great. In about one month after arrival, with easy credulity, Silveira

baptized the Munumutapa, his mother, and some three hundred of his headmen and attendants.

But no monarch, however polite, could be expected to keep up so great a strain of courtesy indefinitely. There were limits even to Karanga endurance. When therefore the Munumutapa found that baptism meant monogamy, obedience and sundry other inconveniences, he became less courteous. He wearied of his too zealous teacher, and finely ordered him to leave the country. But what miner willingly leaves a rich reef ? What missionary a fruitful field ? Accordingly on March 16, 1561, the heroic Silveira was strangled and his body thrown to the crocodiles. Thus disastrously ended the first attempt to



VIEW IN THE INYANGA MOUNTAINS

Christianize this part of the Dark Continent. The immediate scene of the tragedy was in the neighbourhood of Inyanga, far enough away from the country afterwards occupied by the MaTebele, but no doubt within reach of Mzilikazi's spear, and therefore included in his dominions.

What happened in Mokaranga between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries is quite unknown. Blundering attempts at gold mining, building weak imitations of fine old models, and the turbulence usual in African history, were undoubtedly prominent. Ambitious headmen under a strong Munumutapa, became independent under a weak successor. Thus there came to be many monarchies in the land, kingdom set against kingdom, family against family, ever the strong prevailing and the weak going to the wall. But still to-day is preserved among the people the memory of the palmy days of Karanga rule. Old men have told the writer that the land had peace in those days, and a lonely woman could walk through the country unmolested.

The title Munumutapa gave place to that of Mambo, and this is the name still cherished by those who keep alive the traditions of their country's fallen greatness.

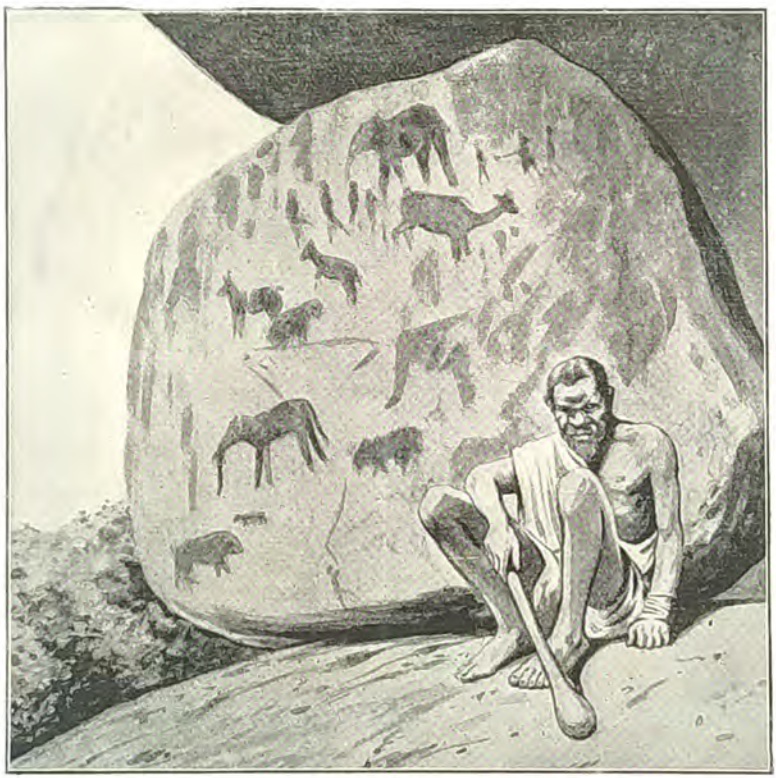
A curious story is told concerning the final downfall of the Mambo power at the hands of Zulu hordes from the south. A certain Mambo, whose personal name was Sabangu, had doubts about Mwali (God), as to his existence and power He had thrown off the faith of his fathers and had become a freethinker. Sitting one day in the hut of his favourite wife, Mwali spoke to him from the thatch of the hut. This enraged the chief, and he sought to burn Mwali by burning the hut. Then came the voice from a tree growing in the midst of the village, and Mambo cut down the tree that he might find and destroy Mwali. Successively Mwali spoke from a boulder, the grass and an ox. The boulder was

buried, the grass burned and the ox killed. All to no purpose: Mwali could not be found, could not be killed. Then did Mwali speak from Mambo knew not where, and this time he was compelled to hear. "You have doubted me, you have flouted me before your people, you have shut ears and heart against my call, you have hunted me from place to place. I am therefore leaving you never more to return; my voice will no more be heard in the land, but instead of my voice will come my warriors wearing skins, and you will learn too late that Mwali has a spear."

So spake Mwali, and in a short time the Zulus appeared, fierce, and wearing skins. Mambo opposed them with all his forces, but in vain. In the valley of the Inkwekwizi a pitched battle was fought. Mambo was defeated and fled, his men lay slain on the field, and that day the river ran blood. The fugitive chief hid himself in Intaba zi ka

ANCIENT RUIN ON THE SUMMIT OF INTABA ZI KA MAMBO, ON THE BROW OF THE PRECIPICE DOWN WHICH MAMBO'S BODY WAS THROWN.

Mambo, where he was discovered by his pursuers. On the hill top they found him seated among the ruins of by-gone days. They took him, flayed him alive after their manner, and cast his poor mangled body down the rocks. Thus perished the last of the Mambos.



BUSHMAN OR KARANGA DRAWINGS. A HUNTING SCENE.

This horde of savages ravaged the country and passed on over the Zambesi towards Nyasa Land, where they became the progenitors of the modern Angoni.[1] Soon afterwards while the country was still

[1] See illustration on the cover of this book.

disorganized, without rule or order, came the MaTebele, settling themselves down on the ruins of the Karanga glory, enslaving and killing, without pity and without remorse. This was in the year 1837 (*circa*).

An industrial peaceful folk were these MaKaranga. Their smiths turned out excellent spears and hoes: none better. Their weavers

INTERIOR OF A KARANGA VILLAGE.

understood and practised the mysteries of weaving, with implements calculated to drive a civilized weaver to distraction. Many other things they could do, and many other things they could not do. They could not keep their huts or persons clean. They could not appreciate decency in clothing, unless scanty skins worn apronwise could be

deemed clothes. Unsavoury and courteous, peaceful and dirty, they truly represented a vast degeneration from the brave days of old.

In some cases their physiognomy bears traces of admixture of Sabaean blood. Other remains in language and rite suggest evidence of that same early occupation. One example of a custom still prevail-

NEW UMTALI. INYANGA DISTRICT (1900). THE MISSION STATION OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF U.S.A.

ing will be specially interesting to readers of the Old Testament. If a man fell ill and ordinary medicines failed to cure, two goats would be taken from the man's flock. One would be slaughtered, and from certain portions of the carcase a broth made. Some of this broth would be given to the sick man to drink, and some poured down the

throat of the second goat. The patient by direction of the "doctor" would lay his hands on the head of this goat, and in virtue of certain incantations, the "evil" would pass from the patient into the goat, which would then be taken and let go whither it would. The Hebrew scapegoat rises to mind, and some kind of connexion between the two peoples in the dim past seems assured. The inhabitants of this beautiful tragic land are thus brought nearer to the hearts of all lovers of our Bible.

CHAPTER III[1]

TJAKA

IN the end of the eighteenth century a tribe of the Bantu called Mtetwa was living quietly on the sea coast of South Africa not far from St. Lucia Bay. Their chief was one Jobe, who had two sons, one of whom, Ngodongwana, was destined to great things. After the manner of young men he and his brother were ambitious, and hasty to share in the rule of the tribe. But their father resisted, deeming the young men presumptuous. Trouble arose, one son was killed and the other driven to save himself by flight. Ngodongwana, fugitive and wanderer, found the way of transgressors hard, and long sought rest, finding none.

Weary and dispirited, haunted doubtless by many thoughts of the home he had forfeited, he at last met his fate in the shape of the strangest being human eyes had ever seen. So thought Ngodongwana. It was like a man, but not of a man's proper colour. It was borne by an animal swift as a zebra, but not a zebra. It was clothed in a garment so small as to be held in one hand, so large as to cover its whole body. It had no toes to its feet, but a big heel which made a great hole in the ground as it walked. The creature carried in its hand a long stick which spat fire and thunder, and killed all at which it looked.

Ngodongwana had heard of it in his wanderings, how men fled at its approach, abandoning villages, gardens, and cattle to its use. The creature would take possession and feast on the best, but always leave

[1] Material for this chapter was found in the Introduction to Bryant's Zulu Dictionary.

behind beads and brass wire in payment for the unwilling hospitality. And now Ngodongwana stood face to face with the monster. Said he, to himself, "It is the lord of the witch doctors, source of their powers." But he was a brave lad and stood his ground, finding rich reward in the friendship of the first white man that land had ever seen.

The stranger sought a guide, and Ngodongwana was willing to serve. By path by day, and camp fire by night, there was unfolded to Ngodongwana's astonished mind the new world of the white men. Bewilderment followed bewilderment; some of what he heard he could believe, but much passed all bounds. Sorely he was tempted to think his companion a mere liar, but the white man himself and his wonderful fire-spitting stick were evidences that could not be gainsaid.

Now Ngodongwana was a sharp lad of most retentive memory, and of all the strange things which the white man told him, none were more eagerly heard and stored than the stranger's tales of the white men's working and fighting, of their factories and regiments, of their tools and weapons. "How godlike are they! what children are we!" thought the young man. It was a pity that the stranger could not have told of the love of the white man's God, for he little knew into what fruitful soil he was dropping the seeds of knowledge. Perhaps he did speak of the best things of life, but if so only the stories of war and wealth found home in the prince's mind.

By and by old Jobe died, and great inquiry was made for the missing heir. He was soon found and set on the throne of his fathers. Then came to Ngodongwana his great opportunity, and right wisely did he use it. Steadily he taught his people to trade, and wisely he encouraged them in all home industries. The baskets, skins and pottery of the Mtetwa became famous, and thereby riches greatly increased.

Now the whole land was filled with numberless small tribes, each with its own little chief, its own little territory, and its own little quarrels. Tribe fought against tribe; they were always fighting, but never doing much harm. Only this, which Ngodongwana soon discovered, that while fighting they could not be working; that much good came of working and none of fighting. Therefore did he set himself to end it, and his growing strength gave him the power to do so. He remembered the white man's regiments and discipline, and these he introduced among his own soldiers. Under his care the Mtetwa became the police of the district. Ngodongwana mended or ended the incessant quarrellings, he amalgamated other tribes with his own, and was soon the strongest force in the land.

And now, seeing he was a great king, he changed his name, and was henceforth called Dingiswayo. Wise and generous was he, so that the weak sought his protection, and the bully feared his strong arm. One day the whole harem and household of a certain chief who had disputed his sovereignty fell into his hand. But instead of the expected death or slavery, came the feast and dance; and in that dance Dingiswayo did himself take part, for the pleasure of his guest-captives. The festivities over, the king sent them home blithe and gay, with the kingly word ringing in their ears, "Dingiswayo fights not against women." Truly there was no wonder that such as he became the great power in the land.

About the year 1805 there came to the court of Dingiswayo a certain young lad and his mother seeking protection. Nandi was the mother's name, Tjaka that of her son. They were wife and son of a chief of a small tribe, quite a small tribe, called Zulus, tributary to Dingiswayo. Nandi was good and true; but the lad had an evil

NGUNGUNDLOVU, CHIEF TOWN OF DINGANE, SUCCESSOR OF TJAKA.

(From a sketch by Capt. Allen Gardiner.)

temper and unbearable ways, so that none but his mother could endure him. From home, from one after another of sheltering villages, these two were driven with jeers and taunts, with scorn and hatred. And the lad's heart grew blacker and blacker towards his fellows, and clave closer and closer to his only friend, his mother.

No other refuge seemed open to them but the court of the great king, and thither came they; where he, learned in adversity, constrained himself to good behaviour and was tolerated. Brave and strong, keen and observant, he zealously entered into all Dingiswayo's plans for military development. He obeyed the discipline and profited by the training; and, while noting defects, he planned improvements. He grew to celebrity as a warrior without fear, if not without reproach.

At that time the people were terrorized by a certain furious madman who had long done as he would with such men and things as

came into his hands, and no man dared to meet him. But Tjaka faced him and mastered him, and the people lived in peace again and were glad. Yet did Tjaka hate them and all men, for his own black heart, and for the treatment meted out to him in his earlier days.

TJAKA THE TERRIBLE, KING OF THE ZULUS.
(From a sketch by Capt. Allen Gardiner, first missionary to the Zulus.)

Amongst other things in the fashion of the day which filled him with contempt was their way of "playing at war." Impi would stand hurling spears at impi, rarely coming to close quarters. Tjaka devised the more excellent way of hurling the spear, and following it up by a deadly rush which carried all before it. Thus the army of Dingiswayo became a more fearful engine of war than ever, and none could stand before it.

There came a day when Tjaka's father visited the court to render tribute, and his soul was glad when he knew how great a warrior was this boy of his. Returning home he made known that "That young bull of mine with the little curled-up ears was to be king of the Zulus by and bye."

About 1810 this also came to pass, and a great peace filled the land for the space of two years. Then began a time of tribulation,

such as the Bantu of South Africa had never known nor would ever know again. Tjaka and his Zulus attacked the Ngwanas, and the Ngwaṇas in fleeing attacked others, till they in turn fell on others, and native South Africa was in a shrieking turmoil. Rivers ran blood, and herbage grew luxuriantly.

One people set agoing was the Ntatees, with their chief Sibindwana (Sebituane). He it was who had a home under the Drakensberg, towards Basutoland. He fled before the Ngwanas, who fled before the Zulus. It was he who, in his raiding, nearly attacked (but was restrained) a lonely mission station out in the far west, where lived and wrought a young Scotch missionary and his wife, Moffat by name. Thence he wended his way, destroying and suffering much from spear and thirst, till he settled on a home carved out of other folk's homes, on the Zambesi. A new name attached itself to his people, MaKololo, who with himself became known in Europe and the world as friends of one David Livingstone.

The Ngwanas had started the Ntatees, and continued their raiding till it was checked by a sterner foe than the black men had ever yet encountered. On the borders of the Cape Colony, the white man with his gun hurled the black marauders back on their haunches.

Then war arose between Dingiswayo and Zwide of the Ndwandwes: the grand old Dingiswayo was taken unawares and slain. After that disaster the Mtetwas went to pieces, and there remained in all the land only Tjaka and his Zulus and the Ndwandwes under Zwide. But Tjaka said in his black heart, "There must be only one," and the Ndwandwes were beaten, and beaten again, and yet again, until there was no more strength left in them. That was about the year 1826.

CHAPTER IV

MZILIKAZI

ONE young man of the beaten Ndwandwes was ill-content, nursing his bitterness. He dissembled, biding his time, seemingly content to be induna under Tjaka. It was honour enough in itself, for Tjaka was a very great king : but in one heart at least it was a disgrace, being a badge of servitude.

Bulawayo was the young man's home, near Etjowe, between the Mlalazi and Mhlatuze rivers. There he ruled and plotted, laying the foundation of his plots in the hearts of a few trusted followers.

His opportunity soon came. Sent by Tjaka to raid, he raided on his own account, and still raided ; the people gathering round him, snowball fashion, as he dashed on in his wild career.

Then Tjaka gathered his mighty self together to wipe out this daring young rebel. He headed him in the Drakensberg, but could not stop him. Down he swooped on the plains of the country to the west, filling the land with a terrible desolation. Mzilikazi was the young man's name, his people fragments of the Ndwandwes and Zulus.

By and bye they wearied of the incessant rush ; the women and children cried out for a home. Thinking himself beyond the reach of the bloody Tjaka's spear, he rested and dug gardens at Ekupumulweni (Place of Rest) not far from the Vaal River. But there was no rest there, for drought dreary and long drove him hence ; not, how-

ever, before he had thrown to the crocodiles the unsuccessful rain doctors. In Mzilikazi's system failure was a crime worthy of death.

In the fair valley of the Mariko he found at last all the heart of man could desire, rich soil, abundant herbage and a numerous people (Be-Chuana) among whom he could raid and plunder. There would be no need for his young men's spears to be idle here. From their peaceful Mariko home the MaTebele spread death and misery all around.

They extended their raiding as far as Basuto Land. There Mosheshwe (Moshesh), probably the greatest man Bantu South Africa has produced, had built up a nation out of motley materials, fragments of the many tribes destroyed by Tjaka the terrible. Mosheshwe had made his headquarters on the summit of an inaccessible mountain, Thaba Bosigo; where, secure amid abundant pasturage and water supply, he carried out his establishment of a strong wise rule.

MZILIKAZI, FROM A SKETCH (IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM) TAKEN DURING HIS RESIDENCE IN MARIKO.

Mzilikazi sent an impi to relieve these BaSuto of their children and cattle. After a long and fatiguing march the MaTebele reached the foot of the mountain and rested themselves, bathing in the stream, and singing their songs of what they were going to do to the "Baboons up in the rocks." The "Baboons" heard and held their peace. The MaTebele attacked

on two or three sides at once, but were everywhere received with boulders and spears, themselves utterly unable to get at their foes. Time after time they bravely returned to the attack, mindful of the stern old king away in Mariko. Crestfallen and weary, they had at last, after heavy loss, to turn tail homewards. Then was Moshesh we's opportunity. He understood both how to defeat, and how to treat the defeated. He gathered a large herd of fat cattle and sent them after the beaten MaTebele, with the word, " You have eaten all your food, and are hungry, the chief of the BaSuto sends you food." After that the MaTebele came no more into the coasts of the Basuto, and there was peace and friendship between the two peoples. On this occasion the MaTebele received the name by which they have since been known, " MaTebele " which is SeSuto for " Foreigners."

Many things might be written of the doings of the MaTebele while in Mariko, but only two things may find place here. The Boers escaping from British misrule in Cape Colony, and the MaTebele escaping from the tyranny of the bloody man-hater Tjaka, came to blows. They were both masterful folk, desperate lovers of their own freedom. The fighting between them brought much misery and little joy, as it always does ; and resulted in the MaTebele being driven northward.

But before they went, another and very different stranger had found their home. This was Robert Moffat, the missionary. He ventured himself into the midst of the peace-haters in the name of the Prince of Peace. The story is well worth reading, and may be read in Moffat's own telling in his book.

Mzilikazi had heard great things of the white men living away to the south-west in a garden in the desert ; thither he sent two of his head men to be eyes and ears for him. Well were these envoys received by

the hospitable Kuruman missionaries, and great their wonderment at all they saw and heard. By and bye, when they needed to go back to their lord, they remembered that there were enemies in the way, the Ba-Hurutse, against whom Mzilikazi had fought. Nothing would do but that the missionary should escort them through these perils, which indeed he did right willingly in the service of his Lord. It ended in Moffat going right into the lion's mouth, to the town of the ruthless Mzilikazi. Of his reception and treatment by the savage despot the full graphic story may be read under his own hand as aforesaid.

These words of Moffat's may, however, be quoted concerning their parting. "Laying his hand on my shoulder, Mzilikazi said, 'My heart is all white as milk, I am still wondering at the love of the stranger who never saw me. You have fed me, you have protected me, you have carried me in your arms. I live to-day by you a stranger.' I replied I was not aware of having rendered him such a service. Pointing to the chiefs who had visited the Kuruman, he instantly rejoined, 'These are my great servants whom I love. They are my eyes and ears, and what you did to them you did to me.'"

This happened in December, 1829. In June, 1835, Moffat paid the king another visit, escorting a scientific expedition, and endeavouring to prepare the way for some American missionaries to settle among the people.

Soon after this came an attack from a Zulu impi sent by Dingane, successor, brother and assassin of Tjaka the Terrible. Thus Mzilikazi found Mariko too hot for him, being within reach of Zulu spear and Boer gun. However much he enjoyed killing other folk, he discovered great objection to being killed himself.

Therefore did he and his people—men, women and children—pack

up their belongings, desert their homes, gardens and kraals, and make their way northward to a fair land of which they had already dreamed as a land of promise.

As they went they left behind them a waste howling wilderness. Who could, fled ; who failed, died ; and the children of others' rearing became the future warriors and wives of the Matebele despoilers. Thus did Mzilikazi fall on the happy garden towns of the MaKaranga and other tribes, and on their ruins found a kingdom and a home.

A terrible man was this Mzilikazi, well named the " Napoleon of South Africa." A man of blood and genius was he. Wherever his assegai could reach, there could be but one will, and that his own. No man dared to dispute his orders ; however outrageous to common sense or common humanity, they were at once carried out amid the plaudits of his adoring subjects. His one reply to disobedience was death ; his one reply to mere suspicion of disloyalty, death under cover of witchcraft.

Under such a system, where everything was subordinated to the irresponsible will of one man, nothing being allowed to truth and honour, loyalty became a disease and suspicion an atmosphere. In Matebele Land every man feared his neighbour and mistrusted his friend ; and the very protestations of loyalty, so superabundant at the Matebele court, became hypocritical. Mzilikazi knew it, but apparently failed to appreciate the true reason of it. Amidst deafening vociferations of applause he once whispered in Moffat's ear, " Do you hear how these hypocritical rascals try to persuade me that they love me, whilst all that time they wish I were dead."

His friendship with Moffat and his extraordinary loyalty to that friendship present a curious problem, and at the same time reveal

IN A MEALIE GARDEN (INDIAN CORN).

unsuspected virtue. His tenderness of heart, when suffering came to his own circle, was really amazing. It might have been thought that in the nature of a man with such a record, there could be no room for pity. Yet in later years, when Mr. Thomas went south to take his motherless boys to England, Mzilikazi was moved in a most extraordinary way. He showed a feeling almost womanish. "Take the poor motherless boys out of my sight; I cannot bear to look at them, they pierce my heart. Ha! they have lost the best of mothers."

CHAPTER V

MTJETE

IN 1856, after fifteen years' strenuous service in South Africa, Dr. Livingstone arrived in England to find himself famous. His despatches from the Cape, and later from Loanda, had interested the churches in the MaKololo, just as Robert Moffat's romantic friendship with Mzilikazi had interested them in the MaTebele. The Doctor's arrival fanned these flames and kindled others. As the first-fruits of his work, the Universities and the Scotch Presbyterians proceeded to occupy Nyasa Land, and the L.M.S. to establish a mission among the MaKololo. But this welcome uprising of missionary zeal demanded an all round advance by sending a mission to the MaTebele also. The members of these two missions gathered at Capetown in July, 1858, where they were met by the Rev. Robert and Mrs. Moffat.

In due time they started in detachments on their tremendous journeys into the interior. For young folk, fresh from the comforts of England, the discomforts and privations of veldt life were extreme. Their way led through fertile valleys, smiling under successful cultivation, by terrible mountain passes where the cattle seemed to hold on like flies, up to the wide thirsty Karoo. This was literally a waste howling wilderness, where everything was scarce save sand and dust. Wearily, wearily, day after day, and night after night, the teams toiled

THE PAARDEKOP PASS, CAPE COLONY. WAGON TRAVELLING IN 1859.
(*From a picture in the British Museum.*)

along amid a penetrating pitiless glare and distracting thirst. The moaning of the suffering trek cattle was harrowing, and terrible the near presence of the vultures waiting to pick their bones.

By the kindly help of farmers and others the missions muddled through, forded the Orange River, took a spell of comfort at Griqua Town, and at last reached Kuruman (Dec. 1858).

This outpost of civilization and abode of peace was in a turmoil of anxiety, because of an expected attack from the Emigrant Boers. These worthies had long threatened to drive the missionaries and "all such cattle" back into the Colony, now they were going to do it. Yet that attack was never delivered, and the alarm died down.

The peace of the station was, however, broken by death, the great disturber. A grievous loss befell the Matebele mission at the very out-

set, for on May 19, 1859, worn out by the sufferings of the journey across the Karoo, Mrs. Sykes passed away. The first to fall!

As soon as possible the Makololo Mission started for the Zambesi, and in due ourse the second mission followed. The six wagons carrying Messrs. R. Moffat and Sykes, Messrs. J. S. Moffat and Thomas, with their wives, were heavy with stores for two years' supply. A great part of the road lay through deep sand At one time they were three days without water, but for such scanty store as could be carried in the

TREKKING IN THE KALAHARI.

already overloaded wagons. Amid burning sand and scorched pasture, when spilled drops of water were greedily licked up, when everything was hot and everything was dry, then imagination pictured most vividly the shady banks and rippling brooks of home.

This misery was at its greatest when heathen Matebele Land shot out a wondrous welcome to her missionaries. Mzilikazi hearing of Mtjete's approach despatched a messenger to meet him, and to say "The king longs exceedingly to look on the face of Mtjete again."

Two days later the mission reached Shoshong, the town of the

BaMangwato. Here was a Hanoverian missionary laying foundations on which others were to build a church of Jesus Christ. Here came to the wagons to greet the missionaries, a young stripling, clean and serious, clothed and courteous, a bright contrast to the filthy heathenism

REV. R. MOFFAT (1859).

of the rest of the town. He was Khame, son and heir of the old heathen chief Sekhome, and already a disciple of the Lord.

At Shoshong the travellers left the desert behind them, and entered on a richly wooded garden land. Moffat had been one of the first

white men to penetrate this part of South Africa five years before and it was still almost unknown. Native footpaths pierced its recesses, but no semblance of a wagon track. Day by day pioneers walked ahead of the wagons to choose a practicable passage, threading their way among trees and ant-heaps. Anon all hands would be summoned to the task of clearing a road, or of crossing a sand river. To some was apportioned the labour of the hunt to supply the larder, or to repel a night attack by lions. Robert Moffat, old hero, was the life and soul of the party. Like his great son-in-law, David Livingstone, his true greatness shone out in the veldt ; nowhere else is the grit of a man so sorely tried. He who can retain his self-respect throughout a long wagon journey in the African veldt is worthy to be called a man.

In due time the missionaries reached the Matebele outposts, where one Mahuku kept watch and ward. None might pass without his knowledge, and without permission obtained by special messenger from Mzilikazi.

Another most welcome change in the countryside here presented itself. On all hands queer kopjes outlined the horizon in fantastic shapes. Here a hill, one solid mass of unbroken granite : there a range built up of boulders each as big as a church, and crowned by others balanced and overhanging, ready to fall at the touch of a child's hand. Here a pile of boulders, a gigantic pillar : there huge rocks littering the valleys, fallen in some remote age from those same hill tops. Already the signs of an eager spring were beginning to burst the browns and yellows of winter. The forerunning showers of the early rains had made the grass rush into verdure ; and trees, bushes and climbers were preparing to deck the hill sides with most wondrous beauty. Some of the birds had already donned their new spring costumes, and made a

THE SUMMIT OF WORLD'S VIEW. AMID THE BOULDERS IS THE GRAVE OF CECIL RHODES.

brave show. Oh! the joy of this paradise after the deserts of the south! At last Nature smiled upon the mission band, and therein they saw the smile of God.

Fifty years later, amid the solemn pomp of white men and of black men, were laid to rest on the summit of one of those granite kopjes, the mortal remains of the conqueror of the son of Mzilikazi, the founder of a new and happier state, Cecil Rhodes. Of this no man dreamed; had he known it, Mzilikazi would surely have snuffed out the white man at his first coming.

Now there was a great plague among the cattle of the south; the

desolation of many a kraal, the ruin of many a farmer and tribe. Lung sickness began to show itself among the cattle of the expedition, and it was felt that to go on bearing this scourge to the thousands of the Matebele cattle would be heartless and disastrous. Therefore did Moffat wait at Mahuku's town, till word had been carried to the king, and clean oxen sent by him to bring the wagons home.

In due time they came with royal words of gratitude. But surely such cattle had never before been seen. Two-legged cattle and tailless ; nothing less than the impis of the king, his young men, trained in all things to do his bidding Blithely they took up the white man's burden, and inspanned themselves to the missionaries' wagons. In their pride of strength they came ; in relays, with song and chant they toiled at their heavy task. A strange progress ! Here on the level they would run, there in mud and sand their manhood would be hard put to it. All to no purpose, the whim of the despot could not be carried out, the " black spans " had to give place to others.

At last the excitements and drudgeries of the road were over, and the missionaries saw through the trees the camp of the Matebele king. His majesty was staying at a cattle post on the banks of the Mbembezi river ; where far from the madding crowd of begging toadies, he could enjoy the society of his cows and oxen. They at least had no favours to ask, no vengeances to gratify. The king was on holiday. His wagons (stolen from the murdered Boers), a few grass huts shrouded in privacy by a thick brushwood fence, two or three large cattle enclosures of trunks and branches of trees, around him the wooded veldt, and the river close at hand ; this was his paradise. A few of his women and slaves in attendance on his pleasure, some headmen with their suites in waiting, a superabundance of beef and beer.

grass, water, and sunshine, what more could the heart of man desire?

To all this savage sylvan peace came Moffat and his friends, full of ardour and high hopes. At last the goal of their ambition had been won, the dream of years realized, the long preparations,——Alas! it turned out so different from expectation. The first greetings over, their welcome became icy. "What do these white men want in our country?" The king had permitted them to come, had even sent his young men to fetch them; but they were not wanted. Mzilikazi gave them meat as his kingship demanded; but when the missionaries tried to buy grain, milk, and other necessaries of the white man's life, he churlishly refused. He coveted everything he saw, whether of use to him or not, and wondered at the hardihood of the white men in refusing. Probably never before had this spoiled child of barbarism been so persistently denied—and by men, too, whom he could have crushed as easily as the egg in his palm. The reasons for this most disappointing and distressing change of attitude are hard to fathom. Who can gauge the workings of a black man's mind?

For three weeks Mzilikazi kept them on tenter hooks, the sport of himself and people; then, without word of warning, he inspanned his wagons and moved away, leaving his "friends" to their solitude. No wonder a great gloom fell on the spirits of the party, even as the tropical showers began to fall and make a quagmire of their encampment. In a day or two, like flashes from blackest thunder clouds, came messengers from the king big with threat and insult. They charged the missionaries with being spies, and demanded guns and ammunition as compensation for the use of the oxen sent to bring them into the country. Very patiently did the harassed leader bear himself,

and very dignified were the replies he sent to the king. The burden was heavy on him, and even he wavered in doubt whether it would be possible to establish the mission. Yet must he sustain the drooping spirits, and quiet the alarms of his young brethren and their wives. Grandly did he bear himself, grandly did he show himself master of this darkest hour.

The missionaries were prisoners in the open veldt, afraid to wander, forbidden to hunt, banned by king and people, and to their inexperienced imagination, doomed. Suddenly when clouds were at their blackest and ready to belch forth destruction and death, the wind changed, the clouds cleared, and the sun shone out. Word came from the king that the Inyati valley and fountain were at the service of Mtjete.

With glad thankful hearts, tents were struck, wagons packed, oxen sent by the king inspanned, and soon the whole party were wending their way across the veldt, homeward bound. Heavy rains had fallen, making trekking very difficult, and nearly a week was occupied in this two days' journey. But at last the leading wagon emerged from the wood, and from the low eminence the tired eyes rested on their new home.

It was a prospect fair as heart could wish. Through their long weary travelling they had often looked forward to this moment, they had pictured the scene to each other ; but none had dreamed of a home so beautiful as this. Eagerly they forded the little sand river Nkwekwizi ; and the king's guide Monyebe, leading them up the valley, presently called a halt on the outskirts of the royal town of Inyati Here was spent the Sabbath, a true day of rest, a day of happy omen, a Christmas Day ; and on the following Monday morning the whole

party trekked to the head of the valley, about one mile distant, and were at home.

Thus was the Matebele mission established, Monday, December 26, 1859; the 299th anniversary of the arrival of the first Christian missionary (Silveira) in Mokaranga; eighteen hundred and twenty-nine years after the giving of the Great Commission.

Huts were run up, rough and small, but very welcome after the prolonged cramping of the bullock wagon. They were made palatial by the thought that there would be no moving on to-morrow. In such building the Kuruman volunteers were adepts, while in the general methods of the settler, what greater master, what better instructor, than Robert Moffat!

Of course, all these operations were carried on under the close observation of the natives of the country; keenly interested as the children of an English town in the setting up of a fair. They watched for the most part at a safe distance, until a few of the bolder spirits came nearer than was convenient for the safety of small articles lying about.

On the first Sunday after arrival, Moffat and Sykes went to the king's town to ask that the people might be collected for "the teaching." Mzilikazi at once sent round word that the men were to gather, and obediently they came. Attention was at once riveted by the simple melody of the Christian hymn rising in the fresh morning air. The singing was in Sechuana and was effectively led by the Kuruman men. Few of the congregation could understand, but the weird novelty of "the music of God" proved very piquant in their ears. Simply, clearly by the aid of an interpreter, the veteran missionary told the familiar story of the love of God in Jesus, Our Lord. Very familiar in white men's

ears, but to most of those savage folk the message was entirely, strangely new. Old people among them sometimes talked obscurely of a Some One, Who lived somewhere, Who made everything and everybody; but that He cared for them and loved them,—it was all very wonderful!

The days passed rapidly in the work of settlement. Moffat was wanted everywhere and for everything. He was at home in the study, and at sawpit and forge. He was able to help the king by mending wagons and guns; and directed the missionaries in the building of a dam and laying out of a garden. He did not spare himself. Time was short, and soon he would have to return to Kuruman, therefore did he fill his days with labour. To the missionaries he was father and brother beloved, to the king truest friend. Neither missionaries nor king could contemplate the fast approaching parting without sorrow and dismay.

But the last Sunday came (June 17, 1860). It was a solemn service held that morning, for all knew that they were listening for the last time to the words of Mtjete. On the Monday he was to start. Mzilikazi had outdone himself in objections to his friend's departure; but at length, seeing that what must be must be, he ceased his protests. The hour came, and the chief, holding the missionary's hand in his, the while pretending to give directions to some of his men, rose from his chair, and looking straight into Moffat's eyes said, "Why should I continue looking on you? go nicely, I will take care of the teachers."

Thus they parted, never to meet again; but the attachment lived, and in the very article of death the name of Mtjete brought a kindling to the savage king's glazing eye. The promise he made, to take care of the teachers, was faithfully kept; kept also by his son after him.

CHAPTER VI

INYATI

THE new mission station was happily placed, at a spring of water reputed to be the best in the country. The stream issuing therefrom meandered through a shallow valley, about a mile wide from crest to crest, into the Nkwekwizi; which ran in a valley similar in character of thrice the width. The general course of the river was from south-east to north-west; the Inyati brook joining it at about right angles, with the mission station on its south-eastern slope.

The houses were built quite near to the fountain; Mr. Sykes' house on the exact spot where at first had stood the wagon of Robert Moffat. Below the eye of the fountain a dam was formed to provide for the irrigation of the gardens during the six months' drought of each year. In convenient places were built kraals for the cattle and sheep and goats; and later on, when servants were obtainable, huts for their accommodation.

Each missionary had at first a two-roomed house, cosy and comfortable, with all things handy. The walls were of sun-dried bricks, plastered within and washed with lime. The roof was of rough timbers open to the thatch. The windows were "glazed" with calico. The floor was of clay, well smeared with cow-dung. Poor quarters? Not a bit of it! On the whole a sufficient protection from the elements, and more than that surely savoured of luxury. Ventilation and draining were of Nature's own, and never gave trouble. The plumber

was not wanted, for there were no pipes; the rent and tax collector never darkened the doorways. Happy homes were these, often remembered with much affection, when houses were larger, more convenient, and more troublesome.

A main hindrance to the perfect enjoyment of these houses was the numerous other and uninvited occupants. Their name was legion. Ants black and white, rats, snakes, beetles, spiders, tarantulas, etc., etc. The white ants tunnelled the walls as fast as they were built, and occupied the thatch before the ridge was completed. From this vantage ground they were able to drop their grains of earth, and occasionally themselves, into teacup and milk jug. They entombed (preparatory to destruction) boots taken off at night and incautiously placed on the bare floor. They perforated boxes not standing on something imperforable, and appropriated the contents. They built out from the walls and devoured the books in the missionaries' scanty libraries.

The black ants did all the mischief that the white ants had left undone. They filled the safe, bathed in the milk, and explored every cranny of loaf and joint. They scaled bedclothes inadvertently touching the floor, and sang for joy as they roamed through the bedclothes and hair of the sleepers. Then did the settlers discover fuller meaning in many passages of Scripture, prominently in Proverbs vi. 6. Rats marauded after their kind, held high carnival through the houses at night, and occasionally made their nest under the pillows of the bed made in the morning.

But why continue? Such incidents formed the condiments of life; they were part of the training provided by a prolific and indulgent country. The settlers in time came to understand and circumvent

all these pleasing little ways of the insect creation, and lived at peace among them.

At first the missionaries had the advantage of the assistance of the Kuruman men, but with their departure for the south they were thrown entirely on their own resources. By and by, as they learnt confidence, native girls gave their aid for considerations in calico or beads. Their dainty hands and feet dug out and trampled the clay for brick-making,

UNSKILLED LABOUR.

and the ant-heap, for mortar. Surely there was peculiar pleasure in utilizing this ant-heap, for thus the settlers got even with these omnivorous destroyers. The young men were not so forward as their sisters, work was not so much in their line ; yet after a while the lure of calico and beads overcame, and they were persuaded to help with roof and thatching. Truly this native help was sometimes doubtfully better than nothing ; but the houses got built, and they held fairly well against wind and weather.

One very real advantage of native work was that during the midday rest some of the girl workers were persuaded to make essay at learning to read. Building and other work proved the thin end of the wedge, the full effect of which was not seen till after many days.

Beyond the narrow confines of the mission station lay the great veldt in all its majesty. Mounting to the crest of the valley on either side, as the missionaries were wont to do in their evening strolls, the eye roamed over a domain stretching mile on mile, picturesquely undulating and sparsely covered with thorn and other trees and bushes. At the back of the station rose the long low hill of Ndumba, from the summit of which the wide expanse of the Nkwekwizi valley might be viewed. From that point of vantage the observant eye might find many things of surpassing interest, and the speculative mind much food for thought.

Strange and terrible deeds had been enacted in that valley in the kaleidoscopic life of the country. In the remote past bands of those former inhabitants, who subdued the Bantu and established the gold mining, had crossed and re-crossed the river (perhaps at the drift where the missionaries forded) on their errands of conquest and trade; and by them many a deed of cruelty and treachery had been done. Away to the left, if well directed, the eye might pick out Mambo's tree, where the degenerate scion of a noble race had been wont to hold his barbaric court. A few miles further up the river, on the opposite side, was the battlefield where fell the flower of the Karanga army before the onslaught of the hordes from the south. Nor, we may be sure, had the coming of the MaTebele failed to add to the sorrows of that beautiful valley.

Now had come the pioneers of a nobler race. The old hill in all the chequered story had never seen the like of these white men with their

preachings and their singings, their queer notions of service and of peace. What would come of their advent? Would the white race ever dominate the land, giving it at last peace and freedom? Would white soldiers ever cross that soft flowing river, on their way to the overthrow of the black man's power; or return past those mission shanties from futile pursuit of a flying king? Would white farmers in this valley ever show how the thing should be done? or white troopers hold the fort on that opposite slope? Fifty years later these things, and much else, had come to pass; and in the life of Africa fifty years is but a span.

From the summit of this same hill might be seen the smoke of a hundred villages "sitting in darkness," awaiting the light, which the Church had in her keeping. Queer little colonies of humanity were they; villages such as had been built in that valley for untold centuries, with huts whose design had never altered for a thousand years. Huts of sticks and daub, rudely thatched with long grass and grouped around the cattle kraal. Huts and kraal surrounded by a thorn fence, as protection against the wild beasts, which roamed the land seeking whom and what they might devour. No chimney, no window to these huts; one aperture serving all purposes. No furniture, and most modest of kitchen apparatus. For with these natives of Matebele Land, the simple life had been reduced to a fine art. What need of fork and spoon when there were the more convenient fingers always at hand? Filth and untidiness, scantiness and nakedness, were everywhere, and everywhere the picturesque.

Around and between the villages lay the gardens; and around and beyond the gardens, the pasturage of their own and Nature's flocks and herds. The Nkwekwizi valley was a natural Zoological

Gardens. The observant eye might distinguish the stately giraffe feeding off the tree tops, or the lordly elephant fanning himself in the tree shades. Here a group of zebras, there the graceful koodoos. A pack of wild dogs might perchance be seen chasing some wounded antelope, hopelessly flying for dear life. In the river the occasional crocodile idled away the time, and in its lower reaches and pools the bloated hippopotamus basked. In those early days the large game drank at the mission dam, and were sometimes shot from the threshold of the mission house. And at night the hideous laugh of the hyaena revealed him ever prowling around on deeds of darkness bent. If some wakeful little one heard, he would, with a shiver, cuddle closer to the protecting arms thrown around him; for of all living creatures the wolf was most hated as the prince of "abatagati" (witches). Lions found too warm a welcome to stay long in this valley; for they were a game worthy of the prowess of a people ever keen for deeds of valour.

About a mile from the mission station to the north was the town of Inyati, with a population of from six hundred to a thousand souls. It was the capital of the country and the royal residence. It was a collection of huts ranged within two concentric ring fences of branches and thorns, perhaps 300–400 yards in outer diameter, with a distance of some 100 feet between the fences. Here each family had its section or compound, containing huts for the head, one for each of the wives, and others for the young people and slaves. Some tidy and even dainty, others dilapidated and filthy. In each compound was one or more hut-like granaries; and in each division of the town hut-shelters, lifted high on poles, for the keeping of the king's shields. The great open space in the middle of the town was the scene of town

gatherings, of cow milkings, of evolutions, and gossipings, of preachings by the teachers, and playings by the children.

The days of the mission station were full of work. Before dawn, with a break in the heat of the day, and long after sunset, the missionaries were at work. Evangelistic work, medical work, buying provisions, superintending, teaching, conversing, building, carpentering, all sorts and conditions of service and labour, running into far more than a statutory eight hours. Jack-of-all-trades was the missionary, maid-of-all-work was the missionary's wife. She added to the more ordinary duties of the housewife, the care of rats and ants, the making of soap and candles, etc.

But with evening came repose, and communion. Before candles were lighted, the families would gather for counsel and chat. Work for the day was done, the natives had long gone to their homes (they did not favour being out after dark), the evening meal eaten, the cattle safely penned, the cows milked, the children asleep, and everybody dead tired. From Inyati came sounds of revelry in beer-drinking and the dance. From above beamed the soft silver light of the moon and of the solemn stars, while away to the right, just visible above the horizon, was a part of the Great Bear; stars on which the home folk were looking. All around the mission station a great stillness, made all the more impressive by the vulgar interruptions from Inyati. Then prayer, and a little study of the language notes made during the day, and to bed. Now was the time for lions and wolves to snatch a meal, and guns must be handy even while the missionaries slept.

CHAPTER VII

ISOLATION

WITH the departure of Mr. Moffat the last link with the outer world was broken, for Mr. Sykes had already gone south with the Kuruman men. Messrs. Thomas and J. S. Moffat and their wives were alone, thousands of miles from home and all that was dear, hundreds of miles from the nearest resident of their own colour.

It was a trying position, especially for the wives. These men and women were not of the hunter-traveller type, to whom excitement and adventure were as the very breath of their nostrils. They were ordinary peace-loving folk, desiring only, if it were possible, to do their work without excitement and adventure. The hunt had no attraction for them, except as respects the larder ; and as for travelling, they were already surfeited.

The mission station was an island of Christian civilization in an ocean of barbarism ; the mainland, far below the horizon, and only to be reached after months of toilsome travel. Communication was possible only by the rare opportunity of casual traders' wagons ; while by the time news from home could be received, it was already ancient.

Inyati was in 1860 the advanced outpost of civilization from the south. It was 650 miles, as the crow flies, from the nearest white settlement, Kuruman. It was 1,200 miles from Cape Town, 1,100 and 370 miles respectively from the west and east coasts, on the 20th degree

of latitude. To the north the spectator, standing at Inyati, looked out on an illimitable ocean of heathenism, barbarism and cruelty too terrible for the imagination to contemplate. No star of a Christian settlement, no missionary meteor path, save that of David Livingstone from west to east, gave relief to that vision of night.

What pen can describe, what picture adequately illustrate that ocean of heathenism ? Once in England certain ladies rose from their seats at a lantern lecture describing Matebele life. They left as a protest against the exhibition of such scenes in a mixed assembly in England. Probably they were right ; but it is well to remember that those missionary ladies did not live amongst pictures. Pictures in a certain degree may offend the eye, but the eye alone.

The mission settlement at Inyati was lonely amid multitudes. There was a multitude of people, but no companionship ; plenty of labour, but little help. The closer the acquaintance with the MaTebele, the more conspicuously yawned the terrible gulf of separation. Approach to their minds might be won by learning their language, but that only revealed greater barbarism than their persons exhibited. Growing familiarity brought the teachers perilously near to contempt for their scholars. With the white men truth and honesty seemed fundamental virtues, with the black men they were needless and often expensive extravagances. No respectable Matebele woman would dream of eating with her husband or her sons. What a chasm is here suggested !

God, Christ, Eternal Life, Eternal Love, these were of the most intimate texture of the missionaries' mind ; but most remote from Matebele thought. The very presence of the missionaries was incomprehensible to the natives of the country. "Why are they

here? What do they want?" It took them years to solve these questions. The missionary was a mystery. Traders and hunters they could understand, but the missionary?

Sometimes the teachers tried to tell the people of their home across

COOKING.

the water; of the multitudes of people, one town containing more inhabitants than all the population of Matebele Land; of wagons running without the aid of horses or oxen, and surpassing the birds in the swiftness of their passage; of ships that would hold one of their towns, men, women, children, huts, cattle, sheep and goats, and

sufficient food to feed them all for days together. All this was unmitigated lying to the MaTebele ; absolutely incredible !

Then again, the simple habits of the white people were ludicrous extravagances to the MaTebele. Why all this paraphernalia of the dinner table ? Why the two skirts of the ladies worn at once ? Why the several rooms in a house ? Why a chimney ? These flowers

AN "INDODA" (MARRIED MAN) WEARING THE DISTINGUISHING MARK OF "UBUDODA" (MANHOOD), A RING ON HIS HEAD. THE TWO WOMEN ARE HIS WIVES.

that are tended so carefully in the garden, are they for food ? Out for a walk ! Admiring the landscape ! What on earth do these white men mean ? Are they mad ? What isolation is here revealed !

When the few of the AmaHoli (slaves) came doubtfully to work, they required to be instructed in the simplest elements of the white man's methods. It was difficult for a white man seriously to regard as assistance a native carrying a wheelbarrow on his head, or tying up a horse by the tail. Yet did these things actually

happen. It took the MaTebele long years to recognize the utility of washing up the plates and dishes used for a meal; "they are going to be used again, why wash them?" "Washing clothes and blankets only makes them thinner, and less protection against the cold, and the use of hot water in washing is surely the limit of folly!" Difficulties connected with domestic service in Europe tend to disappear in the light of these experiences. But the isolation they suggest!

The life of the mission station was a peculiarly happy one for early childhood. Probably none of the missionaries' children born in that land have any but the happiest memories of those golden days. The anxieties that ate out the hearts of their parents could not touch them. They did not miss a companionship they had never known, and England figured in their minds as that far-off fairyland of which mother told them in the children's hour. Strong were the ties born of that isolation, and deep sown were the seeds of parental influence. The conditions of life that proved so trying to the parents were precisely those which made the children peculiarly their own.

But—and there was a "but"—as the little folks grew they readily, more readily than their parents, picked up the language spoken all around them. Ingrained, interwoven, of the very texture and fabric of that language, as ordinarily used, was filth unspeakable, filth unrecognized as filth by the speakers. The native girls, hired as servants in the home, taught the missionaries' children the nastinesses current in their own ordinary home talk, and thought no harm of it. Of course the little folks knew not the wrong that was being done them. But the seed was sowed in that most fertile of soils, a young child's mind, and unless counteracted and destroyed, a harvest of evil was inevitable. Love and care could do a great deal; and all that love and care

could do, was done. Nearer than the enveloping heathenism was love of father and mother, love of home and of God.

In the early years letters came by opportunity, chance and rare. Disturbances down south, wars and rumours of wars, made such opportunities rarer, and dislocated the primitive postal service. Monthly, fortnightly, weekly posts by native runners became established as the years lengthened, and the white population of the country grew; but occasionally for months at a time the land would be isolated from the outer world. But when a belated post did come with news of home, and of the great wide world, what excitement! Everything dropped, every work suspended, children's lessons forgotten; for the post has come! News of home, that dear dear home! births, weddings and deaths! Father or mother passed, with last words of unsatisfied longing for the children so far away! The Christmas feast held as usual, the vacant chairs!

Sometimes excitement grew intense at the near approach of the long-expected stores and boxes from England. Perhaps at night, the crack of the wagon whip told that the wagon had come at last. The bairns are asleep, and the old folk ready for bed, but the tidings penetrated the realms of Morpheus, "The wagon has come," and in an incredibly short time the house is wide awake; very wide awake! The kiddies have long heard of the possible contents of those boxes, a Noah's ark, building bricks, picture books, etc., concrete love from the fairy land of England. Day and night they have dreamed of those things from grandpapas and grandmammas, from aunties and uncles, and now they are here! in this very house! Well, of course it's very foolish—but some of those things are torn out of their tin-lined cases, that there may come some chance of sleep for the excited youngsters—and their

parents. All very foolish, no doubt ! but the isolation has been very long.

Travellers and passers-by, one or two in a twelvemonth, were welcome indeed. Those mighty hunters, " Old Baas " Hartley, George Woods, " Elephant " Phillips, F. C. Selous, brought sunshine—better, welcome shade, for in that land sunshine burned. Conversation, argument, music (and games perhaps), brought relief, much help, and no little refreshment. For if these gentlemen did not always see eye to eye with the missionaries in the matter of their life work, did not always help in bringing best fruits of civilization to the untutored savage, yet were they always ready to lend a helping hand in the building or mending of home or church. When a French Vicomte will turn to

THE AUTHOR'S FIRST HOUSE AT INYATI (1877). IT MEASURED 17 FT. BY 11 FT. INTERNAL LENGTH AND BREADTH. IT MAY BE TAKEN AS TYPICAL OF MISSIONARIES' FIRST HOUSES.

and build an oven for a missionary's wife, when a university man will put down a pump which a missionary has bought but cannot use, when a hunter of world-wide fame will set up a head of game to relieve the emptiness of the mission house, or gather and preserve during a four months' hunt "knuckle bones" for the missionaries' children, then is realized that isolation has compensations.

It had its consolations. Not seldom the distance from the more familiar world brought nearer the spiritual world. It is probable that amid all their blunderings,—and worse,—those missionaries and their successors learned lessons, that were worth all the pains of isolation.

Occasionally the loneliness got the upper hand. That familiar hymn—

> Pleasant are Thy courts above,
> In the land of light and love;
> Pleasant are Thy courts below,
> In this land of sin and woe,

was sometimes sung in the solitary mission house with a catch in the throat. There are few services more moving than the Christian Communion Supper, especially when partaken by two families (perhaps one), sole inhabitants of a missionary outpost; the chalice a glass tumbler, the paten a china plate.

Or put it post-mortem, as it were, when the isolation is over and done with for a year or two, and the mission family, after a long spell in the interior, finds itself again in civilization. What a wonderful thing civilization is to children born in isolation! The railway train, the two-storied house, the boarded floor (what a noise it makes!), the sea, the ships, etc. And then, after their very best efforts, how unpresentable and unkempt is the mission family from the wilds! On Sunday they go to church for the first time for many years. The old

familiar hymn, the full rich congregational singing, the glorious roll of the organ! These things call an uprush from the hidden depths which checks utterance and hinders clear vision.

In no respect did isolation tell more heavily than when sickness invaded the home. One of the noble-hearted Kuruman volunteers had early fallen victim to the fever of the country; now a second was claimed. Late one afternoon in autumn (May), 1862, Mrs. Thomas took her little family for a walk in the cool of the day; pleasant but dangerous, as was learned later on. Next day there developed in mother and child symptoms of the dreaded fever, which soon became threatening. All that amateur medicine and tenderest nursing could do was done; but the yearning for the doctor's skill and experience became agonizing. If only a doctor could see them! The nearest medical man was perhaps a thousand miles away. Slowly the heavy gloom settled down on the home, and when day dawned the child was not, for God took her. Three days later the mother, worn by the hard service of her brief missionary life, rejoined her baby. Oh that empty home! That helpless father with his two motherless lads!

Yet could he have looked into the dreadful future, he might even then have prayed that they too should be taken; for in the prime of their early youth they both fell victims to the pitiless spear of the savages. The loss to the mission in the passing of Mrs. Thomas was very great. She had been loved by all for her genuine kindheartedness, her warm affection, her constant consideration for everybody's well-being. Such gracious personalities are everywhere the salt of the earth, the lubricators of society; but nowhere are they more valued than in these tiny islands of civilization. The helplessness of isolation!

CHAPTER VIII

EARLY DAYS

THE whole round of life at a mission station, such as Inyati, was missionary service. Indeed in after years, it was said by more than one of the natives that the first impressions made on them were made by the lives of the mission families. The teaching, though of the simplest, was for the most part beyond their comprehension : but the strong true lives of love open before their eyes from day to day touched them deeply. It was all so utterly different from anything they had seen before, so completely in contrast with their own home lives.

The Sunday services at the king's town were continued by the aid of an interpreter. It was a poor crutch of a method, this preaching by interpreter, to be thrown away as soon as the missionaries had mastered the language sufficiently to hobble along by themselves. The heat that glowed in the preacher's thought was passed through the cooling chamber of the interpreter's unsympathetic mind. Many strange things leaked into the discourse, and many essential things leaked out of it.

The method was this. A sentence spoken in Sechuana by the preacher would be repeated in Sintebele, with or without blunders, which of course the preacher would be unable to detect and correct. And there were too many full stops.

Now Mzilikazi knew Sechuana, and would frequently help out the interpreter, when he halted for a word. This was the more easy, seeing that his majesty, from earlier intercourse with Moffat, knew a good deal of the " doctrine." Of course whenever the king intervened in this way (or when he sneezed), it was customary for his loyal subjects to shout his praises. Lustily they did it, with no thought for message or preacher. The theme might be " God so loved the world," but if Mzilikazi came to the interpreter's assistance, there would be a volley of praises, such as " I dle amadoda " (Eater of men), or " Nkosi yezulu " (King of the heaven).

Occasionally the king would stoutly express his dissent from the doctrine preached. Maybe his conscience pricked him, maybe he feared the effect on his people. One day when the resurrection was the theme, his majesty promptly told the interpreter to " hold his noise, and not tell such lies to the people." A volley, " King of the heaven ! Calf of the black cow ! " On another occasion he distracted attention by saying aloud, " Teacher, your wagon wheels need shortening." A volley, " Black king ! Black calf of Bulawayo ! " These earlier missionaries had need of patience ; and many were the lessons they learned from their barbarian disciples.

Whether the king heard more than he liked, or whether he tired of the preaching, he gradually left attending service ; though he never failed to call the people together when requested. Occasionally he would be beforehand with the query, " Is not to-morrow the day of God ? "

With the king's abstention from service and not infrequent absences from Inyati, it became the custom to hold worship in the morning at the mission station, followed in the afternoon by preaching at the

town. Greater freedom prevailed under these conditions, and fewer interruptions; but the congregations were smaller.

Gradually the missionaries extended operations, and began to visit the villages in the neighbourhood. At first the folk were too nervous to approach the white men (such queer uncanny beings!); but when they found no evil results following, they grew bolder. As many as 150 people would be reached during the week in the three villages nearest to the mission station.

With common inconsistency, the king was pleased on several occasions to show his appreciation of these efforts to enlighten his people, while he himself rejected the light. He heard of the first visit of Mr. Thomas to Monyakanya's village, and sent an ox as a token of friendship and gratitude. "The whole country is before you, teach where you will, and whom you will; and may you be successful!" This was the royal charter for the mission.

Occasionally there gleamed forth signs of encouragement. Men were heard repeating, almost verbatim, some prayer or address to those who had not been present at the service. The healthy practice of catechising, now and then, gave hopeful results; but though the missionaries' command of the language increased, the same could not be said of the natives' power of comprehension. An old man hit the truth exactly, one day, when he said, "I understand the words, which are our own, but the teaching beats me."

Then, as counterbalance to the encouragement, came swiftly some discouragement. The people were so utterly indifferent that any impression was almost immediately effaced. After months of hearing, a question would reveal only dense ignorance. One man asked: "How can the teacher say that Jesus was only good, when it was He who sent

the sun to burn up their corn and grass, so that they and their cattle were like to die of hunger ? " But this flicker of thought waned and died.

Attempts were made to induce the people, especially the children, to learn to read. Some consented at once, thinking that " medicine " would enable them to achieve swift conquest of the mystery. When they found that it meant weeks and months of steady toil, they became discouraged. Nine out of ten said: " We fear the king; he does not wish us to learn, otherwise he would learn himself, or at least send his own children to be taught. How can we do what the king does not wish us to do ? "

Then Mzilikazi, appealed to, would take up his plaint and tell how lazy the folks were. Thus excuse and counter-excuse were made again and yet again, and between the two the bewildered teacher was helpless and bruised as a shuttle-cock. But even a Matebele missionary's patience finds ending at last ; and one fine morning one of these same missionary shuttle-cocks took heart to end the game by talking very plainly to his majesty. And lo ! the king was pleased to be gracious, and did immediately summon the induna and several other of the headmen of the village of Inyati before him; and then and there, in the presence of each other and of certain other indunas, did tell them straight that they were lazy, and must learn the white man's book. It was a notable day, Friday, February 1, 1867. But in the light of what followed there was only too good ground to think that this was a solemn piece of mockery, performed to save the king's majesty from the importunity of the missionaries.

On the following Friday, meekly, obediently came the induna to make arrangements for this unwelcome school, wishing all the time

that——! Never did naughty boy go to school less willingly. Agreement was made that school was to begin next morning. Mr. Thomas would teach for one week, Mr. Sykes taking up the toil for the second week. A fair muster of children appeared on that Saturday morning, but on the Sunday a falling off was there. On Monday the school was in peril of going out, and when Mr. Sykes took up his turn, sixteen scholars presented themselves. The second week's work brought down the total to four, and in the third week the school disappeared. It may have been a joke to king and council, but it was a cruel disappointment to the missionaries.

Of course the thing might have been easily achieved on this wise. A sheep killed each morning would have secured a large regular attendance. Indeed some experiment of the kind was tried, but the voice of wisdom spoke decisively against it. On the whole some six or eight men appeared really wishful to learn, and came three or four times a week in a desultory sort of way. A few women also put on a semblance of studiousness and joined, in hopes of reward.

Then was tried subtilty, and during the season work was given. Sometimes thirty or forty girls and boys would be busy in the gardens of the mission from 8 o'clock in the morning till school time in the afternoon. After school, pay! At this there was general grumbling, and excuses. Pay before school, and persuasion from the missionaries, resulted in a drop in attendance from nine to one. Yet after all this seemed to be the more excellent way, most promising of fruitful result.

Closest touch was maintained throughout with the king, and the missionaries took every opportunity of conversing with him. In this quiet but effective way much was learned of the language and customs of the people (to be stored for future use); and much teaching done.

The old king appreciated his new friends more and more. He asked them to give up living at Inyati, and to come and live with him continually. "I am always glad when you are with me, my heart is white when I see you; and when you are at my camp, I say to myself, God is with me." In curious corroboration one of the head men said to Mr. Sykes: "We always notice that the king does not kill so many people when you white men are at the camp. He loves you, and knows that you do not like killing."

Many members of the royal household and court showed marked fondness for the society of the white men. Mangwana, eldest son of Mzilikazi, was constantly riding down to the mission station for conversation—and a cup of coffee. The superior houses and simple furniture excited his admiration. "Why should not I have a house into which I might walk erect instead of being compelled to enter on my hands and knees?" Manqeba, a high state official, and others went so far as to give up the native doctors and to trust themselves wholly to the medicine of the missionaries; thereby of course rousing the more active opposition of the "profession."

Medical work occupied much time, and was much appreciated. The new methods of tooth extraction especially appealed to a people who suffered greatly at the hands of native dentists. Their practice was to place a small bar of iron against the base of the tooth and hammer the other end of the bar till the tooth came out. Even the amateur use of forceps was better than that.

In view of medicines given free, there sprang up a passion for the nastiest potions. Smacking of the lips has been known to accompany a dose of castor oil taken neat. But a distinct novelty was introduced in the idea that cure should be accompanied by a present from the

doctor. "You have healed me, now tie my waist with a strip of calico, that my heart may be white also."

On occasion, aid was rendered to Mzilikazi himself. Here, however, was no ordinary risk. What if the king were to die under the white man's medication? Happily only good resulted from their practice.

European modes of dress began to come into fashion, and most men sought to wear some fragment of civilization. As might be expected, originality marked their attempts in a striking degree. A solitary waistcoat, or an equally solitary hat, was much affected. Here might be seen a waistcoat and coat, with the waistcoat worn outside the coat. There an elegant costume of a single shirt. One man insinuated as much of his manly form as was possible into the body of a white girl's dress given to his daughter. Another inventive genius fitted an old pair of trousers to the purposes of a jacket.

Towards the end of 1861 a great misfortune befell the nation, at the hands of white men. But this also turned out for the furtherance of the Gospel, and gave the missionaries additional opportunity of service. The misfortune caught the natives on their sorest place, and was a hard test of the position the teachers had won in their estimation. Some traders, less careful of the interests of customers than other white men had been of friends, brought the dreaded lung sickness into the country among their trek cattle. The infection spread like a veldt fire, and the cattle of the MaTebele began to die in their thousands. Without discrimination the blame might easily have been laid on the missionaries. But under so great a provocation king and people exhibited remarkable restraint.

Inoculation had been found a very effective protection, and inoculation was resorted to in the effort to save some at least of the nation's

wealth. The operation was performed by inserting a piece of candle wick soaked in serum from a diseased lung into the end of the tail of a healthy beast. It was by no means a pleasant or easy task, and for three months the teachers spent the best part of every day in stitching tails, opening tumours, and cutting off the ends of the tails that could not be saved.

One thing tended to reconcile the people at large to the losses of the wealthy. Never before had there been such abundance of meat for their consumption. That the meat was diseased mattered nothing, rottenness itself could not prevent full meals.

Slowly but surely the mission grew in favour. The king remained gracious, and with that the demeanour of the people improved. Of course they still begged, outrageously they begged. They still stole on every conceivable and inconceivable occasion. The unripe corn in the mission gardens was cut and carried when none was looking. Hunger might be alleged in excuse, but that did not fill the missionaries' corn sacks.

By the end of the year 1861, they had so far won the confidence of the people, that they were able to purchase whatever was required of the produce of the country, and to move freely about without exciting suspicion.

With closer acquaintance was revealed the deeper miseries and horrors of heathenism, of which some account will occupy several of the following chapters.

CHAPTER IX

ASSEGAIS

THE brand of war was burnt into the Zulu temperament by Tjaka the Terrible, and into the MaTebele by Mzilikazi. The only career open to Matebele boys was war ; the only ambition of young men, distinction in war. The glory of old men was their prowess in war ; the boast of women, young and old, the deeds of fathers, husbands, brothers and sons in war. Almost any day might be seen at the king's town bands of young men burning to distinguish themselves in war and seeking permission to raid. An old woman, whose son had deserted to live and work among the white men, rolled on the ground in her misery and filled the air with her lamentations, " I have no son now to carry the king's spear into war." Exceptions among both men and women here were, but they were few and of poor esteem among their fellows. Shedding of blood and cruel torture made up the Matebele idea of martial glory, wholly unredeemed by those worthier attributes associated with war in the minds of Europeans.

The nation and its wealth were largely recruited from the annual raids in search of slaves and cattle. Often more raids than one were organized each year, but always one.

When the time and destination of a raid had been determined, certain regiments were summoned to the king's town to be " doctored."

IMPI DANCING BEFORE LOBENGULA, OUTSIDE BULAWAYO.

The town is seen in the background, with a trader's house on the left. The illustration is copied from a painting by the late T. Baines, F.R.G.S. It was presented by him to Lobengula, who hung it in his European house. The king gave it to E. A. Maund, Esq., in whose possession it remains, and who has kindly permitted this copy to be made.

They would muster between 2,000 and 3,000 strong, each man bearing sheet or blanket tightly rolled and carried over the shoulder; and armed with spears, clubs and ox-hide shields. One part of the ceremonies was horrible in the extreme. The impi, ranged in a great ring awaited the "doctor." In the centre of the ring was the victim, a young black bull in his prime, held by the hands of the younger men. The doctor cut from the poor brute a steak or joint, and while the wretched animal bellowed out its life, the living beef was handed round for each warrior to take bit or bite. So the strength and ferocity of the bull nature was supposed to be communicated to the troops. If

report may be credited, rites more abominable than this were sometimes performed.

Thus prepared, the impi set forth on its errand of death. Imagination might easily picture the raid after such a send-off. No thought here of chivalry, or mercy. Not defence, but defiance! Not hearth and home, but cruelty and murder, death and destruction!

The tribes to be raided were perhaps 200 or 300 miles distant, living their simple lives all unconscious of the fate prepared for them. Lest they should take alarm, the destination of the impi was kept a close secret, and the advance so rapid that no warning could precede the attack. Swiftly the hot thirsty miles were traversed. Early in the morning, ere it was light, the march commenced; and late into the night it was continued, rest being taken in the heat of the day and in the heart of the darkness. Oxen from the commissariat troop accompanying them were slaughtered as needed, and sleep was sound and secure in the open veldt. In a fortnight or three weeks the impi approached its destination. Perhaps the attack was to be made at night; and at a distance the impi waited its time.

It is a quiet peaceful scene at evening in that Karanga village. The work of the day is over, the cattle, sheep and goats are securely penned. The evening meal has been eaten, and children's eyes are growing sleepy. There is no moon by light of which the people can dance and sing as they delight to do, and very soon the little folks creep under their skin blankets and are fast asleep. The parents soon follow, a little sitting round the wood fires, lingering in chat, then to sleep; and the whole village is still and silent. 'Tis a poor place, filthy and untidy, a mean collection of dirty grass huts surrounded by a hedge of brushwood. A poor place, fit only to be burned, that the world

might be rid of its filth and vermin. But it is home, sweet home! A blot it is on the fair veldt, and yet somehow harmonizing therewith.

Very grand is the African veldt at night. Wide as the ocean, solemn as the sky, still as the grave. The distant roar of lions or the nearer laugh of hyaenas alone break the silence. And the stars look down benignly. But what are these? Long lines of black ghostly forms, noiseless and swift! They are the arms of the advancing impi stretched out to embrace the doomed village. Then is the night silence rent by flames of burning huts, and groans of murdered people. All is soon drowned in the shouts of the butchers as they continue their devilish work in neighbouring villages. Night passes into day, and the impi still destroys. The MaTebele are hunting out the fugitives, and amusing themselves by torturing such prisoners as are deemed useless. The sun looks down on a shambles, where only yesterday were happy homes and laughing children. Poor bairns, there is no laugh in them now! sobbing and frightened, hardly yet realizing what has come to them, they cower together. So the whole district is harried; children, young women, cattle, sheep and goats, and such things as are deemed worth taking, are collected for the march homeward. Some of the captives are unfit for the long weary tramp, these are weeded out and killed in cold blood; and the march begins. Oh those weary miles! those tired limbs! those sad faces! Not a child but what is burdened with the spoils of its own home. Soon the strength gives out, and one here and another there fails; blows and cuts alike fail to rouse, for energy is spent and heart is broken. Then the swift blow of the club, and the child body marks the road the impi travels. One victim after another, some left alive, some

killed in savage pity ; and the lions and wolves make merry over their bones.

So the triumphant impi returns and parades before the king, with its herds of cattle, flocks of sheep and goats, and groups of silent slaves. On one raid some 6,000 beasts were captured, and about 450 men and women killed.

The spoils were distributed at the pleasure of the king. But the boys, survivors of the raid, destined to be Matebele warriors, must be hardened. To that end they were fed only on meat ; and compelled to sleep out in the open, exposed to the chilly winds and heavy dews, without blanket or other covering. Huddled together round the fire those nearest were scorched, afraid to move, lest they should be unable to regain their places. The horrors of it all ! the nightmare horrors of the raid !

But the crowning horror lies here. The final survivors of all this butchery, trained in Matebele traditions, become MaTebele in blood-thirstiness ; and grown to young man's estate, proudly take the king's spear and " wash it " in the blood of their own countrymen. If any national system and tradition were wrought in hell surely it were this. This the cherished glory of the country, these the tales told by old men to their children, this the inspiration of manhood !

In later years one of these raiding parties passed the mission house at Hope Fountain ; and in derision the amajahha (young men) called on the missionary to come out and look at their spoil. There were droves upon droves of cattle, a great troop of slaves about seventy in number, mothers with babies, grown up boys, but mostly little children. They represented many times their number of murdered fathers, brothers and husbands who had fought vainly, desperately for

homes and dear ones. They represented many wearied, heart-broken victims murdered by the wayside. And the missionaries of the Compassionate One looked on helpless and heartsick. O ye MaTebele! "if ye had known, even ye!"

The king was kind enough in his way to the boys remaining with him, but some of his warriors were far otherwise. In all cases this "hardening" process was sufficiently brutal, sufficiently wasteful of human life. It was pitiful to see those children fed, a huge lump of cooked beef tossed to them as a bone might be tossed to the dogs, the while king and company look on laughingly, as the children tear with tooth and nail, each for the largest piece, careless of his fellows. Sickening beyond words—yet will some say, "Savages are happy enough in their ignorance, let them alone."

A KARANGA VILLAGE PERCHED AMONG THE ROCKS IN FEAR OF THE MATEBELE.

An impi was once dispatched to raid some MaShona to the north, reputed to be rich in cattle and children. A subject tribe under one Samenuga was appointed to supply guides. Reaching its destination, the impi found that the victims had received warning, and had fled with all their possessions. It was reported to the king that Samenuga's people had given the warning, and frustrated the raid. Secret orders were sent to the impi, which resulted in a return by way of Samenuga's village, not many miles from Inyati.

The king's soldiers were received hospitably, and provided with the best the village could offer. In the morning the men finished the remains of last night's feast, and then, with the food of hospitality still in their mouths, they rose up and commenced the massacre of every villager. Men, women and children were speared and clubbed, for the order had been given to spare none.

Half-a-dozen little girls sought refuge in an empty corn pit, a large hole in the ground with very small mouth, hoping there to escape the sharp eyes of the Matebele soldiery. But to no purpose! "The noble savages" found the little refugees, but moved by no feelings of compassion or chivalry, they prodded in the pit with their spears till all the bairns were dead. One alone escaped, badly wounded. A man drew her out of the hole, and brought her to the mission station, asking whether she could be healed. The spear had pierced her lung from the back, and in part she breathed through the wound. When the missionary waxed indignant at men making war on children, the savages laughed, and bade him hold his peace if he could not heal her. Happily she died, poor bairnie! Her's was a sad fate, and she was only one out of many thousand victims of the Matebele lust for blood.

After another raid towards the Victoria Falls, a member of the Paris

Missionary Society found the remains of a village which the MaTebele had just destroyed. Mangled corpses were lying about among the embers of burned huts. One gruesome sight roused horror and indignation to white heat. Fastened to the ground was a row of bodies, men and women, who had been pegged down and left to the sun's scorching heat by day, and the cold dews by night ; left to the tender mercies of pestering flies and ravenous beasts. To add to their agonies a huge fire had been lighted against their feet, and the ashes of it were still warm.

Instances well-nigh without number might be adduced of brutalities almost past belief, but enough has been written here. Only by degrees, in moments of confidence, were these horrors revealed to the teachers, who groaned sick at heart at the doings of the people to whom God had sent them.

Expostulation with the king was frequent, but to no purpose ; and the missionaries could only appeal to the King of kings, the Great Avenger.

Slowly but surely that vengeance was being prepared.

It might be supposed that the abominations of the raid, here hinted at, would be exhibited in some form before the eyes of the missionaries at home. But that was not so. Men only to be described as devils abroad might fairly be said to earn the title of gentlemen at home, so far at least as the missionaries could see. They appeared to understand how hateful in the white men's eyes were these atrocities, and kept them out of sight.

More than once impis fresh from marauding camped on the mission station. Yet no theft, no personal insult, no disrespectful word marked their stay. The missionaries slept that night in the

hollow of the impi's hand, so to speak, but the teachers were the king's friends, woe to the man who should lay hands on them!

It is hardly too much to say that through the thirty-three years that the missionaries were at the mercy of the Matebele king (absolutely so under God), their lives were the safest in the country; probably safer than those of other white men, certainly safer than those of any of the natives. The reason is clear. Missionaries were "Ba ka Mtjete" (Moffat's children), Mtjete was bosom friend of Mzilikazi, and Mzilikazi was god. His was the supreme power, even after he had passed into the land of "shadows!" anything he did or sanctioned was sacred and unchangeable. Therefore were the missionaries safe and spared the sight of much of the unspeakable wickedness which they knew quite well was going on around them.

This is knowledge gained largely in retrospect. During the passage of those long weary years, at times there was almost constant insult and annoyance. Any day might be heard at the king's town the cry of the young men, the young bloods, the fire-eaters, "Si p'amakiwa nkosi!" (Give us the white men, chief). Had the king agreed, they would have made short work of the scattered handful of white people then in the country. What might have happened then did happen in the rebellion of 1896. Undoubtedly there were times of great anxiety, when probably no insurance office would have accepted the lives of the white people in Matebele Land. But the good hand of the Lord was upon His servants for their safety all the days.

CHAPTER X

AMADLOZI

AWAY in the background of Africa's thinking, out of sight and well-nigh out of mind, lies some vague notion of God. Far away and unmindful of men, He might as well not exist, so far as the MaTebele were concerned. To Him no prayer was offered, no praise sung. Yet was He in some sort represented in the land.

Among the Matopo Hills was a town called Matjetjeni; to the south another town, Njeleli; and to the south-west a third, Mkombo, all towns belonging to a god in whom the people had great faith. He was not a man, he was a spirit invisible and intangible. He dwelt in a cave, and was represented by a priest who was commonly taken for the god himself. Away to the north lived one Salakazana, a goddess "with one eye, one ear, one nostril, one arm and one leg." She had a son also a god, called Mondoro. All these were Mashuna gods, but in the spirit of the old Romans they were accepted by the MaTebele, who did not hesitate on occasion to consult them. But the investigator would be told that the three were one, all of them manifestations of one Mwali. He it was who made all men white and black, and all things on the face of the earth.

There were also sons of God, one of the principal of whom, Njugwa by name, was held in high esteem by the MaShuna, and utilized by the Matebele king for his own purposes. During the ravages of

the lung sickness, he was called to the king's town to assist in driving that scourge out of the country; a labour in which he did not meet with any conspicuous success. He was small and slight, with large bleared eyes, which he rolled slowly when performing, or when he perceived that he was watched. At other times they were quick and inquisitive. His hair was curiously twisted to project before and behind, while the rest hung down on either side of his head in long curls. He held a number of small calabashes containing some minute stones, the calabashes being strung together and shaken to serve the purposes of a rattle. He squatted on the ground, tailor fashion, with his head thrown back, one hand holding the calabashes, one hand on his hip. He was the centre of a group of girls who clapped hands and chanted a kind of refrain at every pause in his song. He kept up a succession of spasmodic jerks, while at the same time a kind of falsetto chant seemed to drop from his mouth. The rattling or rustling of the calabashes formed the only instrumental accompaniment to his performance. This was the native idea of the son of God! Ultimately Njugwa was found out by the king and thrown to the crocodiles, a meet reward for his many villainies.

Far more important in Matebele esteem than Mwali, because nearer and more active, were the amadlozi or shadows of the departed. People when they die are dead and done for, just like cattle; and the amadlozi are their shadows. The MaTebele will not admit that these amadlozi are people. They say, "They are dead people, and are like that," pointing to the shadow on the ground.

Bad amadlozi are driven into the veldt, far from the haunts of men. Good amadlozi inhabit the villages and homes of the people, to help and bless the living. Sometimes the amadlozi take shape

as a particular kind of snake; and very rarely they may be seen as ghosts. No native will ever kill one of these snakes found on his premises. That were a grievous offence against the amadlozi, and fraught with much ill-luck to the family. One day a trader killed such a snake, and the natives in hot indignation reported the affair to the king. "Poor fellow," said he, "these white men know no better."

A missionary was asked to visit a sick girl. He attended her several times, but with no benefit to the patient. Then did the mother think it high time to bestir herself: she turned to the back part of the hut, "the shrine" of the family so to say, and roundly rated the amadlozi for neglect of duty in not assisting the medicine of the teacher. A happy land for doctors that, where not the profession but another is blámed for failure!

On another occasion there came a man with a problem to the mission station. Said he: "Supposing a man walking along does not see, lying among the grass bordering the path, a nice stick just fit to make a club; but another man, following soon after, sees the stick and gets it for his use. Why does the first man miss the stick, and the second see it and get it?" The answer given was to the effect that the first man was looking in another direction, and attending to some other matter; while the second man happened to look in the right direction at the right time. With some impatience at the answer, which was obviously no solution, the questioner said, "Nothing of the sort! the first man was on bad terms with his amadlozi, and they failed to point him to where the stick lay: the second man's amadlozi told him, 'There is a nice stick out there in the grass. Go and get it.'"

Therefore it is reckoned well to keep on good terms with the amadlozi. It pays. In order to ensure their benign activity, offerings of food and drink are sometimes made to them at appropriate places. With a dead person also are buried the utensils he was accustomed to use, and small portions of food, that in the "shadow" state he may not be destitute.

The great annual festival, the "Big Dance" (Inxwala enkulu), was associated with the king's amadlozi, that is, with the "shadows" of the king's ancestors. It was held when the moon was full in the middle of summer (December or January), having been preceded by the "Little Dance" on the day before that same moon appeared.

The "Little Dance" (Inxwala encinyane) celebrated the "Feast of the First-Fruits." The king must of course be first in everything, and he must be first in tasting the new fruits of the season.

The "doctors" having attended to the king, went the round of the military towns of the country. For this ceremony all men and youths were required to present themselves at the town to which they belonged. On the appointed day, they gathered in the central commonage, and in their presence the "doctor" cooked pieces of vegetable marrow and other garden stuff in milk, along with the proper medicines. Meantime other preparations resulted in a certain snuff which was apportioned out to the assembly, and taken with the natural result. It was an edifying spectacle, 200 or 300 men sneezing their hardest. But no flicker of a smile was ever seen on any faces but those of white spectators. The vegetable marrow being ready for consumption, was poured into a large wooden trough; and, at a given signal, flung among the people that he might catch who could. The hot liquor was then drunk or tasted by all, lapping dog

fashion. After this rite the people were free to eat of the fruits of the garden as they became available.

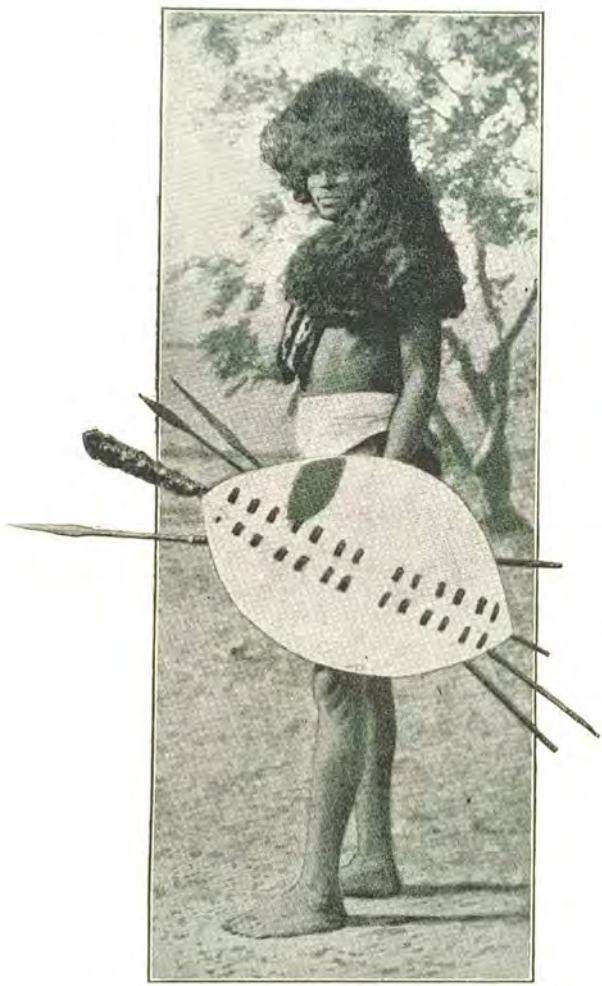
At this feast new fire was made for the country. In every well-regulated hut the fire on the hearth was kept alive under the ashes throughout the year. Only just before the arrival of the "doctor" was it suffered to go out, and new fire obtained from him. At the same time the old hearth-stones (used to support the pot over the fire) were thrown away and new ones selected.

In the interval between the feasts the king's power was in abeyance, and a hereditary triumvirate were lords of the land. Neither native nor white man was permitted to enter or leave the country during this interval, nor might any man be killed.

As the time of the Inxwala approached fatigue parties got to work preparing huts for the reception of the impis. A day or two later they gathered, mustering 8,000 or 10,000 strong. Immediately on arrival the warriors proceeded to the ceremonial cleansing, which happily included a bath in the stream.

The next morning the impis gathered in the immense commonage within the chief town, in front of the royal enclosure. Arrayed in all the glory of their war dresses, they made a brave show. These dresses comprised head-dress and cape of black ostrich feathers, armlets of long white hair from the tails of cattle, plumes of the wild buzzard, and such bright-coloured calicoes as they had been able to procure for the occasion.

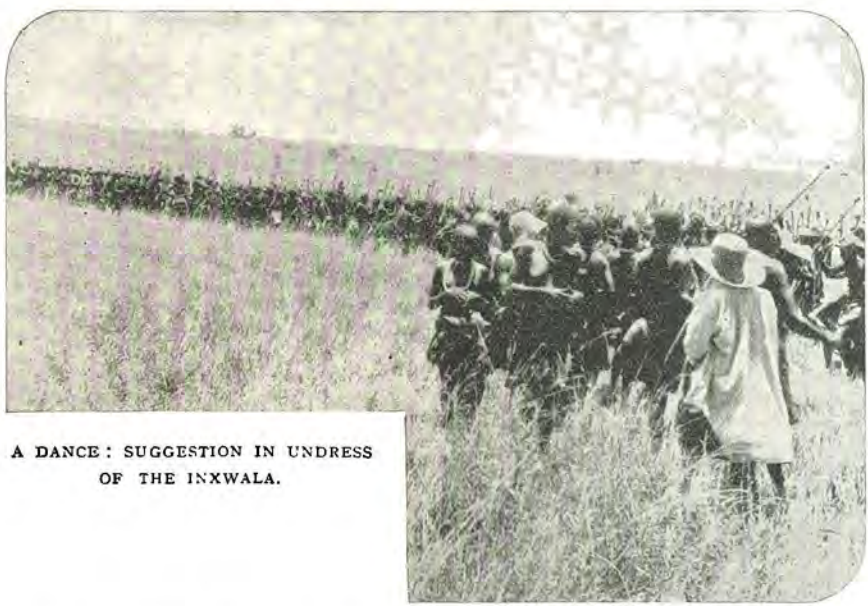
While the king was being ceremonially prepared and otherwise dressed in all his best, the impis delighted themselves and the spectators with song and dance. There were very many onlookers of the gentler sex, who would by and by have abundant opportunity of displaying



A LIJAHHA, IN FULL DRESS FOR THE INXWALA.

their charms and finery; indeed, it was a great time for the young folk, and they made the most of it, after their kind the wide world over.

A very pretty feature of the dancing was the "cornstalk dance." The sticks were removed from the shields, and the shields themselves laid aside. These sticks had twisted round their ends strips of fur, and the general effect when they were held upright, each in the hand of a warrior, was that of a corn field. The song which accompanied was of course of an appropriate character.



A DANCE: SUGGESTION IN UNDRESS OF THE INXWALA.

Meanwhile the king had been duly prepared, and now appeared in all the magnificence of his splendid war dress. The impis greeted their lord with roars of welcome, stentorian shoutings of his praises, tumultuous beatings of the war shields. It was a right noble royal salute, and subject to his kingly corpulence and advancing years (with sundry touches of gout), right worthily did his majesty attempt acknow-

ledgment in semblance of a dance. But a few paces and one or two well-intentioned leaps were sufficient. Then came the great war song, with words such as these—

> Come and see at Matjobane's, come and see!
> Come and see at Matjobane's, come and see!
> Here is the business, the business of the spear!
> Come and see at Matjobane's, come and see!

Ten thousand magnificent savages, right gorgeously arrayed, swaying from side to side in the rhythmic dance, anon springing into the air as their excitement waxed, and with heart and soul pouring out a stirring volume of rich diapason song! Once heard and seen, that war song and dance could never be forgotten.

From one end of the array sprang a shrill whistle, which gathered force and fury as it passed down the ranks. It was the great war assegai of the Ma Tebele hissing its way to the heart of the nation's foe. This having hissed itself out, there came the opportunity of the year for the "heroes" to exhibit their prowess, and to tell in dumb show the story of their mighty deeds. They were received one by one with roars of applause. In vigorous pantomime they attacked, skilfully evaded the enemies' spears, and with tremendous gusto plunged their own assegais into the breasts of the foes. They stabbed again and again, and foe after foe fell before their terrific onslaught. Every stab in the air meant a life taken in actual conflict. These realistic displays, vividly bringing before the people incidents of the raid, roused tremendous enthusiasm, and king and army shouted their applause.

Then another kind of display occupied the stage. The beauties of the country, the king's wives, in groups, bedizened in all the finery of choice skins cunningly dressed, and a wonderful wealth of red and

blue calicoes (provided from the traders' stores by an indulgent spouse), moved in stately procession before king and people. Each of these royal ladies bore upright in her hand a long wand, which swayed gracefully with the undulations of her body.

The procession that followed was one of dread. The witch doctors, suggesting to civilized eyes a drabble from the slums, paraded their power; and all men, even the king, made way for them. None were anxious to meet their eye of doom. Those proud warriors who had even now delighted the mob with their prowess, shrank terror-stricken from these harbingers of death and disgrace; for before the festival ended some of themselves would have been claimed as victims.

The procession passed, and with something like a sigh of relief the impis returned to their singing and dancing. When the ground became clear one of the thrills of the day roused the feelings to tragedy point. It was the Grand Charge. At a given signal the united impis with tremendous shouting of their war cries charged down on the king, halting in full career within a few paces of his majesty. It was a tremendous effort, finely carried out. The king's guests sitting by his side might almost feel the breath of the savages on their cheeks. They could see the war fire in their eyes.

The sacrificial cattle were now turned loose into the veldt for their last run. After a fair start the amajahha (young men) went in hot pursuit, eager to distinguish themselves by a prompt return, like a foraging army with the spoils of the raid. In the interval those warriors who remained continued the song and dance; and again the ladies of the court, royal wives and noble maidens paraded in their graceful semi-dance.

The throwing of the assegai followed. The king headed the splendid procession of the army going forth as if to battle. A goodly force were they, and brave their show! Out from the town, in a direction previously determined, the king led them forth, presently to hurl his assegai at some invisible foe. Invisible then, but soon to be visible enough; for in that ceremony his majesty had indicated the direction of the raids of the coming year.

But the climax of the festival approached, the second day of the feast, when the king prayed for his people. The impis gathered once again in song and dance, the consecrated cattle were securely folded in the royal kraal, and over all an air of expectation. His majesty had been for some time invisible, but now, arrayed in full war dress as warrior high-priest of the nation, he presented himself for the royal salute, and passed into the cattle kraal. As he entered, a great silence fell on the assemblage, the impis at attention, the people reverent. In the holy place the king prayed to the "shadows" of his departed ancestors. He asked for their favour in the coming year. He prayed that the children of the nation might increase and grow strong, that their flocks and herds might flourish, that their crops might be heavy and their raids successful. His intercession finished, he offered cattle to each of the royal amadlozi by name. Then he withdrew and made way for the butchers.

The sacred cattle were taken out of the kraal and slaughtered; an occupation much to the taste of the amajahha, who could thus glut themselves with blood. Truly it was only the blood of beasts, but it was better than nothing. The wretched animals were speared and speared again till they fell. Any white man who cared to look might have seen numbers of these devoted oxen running about in

their terror, bleeding and bellowing in their death agony till they fell exhausted. The flaying and cutting up followed, and soon was erected to the honour and glory of the "shadows" a horrible mountain of flesh. None might eat of this sacrificial meat; it was reserved for the amadlozi, for whose food it had been slaughtered. To-morrow what the amadlozi left would be at the disposal of the impis and numerous camp followers. What could not be eaten there and then was carried away home, to be eaten after many days.

This was the climax of Matebele worship, the one great festival religious, military and civil. It was the height and glory of Matebele life and thought, imposing, barbaric, disgusting, the best they had.

CHAPTER XI

WITCHCRAFT

IN Matebele Land the seasons are two, dry season and rainy season. Rain may be expected in October and may continue till towards the end of March, when umbrellas and mackintoshes may be put away for six months. If the rain be long delayed the sufferings of the country are great. Crops fail and the people are barely able to keep themselves alive by foraging for wild fruits and roots, and by devouring all sorts of things living and dead. Those who have wherewith to buy are driven by hunger to seek food in districts where the season has been kinder.

Drought brought vividly before the missionaries the helpless superstition and blighting influences of heathenism. On one occasion the rains had been very long delayed, when the "mother of the town" (the king's wife resident there) sent word that there was to be no digging that day. The people were scouring the veldt in search of dead men's bones. It was the custom to throw away the bodies of all killed for witchcraft. Their bones, picked by the wolves, cleaned by the ants, and bleached by the sun, were held to be an offence to the clouds, and must be buried.

For many years a lion's skull rested in the fork of a tree in front

of one of the mission houses. Season after season, when rain was delayed, complaint was made of that skull. It was kept in position as an object lesson. But the regularity of the complaint would have been amusing, had it not been pitiful.

Some pegs had been driven into the ground in preparation for the repair of the mission dam. During drought certain of the people said, "How can the rain fall when those pegs are continually pointing up at the sky?" Later the rain fell, so that the people wished it would stop, and the men who made the complaint were confronted with the pegs and reminded of their words. But the lesson was not learned.

The missionary children forbore to fly their kites in October if the clouds were gathering; then also the missionaries refrained from shooting lest they gave offence to the people.

The profession of the rain doctor was one of the most important, but it was risky. If he failed too badly or too often, there was the vengeance of a disappointed king and people to be faced. The king was chief rain doctor, and he spent a good deal of time in arranging for a suitable rainfall. Of course he pursued his labours in complete security, for "the king can do no wrong."

One Sunday, while folk were gathering for the usual service, Mzilikazi said to the preacher, "Ask God for rain, pray for us, our gardens are burnt by the sun, and we shall die of hunger this year, therefore pray for us." The missionary did so. But that same afternoon the king slaughtered five oxen for rain-making purposes, preparing the way, that when the rain came it might be attributed to his own high powers.

How these rain doctors wrought remained the secret of the profession; but it may be guessed that common sense, acute observation, and native shrewdness made up a large part of their stock-in-trade.

To these may be added a degree of impudence approaching the sublime, and some medicines to give the necessary air of mystery.

Rainmaking was a comparatively harmless superstition, except sometimes to the rain-maker himself. Of course when rain followed his efforts every one was vastly pleased, and no one would grudge a liberal fee to one who ran so great risks and worked so hard. No doubt he "made money"; not in coin, but in kind.

There was, however, another superstition by no means harmless, which gradually unfolded its terrible strength before the horrified missionaries. Witchcraft was lord of the minds of the people, even as Mzilikazi was lord of their bodies. They say that belief in it lingers in England to-day, but it is only in obscure mental corners and out-of-the-way minds. But all through Africa it is lord paramount in native thinking. It rules with deadly sway.

The MaTebele believe that it is in the power of an evilly disposed person, by means of pourings and mixings, of mutterings and sprinklings, to do deadly harm to another, without in any way appearing to do it. Certain medicines sprinkled on the threshold of a man's hut will make him pine away. A little clay image of an enemy pierced with a thorn or two, plus muttering of formulas, will result in his being slain by somebody's assegai. The real evil doer can only be found out by the witch doctor.

On the banks of a beautiful stream was found a crocodile, dead and disembowelled. Cause for gratitude, one would think! seeing that there was one less destroyer of life to menace the inhabitants. Wherein the MaTebele would say, "There you shew the ignorance of the white men on such matters." To them it was an occurrence as serious as the coming of small-pox. Some miscreant had possessed

himself of a huge stock of the most potent medicine known in witchcraft, the liver of the crocodile.

The matter was duly reported to the king, and he passed it on to the head witch doctor, whose duty it was to discover and counteract witches. He brought in guilty a man living in a village overlooking the scene of the crocodile's death. Probably he was entirely innocent of any hand in the matter. Probably also he had enemies at court, who seized this opportunity of settling old scores.

INYANGA, OR "DOCTOR." THIS GENTLEMAN IS A WITCH DOCTOR.

No chance was given to the unfortunate man to exculpate himself. For the authorities to do that, would be folly where a witch was concerned. The witch doctor sees unerringly, and nothing can be gained by inquiry. Bewitching does not permit of trial like ordinary crimes, nor are ordinary methods of any avail against it. Bewitching must be met by methods known only to the witch doctor. So the poor wretch, peacefully living with his wife and family in that pretty village among the hills, was condemned all unheard.

The king sent at once to carry out the sentence. And as the messengers of death hurried to their work, the sun shone on them, the birds sang to them, and the flowers smiled in their faces, but they saw and heard not. They found the man sitting in his hut drinking beer.

He knew them to be king's boys, and divined their purpose. He thought, however, to make a dash for life, and dissembled. He invited them to drink beer with him; and they, nothing loth, sat down to the beer basket with their victim. But he watched his opportunity, slipped out of the hut, and leaping the fence was away before they could prevent him. They pursued, but he made good his escape, and was never more seen in Matebele Land. Balked of their man and finding themselves in a difficulty for letting him escape, they returned to the village, where they made a clean sweep of the family, killing even the baby. Taking all the man's belongings, they returned to the king with an incomplete report. But the king did not know, and said "Gu lungile" (It is well). So another tragedy ended.

This was no extraordinary occurrence; probably no single day passed without one or more being done to death in the accursed name of witchcraft. Sometimes a high-born lady, sometimes a slave, sometimes a whole village. In one week the headmen of six villages were thus killed and thrown to the wolves.

Two of the most important men in the nation, Monyebe and his brother, men distinguished for their kindness, straightness and wisdom, were by this means put to death from pure spite.

The king's son had the misfortune to shoot himself through the head. This was clearly due to witchcraft, they said; and the crime was fastened on a little Mashuna village, where every inhabitant was put to death.

Xokotwayo, the commander-in-chief, charged certain people in his own and neighbouring towns with bewitching him, and nine persons were beaten to death.

In witchcraft the envious, jealous and aggrieved found a safe and

effective weapon. They had only to insinuate, and allow the poison to work. Matebele society was terrorized, and no man's life was safe. A man's foes were often those of his own household.

In 1878 Messrs. Helm and Cockin found a middle-aged woman in the veldt worn to skin and bone. She was calling piteously for water. The missionaries brought her home and did what was possible for her, but the poor soul refused all food, and in three or four days died. She was in terror lest her home folk should find her and kill her. Her son-in-law, the induna of a neighbouring town, was called to bury her, but he was afraid. The work boys of the station were called to dig a grave, but they refused. They offered to tie a rein to her legs and to drag her out to the wolves. Eventually Mr. Helm, with the aid of two other Europeans, laid the poor bones decently to rest, and reported the matter to the king.

She was the wife of the king's cousin, and had been charged and driven from home by her own husband. She went to her son in another village, and was driven from there without a morsel of food. She went to her daughter, and again was driven away empty and forlorn. She went to another daughter, and was hounded out naked and starving. So for three weeks did this poor victim of a horrible superstition wander about, feeding on roots, growing weaker and weaker, without a friend, till the missionary found her, too late. How she escaped the wolves at night was a mystery.

This tragedy must not be put down to lack of natural affection; of that the MaTebele had a good share. It was due entirely to the awful hold which this dread of witchcraft had on the souls of the people. Who can deliver from such devilry? The British power has put an end for ever to the killing for witchcraft; but who can deliver the

people from the thraldom in which mind and heart are bound? "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

These are two of the many forms in which superstition holds sway over the MaTebele. Superstition is eldest born of ignorance, and their ignorance is dense as their pride of knowledge is great.

Charms are very generally worn as protection and help. A charm is generally the first adornment of the baby, and is deemed more necessary than the bath. They are worn by the king on the throne, and by the meanest of his subjects. The hunter has a charm to help him to shoot straight, the traveller one to protect him from the lions. The physician has charms to assist him in his practice, the agriculturist to give good crops. They preside over a man's course from birth to death, and they are buried with him in his grave. The preparation of these charms is one of the most profitable branches of the "doctor's" craft.

There is a distinct preference for water from a pool whence a snake has come. To be bitten by a crab is to die childless. There is a certain hill, "the hill of the snake," towards which no native will point whilst rain is falling, lest the rain cease and the cold come. No woman may touch an ox or a cow; for her to do so would result in misfortune to the animal. Indeed, no woman is allowed to pass through the village cattle kraal, for the same reason. In the early days of the mission trouble threatened because of the refusal of Mr. Thomas to conform to the custom requiring the nearest relative of a dead person to retire to the hills or other secluded spot for purification. Otherwise, said the natives, when they come to us, or we go to them, harm will assuredly result. But why continue? The list of Matebele superstitions is well-nigh limitless. One more illustration may conclude this chapter.

Many years ago war was contemplated with Mzila, chief of a tribe living away to the east. But there was division in the national council. Some were for the war, others were against it. Two cocks, therefore, were brought before the king and set to fight the matter out. One cock stood for Lobengula, one for Mzila. Mzila won. Further test was demanded, and two rams were similarly opposed. Again Mzila won. A third time trial was made with two bulls, and for the third time Mzila won. Then was all thought of the war dropped. Would that all war scares could be as easily laid.

CHAPTER XII

ZWONGENDABA

AT the time of the establishment of the Matebele Mission Mzilikazi was probably about sixty years of age, by no means old in years, yet was he worn out and visibly becoming feebler every day. Truly he had lived a strenuous life, full of fierce activity, full also of self-indulgence.

Within two years of their arrival at Inyati the teachers saw ground for anxiety concerning the king's health. They knew that the king (the embodiment of the Matebele tradition) was the main hindrance to the people learning, but they knew also that his authority maintained their position in the country. He himself had said that people grumbled at him for introducing so many white men to build and live in the land. It was probably a diplomatic lie founded on a fragment of truth.

Beyond doubt the question was important: When Mzilikazi died, what would be the position of the missionaries? They might discuss that problem, possibly grow anxious, but they could not solve it. Happily it was in the hand of the Great Father, and there the teachers were presently content to leave it.

Meantime the poor old king suffered cruelly from gout. Mr. Thomas did a good deal to relieve the pain, but the disease grew upon him.

He could no longer walk, and was carried by his wives in an armchair that had been the gift of Mtjete. He grew petulant and at times childish, and his personal attendants had a hard time of it. Yet they and all the people loved him in their savage way.

In 1868 it became clear that the old man could not last much longer. The missionaries were with him as often as possible, and in June Mr. Sykes paid him a visit that was to prove the last. All he could then say to his teacher was, "I am very ill." The one thing which roused his failing soul was tidings of Mtjete. At the sound of that loved name his countenance beamed, but he could say nothing. Formerly, when he received the teachers there had always been joke or playful trick. Now there was nothing.

Early in September (1868), Mr. Sykes left Inyati for the south, and called at the king's town to bid his majesty good-bye. He found him dying, and remained to the end. On the 9th some of the queens and indunas were sitting with the king in his hut, when about the middle of the afternoon that subtle change took place, which proclaimed that the angel of death was at hand. One of the men, a great warrior, who had distinguished himself in Matebele fashion in many a raid, could not endure the sight of the dying king. Mzilikazi had been the central figure in his life, and with his passing the sun had gone from the heavens. From that failing hand he had received every favour and every honour. With him (and with scores of others) the glory of Mzilikazi obscured all else, and to see him die unmanned him. Presently one of the queens came out with the word that all was over; that for the MaTebele the sun had set and darkness covered their hearts, not to be dispelled till the new king should be installed.

A few of the head men, shaken by a deep and very real grief, went

into the hut, gathered the blankets and rugs in which the king had been lying, and in them carefully wrapped the body till a thickness of some three feet had been attained. At dusk the corpse was taken in a cart to Mhlahlandlela, where in his own hut the dead king was laid. Indunas took charge and watched round the hut by day and night, while within relays of queens with plugged nostrils kept guard.

With the king's incapacity to hold the reins of government, Mncumbata, hereditary regent, had taken charge, and he at once ordered a muster of impis to the number of some 5,000. This was done partly in honour of the deceased monarch, and partly to prevent any disorder. But the wisdom and experience of the regent, his high character and intimacy with Mzilikazi, commanded fullest respect, and the most perfect order was maintained throughout the land.

Steps were taken to find the heir. All men knew that Mzilikazi had appointed him twenty years before, and that in accordance with Zulu custom he had been driven from home to await in exile his accession to power. All knew that his name was Nkulumane (Kuruman), and some remembered his person; but beyond this all was ignorance. Every effort was at once put forth to find him, in which Mncumbata was assisted by the Colonial authorities.

During this black uncertainty the loyalty displayed by all classes, prince, induna and commoner, was wonderful. It might almost be called an infatuation. It was generally supposed that the usual custom would be followed; and that the new king would duly kill out of the way other sons of his father, from whom there might be the slightest chance of opposition, as well as those who had held office under the late king, lest their notions should interfere with his own absolute supremacy. Yet the nation was solid in loyally holding the kingdom

for the Royal Unknown. Those whose lives might be supposed to be in jeopardy hoped that they might be spared: but "Who could tell what was in the heart of a king?" They told each other: "Perhaps he has been with the English and has learned the white man's book; but who can tell what a king will do?" So they waited and searched, keeping his inheritance and their own consciences. After all they were his; it was his affair whether he killed or allowed them to live. "Shall not the king do as he wills with his own?"

Mr. Sykes took the opportunity to discuss the position of the missionaries with the leading men, and received the assurance that theirs were probably the safest lives in the country. They were widely known and thoroughly trusted. Moreover, were they not Mtjete's children, and was not Mtjete bosom friend of Mzilikazi? Said the indunas: "The new king will be sure to love the teachers, and not a man in the country would wish to see them leave." Making full allowance for the fascination which flattery has for the untutored savage, there seemed to be real evidence that the MaTebele regarded the missionaries among their best friends, though they paid so little attention to their instruction.

The prospects that permission and encouragement to learn might be given to the people were also wrapped in complete obscurity. It all depended on the character and outlook of the coming king. Some hoped that he would know the book, that they themselves might also learn. Others hoped that he would maintain the old traditions in all their horrid integrity. But it mattered not what they hoped; the new king would do as it pleased him.

On the first Sunday after the death, men were too much absorbed

in the great event to attend to any teaching. But on the second Sunday Mr. Sykes preached to large congregations. The third Sabbath opened cold and drizzling. The people would not leave their huts in such weather to go and sit in the open and listen to a man preaching. They had no comfortable church in which to gather, and were by no means without excuse. Mr. Sykes wisely waited till the sun should warm things up a bit. But while waiting, in that cold drizzle there came certain heathen men to the wagon to know whether it were not the "day of God"? "Would there be any teaching to-day?" They had come from a town at which Mr. Sykes had preached some time previously, and this seemed a good opportunity of hearing more. Never was cold water sweeter to thirsty soul, than that request to the ears and heart of the missionary. Mr. Sykes preached that day to two congregations of 300 and 700; and in the evening there was much talk over the camp fires of the things of which the teacher had spoken that day. If only the new king should favour the teaching!

As he was taking leave of the Inyati division to continue his journey to the Cape, Mr. Sykes was bidden by the people to make all haste back again; and as the wagon moved off a voice rose above the hubbub, "Greetings to the son of Mtjete" (Rev. J. S. Moffat): immediately, as with one mind, came the cry, "All of us! All of us!" It seemed then as if some, even in Matebele Land, waited for the coming of the Kingdom.

In due time Mzilikazi's corpse was buried in the cave prepared for it in the Matopo Hills. Wrapped in his blankets and rugs, laid in his wagon, surrounded by such personal belongings as were likely to be useful to him in "Shadow Land," he lay in wild barbaric state. Black cattle were slaughtered to the "shadows" of the mighty dead,

and by them the " doctor " introduced Mzilikazi to his new companionship. As was customary, adulation was extreme, and the " doctor " did not forget to tell the " shadows " that the king had been well and faithfully served by his people.

A number of men were appointed to guard the burial place, and to that end built themselves a village hard by the cave. Towards the end of the dry season it was usual for the MaTebele to fire the dry grass, that the ashes might enrich the new herbage. High winds often fanned these fires beyond all control; and as a protection men in the early morning, and while the air was still, burned the grass in a broad belt round their villages. This was being done at the royal grave, when a sudden breeze sprang up which carried the fire with devouring fury towards the wagon, where everything was speedily reduced to ashes. There could be but one penalty for so grievous a " fault." The whole village was ruthlessly put to death.

Meantime the missing heir could not be found. Some said that Nkulumane was dead; indeed, one of the leading men positively affirmed that by his hand and under Mzilikazi's orders, the prince had been slain. Nevertheless, search was continued in Natal, and in all likely places. The Government of Natal offered every facility, and Sir Theophilus Shepstone assisted, but no Nkulumane revealed himself.

When everything had been done that could be done, Lobengula was approached. He resolutely refused to entertain the notion of becoming king, in loyalty to his brother. It was only after the most urgent protestations of the responsible heads of the government that he yielded, and in January was inaugurated king of the MaTebele.

This important function extended over two months. The building of a new town for the new chief, with much feasting and drinking

(after the manner of men everywhere) was the main item in the programme. Lobengula was demanded and fetched by the army from his own town and attended in royal progress to the nation's town, Mhlahlandlela, where with much ceremony the final charge constituted him king.

Unfortunately, unanimity of loyalty was lacking, and about a third of one of the main divisions of the army, including Inyati, held to their allegiance to Nkulumane. Their headquarters were at Zwongendaba, a town about nine miles to the south of Inyati. Their leader was the induna Mbigo, a man of moderate standing in the country. The party were few in number, but included many of the greatest warriors in the land, and it was hoped that, in action, their prowess would turn the scale in favour of Nkulumane. With them it was Nkulumane or death!

Every effort was made by Lobengula to induce Mbigo to meet him and his indunas for consultation, but without effect. Thereupon the king, bent on peace if by any means it might be accomplished, determined to go in person to Zwongendaba to consult with the rebel leader. Mbigo, afraid of being taken at a disadvantage, called his men together. Lobengula camped about ten miles away. He had displayed extraordinary patience and forbearance, and had been as often openly derided by the rebels. He never showed the smallest resentment, but again and again sent friendly messages, without result. This was to be his last endeavour after peace.

On Saturday, June 4, 1870, the king harangued his forces. "I am going in person to settle with Mbigo, and if he refuses to come to terms, you (the army) must be prepared to show that there can be one king only in the country."

On Sunday morning Lobengula mounted his horse, and with Mncumbata in a wagon (because of his advanced age) went towards Zwongendaba. When close up to the town, they were fired at by three men who had been lying in wait, hoping no doubt to end the dispute by one lucky shot. As king and regent turned to the cover of the army a smart fusillade rattled about them. One bullet whizzed close by the chief, and grazed the neck of his brother's horse at his side.

The two armies at once joined in a fight, which lasted from about 11 a.m. till 1.30 p.m., and resulted in a complete victory for the royalists. The casualties were 250–300 killed (including Mbigo), and as many wounded. During the first onslaught many men on both sides fought with European muskets, and for a short time the rebels drove the king's men back. But muskets were soon thrown away and all betook themselves to spear and shield. The royalists, reinforced, regained their ground and drove the rebels in confusion, capturing and burning the town.

Again the spear proved to be, in the hands of experts, most deadly of weapons. The main fight was carried on at close quarters, and two men were found each with his spear sticking in his opponent's breast. Wounds were mainly in front. The rebel wounded, not able to get away, must have been killed; but, friend or foe, wounded men stood a poor chance from any but their own immediate relations. The dead of the king's side were buried or covered with thorny bushes, others were left to the wolves. The women and children of the town must have fled before the battle began, for none were killed.

That evening (Sunday) the mission station was crowded with

refugees and wounded. On Monday morning, Messrs. Sykes and Thomson rode over to the battle field, and gave what attention was possible to the wounded. They had no assistance in their errand of mercy from the indunas in charge, or from any native.

Mr. Thomson did his best for the wounded, but they were a most unsatisfactory lot. One threw away his life because he could not endure the discomfort of the bandages applied to control bleeding. They grumbled at the ordinary native food provided free for them, worrying the teachers to kill their trek oxen that they might have meat. They stole the bandages used in the dressing of their wounds, in order that more might be used at the next dressing, to be made away with also. When they left cured, after weeks of attention, they demanded pay and presents, and stole everything they could lay their hands on. In the whole bunch there was not one solitary instance of gratitude.

On the Tuesday following the fight Mr. Sykes rode over to see the king at his camp. Just as he was starting about a hundred of the rebels came asking him to intercede for them. They were old acquaintances from Induba village, and found in the missionary an effective mediator. Lobengula at once promised that none of them should be pursued, nor should their homes be destroyed.

The king received the missionary very graciously, and though there were many waiting to see him, he gave two full hours to free, frank conversation. He said that the victory had been more easily won than he had expected. He was sad for the loss, but he had done his best to avoid a conflict; had he then withheld his hand, he would have forfeited honour and deserved the contempt of his people. He had been chosen by a large majority of the nation, and he thought it

only right to maintain his place, if the people would support him therein.

In the year 1872 there came alarm of invasion from one pretending to be the long lost Nkulumane. Many spies were found endeavouring to entice the people from their allegiance, but without success. The attempt fizzled out, and left the land at peace.

CHAPTER XIII

LOBENGULA

WHEN Lobengula " came to the throne " he was probably about forty years of age. Report has it that he was son of a Swazi mother, and was born when the MaTebele were living in Mariko. Had she been available, his own mother could not have told how old her son was when he became king. Neither she, nor her mighty husband, could have counted up to forty to save their lives. Perhaps she might have said, " Lobengula was born in the year that Mtjete first came to the king's." It is very probable that she would have given that as the date, in which case Lobengula would be forty-one years old when he was installed. He used to tell how he herded goats in Mariko. Now Matebele boys are sent to that occupation when they are about five years old, so that little " Loben " would have had about two years at it before coming north.

In education, as in much else, Matebele ways are not English ways. The veldt is the black boy's school, where are taught the elements of all that he is likely to want in after life; and a very good school it is for the purpose. Herding goats is child's play, a sort of " kindergarten," the beginning of things for the little lad. It is a great day for him when he thus " goes to school."

The training the boy gets in the veldt includes the development

of strength of wind and limb, of speed and agility. He acquires keenness of observation, and an ability to draw simple inferences from what he sees. He becomes skilful in the use of the club and assegai; and the miniature hunting in which he can indulge gives him the elements of the science of war.

Goats and sheep need to be herded in all weathers, and thus the herd gets inured to small hardships, and learns to find or make shelter from the storms of biting wind and driving rain. Goats and sheep do not need much herding, and if they did they would not always get it, for boys will be boys the wide world over. If the goats stray useful training results from the search, and from the thrashing consequent on the neglect.

Goatherds are clannish, and in clans they play and hunt and fight. With sharpened sticks (for assegais) they throw and stab at a swiftly rolling gourd set agoing by one of their number, each trying his utmost to show the best practice. With their little knobbed sticks they make excellent play in hunting the many small animals with which the veldt abounds, hurling the tiny clubs with increasing skill. When nothing else offers they can always fight, and broken heads are good training.

Alphabets and figures are nothing to them. They learn the alphabet of the veldt, even if they miss its literature. As for figures, the naked black laddies go one better than ourselves, in that they learn to tell at a glance, without the labour of counting, whether their flocks are entire or not.

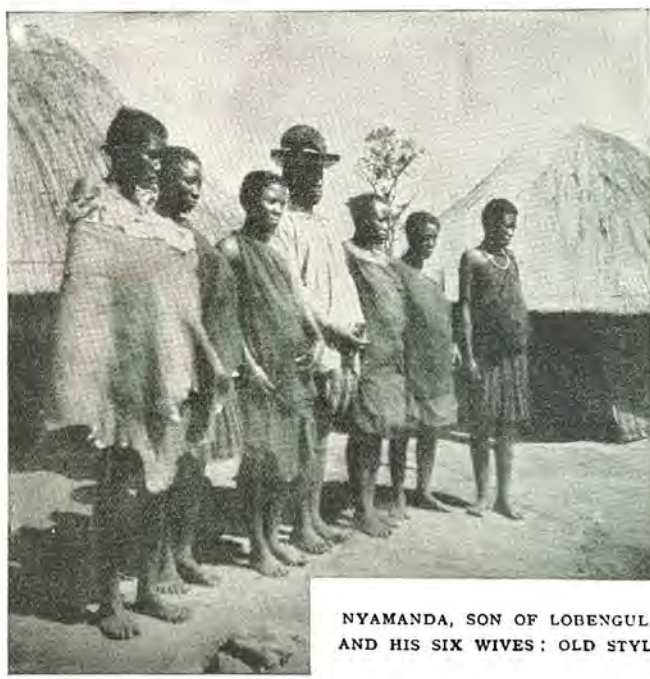
By and by comes promotion to the "higher forms," where herding of cattle is learned. The principles of training are the same; but the elements are left behind, and the young man takes up the study of the higher veldt craft, and feels the burden and dignity of the care

of the nation's cattle. The " university course " is taken in the hunting veldt ; after that—real life ! Now in this rough description, the phraseology may be semi-ironical, but the training is very real and very valuable ; possibly as effective for the purposes of the MaTebele as our own is for our purposes.

Lobengula went through all these. By an observant stranger he would as a boy and youth have been distinguished from his fellows only by his bearing, therein betraying noble birth. His " university tutor " was old " Baas Hartley " (of Hartley Hill), who made him a daring rider and an excellent shot. Report has it that he did not shirk the menial duties of cook and horse-boy ; all of infinite value to the future king. He learned to obey and serve, and thus became competent to rule.

LOSKAI, LOBENGULA'S CHIEF WIFE, AND TWO OTHER QUEENS, WORKING WITH CORN.

Of the details of his life nothing is known beyond the scraps gathered from the letters, yarns and reminiscences of white men; yet his biography, could it be written in true detail, would be an interesting book. When he was married, and "how much" he was married, cannot be told. He died worth probably eighty wives; a putting



NYAMANDA, SON OF LOBENGULA, AND HIS SIX WIVES: OLD STYLE.

of the matter by no means so unfitting as might be supposed. He is said to have set his face against the "excessive marriage" of his father, who acquired some three hundred wives. So white men estimate it, for your MaTebele cannot count. Lobengula put his foot down heavily on the custom which permitted every man of birth

to offer his marriageable daughter to the king (for a consideration, of course), declining to be hustled into matrimony.

In person he was "every inch a king," standing probably six feet in nothing. In the earlier years of his reign, he constantly wore European clothes; but some blight fell on him and his rule, destroying the promise of those days. He returned to a primitive simplicity in attire, which displayed more effectually his kingly proportions. It must be noted that he set a fine example of cleanliness to his people, which they appeared in no hurry to follow. He was, according to his light, a well-preserved man. In feature he was sensual, but his smile was the smile of a child. His manner was courteous, and the heartiness of his hand-shake was something to be remembered. This was no native custom, but a remnant of his fondness for things English, which he did not drop when he fell back into habits of native dress. Lobengula was fond of unbending, both with his own people but more especially with white folk. His delight in hunting yarns was great, and ability to tell them effectively a sure avenue to his favour. He himself was a good story-teller.

NYAMANDA, SON OF LOBENGULA: NEW STYLE.

A white man of large experience regarded him as one of the most intelligent natives he had met. Lobengula must certainly have been of exceptional ability to govern successfully so turbulent a people

as the MaTebele. An illustration will show a logical mind well able to conduct an argument.

It was a time of relaxation, and king and courtiers were enjoying a chat. Lobengula was seated on his favourite "throne," an empty

LOBENGULA'S ISIGODLA.

Lobengula and courtiers. The house is the brick-built house shown in ruins on page 121.

wine case, clad in ordinary native attire. Around him in front, squatting on the ground, were a number of indunas and other men. Mr. Elliott from Inyati was of the party. The conversation led to a remark by the king to the effect that—

"God made some cattle black and some cattle white." This, of course, brought forth great applause, as did all royal utterances. Nor

could any exception be taken by the most captious critic to so obvious a truth. Then the king proceeded—

"God made some men black and some men white." Again general agreement.

"And God made some men good and some men bad." Applause from the courtiers, and dissent from the missionary, to the simulated indignation of everybody but Lobengula himself.

"No, king; God never made anything bad."

"Then who did make men bad, if God did not? for certainly men are bad."

"It was the devil that made men bad."

"Who made the devil bad?" demanded his majesty. Now that is a question more easily asked than answered. It has been discussed by the keenest intellects of the Church for many hundreds of years, without satisfactory answer; and what was a poor missionary to do? However, he made shift to reply to the problem of the ages, spoken through the mouth of a modern savage, by falling back on the solution offered in "Paradise Lost." Mr. Elliott said—

"We do not know, king, who made the devil bad, but one of our great men has said that the devil was once a trusted servant of God, and seeing himself so highly exalted he conceived the desire to be greater still, until he thought to be in the place of God Himself. It is just as if you, king, had a trusted servant to whom you gave cattle and wives, till there was only yourself in all the land greater than he. Then as if in his pride of heart he were to think, 'I will be greatest of all, I will be king.' In that way we think that the devil became bad."

"Then," said Lobengula, "why did not God kill the devil? I

would certainly have killed that man." To which there was no obvious reply.

Undoubtedly Lobengula was the hardest-worked man in all his dominions, and of him it might truly be said, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." One of the missionaries, while listening to the complaints and reports of the almost constant stream of messengers

SCENE IN LOBENGULA'S BULAWAYO.

and others, said, "It is hard to be a king." It was with evident thankfulness for the sympathy in the tone that he answered, "It is indeed hard, teacher."

Every one had access to him, though as a rule every one was only too pleased to keep out of his way. Still messengers, complainants, officials, beggars, kept the poor man pretty busy. In addition, there was all the rain-making dependent on him; there was the constant

oversight of measures necessary for the protection of the nation from the abatagati (witches). Most days the royal pot was on the fire in the sanctum sanctorum (the goat kraal), cooking the "hell broth" (anti witch medicine), as the white traders called it. When he was busy on these things of high state, the poor king would sometimes appear decorated with streaks of black paint across brow and breast, sadly marring the general effect of royal dignity.

LOBENGULA.
(Sketched from life by Mr. E. A. Maund.)

Very much might be written in illustration of this man, who for over twenty years was the protector and hinderer of mission work in Matebele Land. But space does not permit. His brick built house was interesting, and so were the contents. A brass four-post bedstead, a carved and gilt armchair upholstered in crimson velvet, a large musical box, a heap of loaves of native tobacco brought as tribute, a great heap of native corn, a number of very fine rifles, and, later, a large picture of Queen Victoria sent by her to Lobengula and signed by her own royal hand, all thrown together in indiscriminate confusion.

"Chief, why don't you keep your house tidy?" said Mrs. Elliott, to him one day.

"Ah! Mississi, I have no one to keep it nice for me," replied the king, entering into the humour of the question.

RUINS OF LOBENGULA'S HOUSE, BUILT OF BURNT BRICK BY A YORKSHIREMAN.

"But you have all these wives doing nothing, why not set them to the work?"

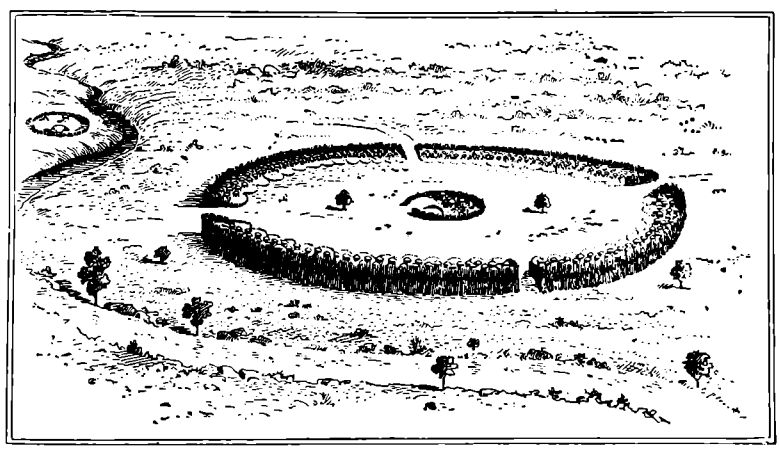
"Oh! they won't do as I tell them!"

"Then you should have one wife like a white man. She would do as you told her."

One outstanding feature of the king's character and policy has impressed all who knew him—his fondness for and fidelity to the white men. It has been said, and truly said, that every white man who in Lobengula's country maintained his own self-respect might be sure of considerate treatment from the king. Perhaps there might be exceptions, and perhaps the exceptions might turn out to be more apparent than real. Lobengula had an unruly people, and there is reason to think that his power was not by any means as great as his father's, that sometimes he was compelled from motives of policy

to acquiesce in a rough treatment of white men which would not have been permitted had he been himself in a surer position.

Let this be noted to the lasting honour of Lobengula, that when in the day of his darkest destiny (November, 1893), the white men's impis advancing to take away his place and name, he was most careful to secure the safety of his white men friends. Mr. Bowen Rees and family he sent out of the country under escort, and Messrs. Fairbairn



BIRD'S-EYE SKETCH OF BULAWAYO IN THE DAYS OF LOBENGULA.
The small enclosure in the centre of the town is the king's "isigodla," wherein were located his "palace," cattle, kraals, etc.

and Usher, traders, he put into the care of a trusted induna, to be responsible for their safety with his own life. When the attacking forces reached Bulawayo, king and people had fled, the town and king's house were in flames, but unscathed and untouched were the traders and their stores. A finer example of loyalty to friends is not to be found in all the annals of civilized Europe.

All who knew him, all who had lived in his country, who had

suffered perhaps not a little annoyance and insult from his people, all who knew the ghastly cruelties that were perpetrated in his name, by his orders, and sometimes by his own hand, will yet heave a sigh at his untimely end, and breathe what is almost, if not quite, a prayer, "Poor old Loben."

CHAPTER XIV

HOPE FOUNTAIN

IN 1865 it became necessary for Mr. and Mrs. Moffat to go south for medical treatment, and Mr. and Mrs. Sykes made a short trip to recruit in their company, for mission life in Matebele Land in those early days played havoc with health. This exodus left Mr. and Mrs. Thomas alone. Their position was difficult, and the work which claimed their attention various and abundant. Cattle had to be herded, and sheep and goats, nor could they be herded together; the gardens to be tended, the house-work done, to say nothing of the insistent claims of direct mission work. For all this the only help available was that of two little girls and a boy of nine years of age.

This is given as an ordinary illustration of the great strain—undermanning of the mission—imposed on the missionaries. The conditions altogether were unspeakably depressing. The climate depressed, the loneliness depressed, the apathy of the people depressed, the non-success depressed, the incessant strain of working beyond strength depressed, and the result was disastrous to the work. To withstand and overcome in Matebele Land in those early years demanded a small colony of, say, half-a-dozen families, whereas at times there was only one family, and occasionally one man. The thing was impossible.

Thus quite early in the history of the mission, it became evident that the work must either be abandoned or strongly reinforced. Two

stations, with two families at each station, seemed ideal till better times should dawn. But the king set his face like flint against any suggestion of more missionaries. He was always friendly, and he faithfully stood by his promise to Moffat, but he would have no more missionaries. Attempt after attempt to get his assent was made through many years, only to meet with repeated rebuffs.

Mr. Price was forbidden to enter the country. Mr. McKenzie met with a warm welcome as a visitor, but could obtain no liberty to teach. Mr. Wookey paid a visit and went away hopeless. It was not till 1870 that success was at last achieved.

In the intervening years great changes had taken place. Mzilikazi had been gathered to his fathers, and Lobengula his son reigned in his stead. Mr. Thomas had left the L.M.S., and had taken up independent mission work at a beautiful spot given by Lobengula and christened "Shiloh." From the bare veldt he made there a home and a farm, and there he laboured hard and long for Christ and the MaTebele.

Mr. and Mrs. Sykes were alone at Inyati (broken health prevented the Moffats from returning), and in 1870 Mr. Thomson arrived as his colleague. He threw himself heart and soul into the work of the station, but ere long he also began to dream of two stations, with two families at each; the second station to be near the king's town.

The accession of the new king, and his notably favourable attitude to white men in general and missionaries in particular, offered an opportunity for one more attempt towards the accomplishment of their hearts' desire.

After some preliminary conversations, Messrs. Sykes and Thomson went to Bulawayo, the new chief town and royal residence, and boldly asked the king for a place where Mr. Thomson could build and teach.

To the great pleasure and surprise of the missionaries, the king said, "Where do you want to build? the country is before you, go and seek a place." They could hardly believe their ears, it semed too good to be true. That for which they had prayed and striven so long given at last. With hearts filled with gratitude to God they hastened to the search.

One of the indunas recommended a place as suitable for a mission station, and on examination they were mightily pleased with it. It seemed "just the thing." It was three miles and a half from Bulawayo, in a charming valley, with a beautiful spring of water, amid a large population.

Advice was sought from Messrs. Hartley and Baines, travellers of renown, than who none were more competent to form an opinion. They carefully examined the whole locality and gave a most favourable verdict. The two missionaries went at once to the king with their report, and were dumbfounded when Lobengula brusquely asked: "Why have you been riding about my country?"

"You told us to look for a new station where Thomson could build; we have been doing so with the help of Baines and Hartley."

"I do not want any more missionaries; I have enough." With this shot the king went away, leaving the dismayed missionaries to their disappointment.

Next day was Sunday, and Mr. Thomson preached to the people through an interpreter. The king had bidden him send word when the "great day" came, and he would attend the preaching. Mr. Thomson called, but the king was asleep, *anglicé* "Not at home."

Monday saw the king at the wagon, and the missionary introduced the topic uppermost in his mind. John Lee, an old resident, acted as

interpreter, in place of Mr. Sykes, who had returned to Inyati. A long talk ensued, in the course of which many questions were raised.

" Were missionaries of any use to the people ? " King and indunas seemed to be of opinion that the country was better without them.

" What is the message from God ? How would the message benefit him and his people ? What is the Missionary Society ? " To these questions from the king replies were given as seemed best under the very difficult circumstances.

" I believe in God, I believe that He made all things just as He wants them to remain. I believe God made the MaTebele just as He wished them to be ; it is wrong for any one to seek to alter them."

" But God does not want men to remain as they are ; they have gone away from Him, and He has sent His Son to bring them back again. God's Son has sent messengers to all men that they should return to Him. Our own people have advanced in every way through receiving that message."

" God has left His people so long I feel sure that He intends them to remain as they are."

Mr. Thomson quoted Madagascar, and told how the people had progressed there, and advised the king to try for himself whether God had left him to himself.

Lobengula replied that he had tried, that Sykes and Thomas had been there for long, and the people had not learned. Then he said he was tired, but he added to his indunas, " I see that this message will do us good in this world and in the other. It is a great matter ; I will take some time to think about it."

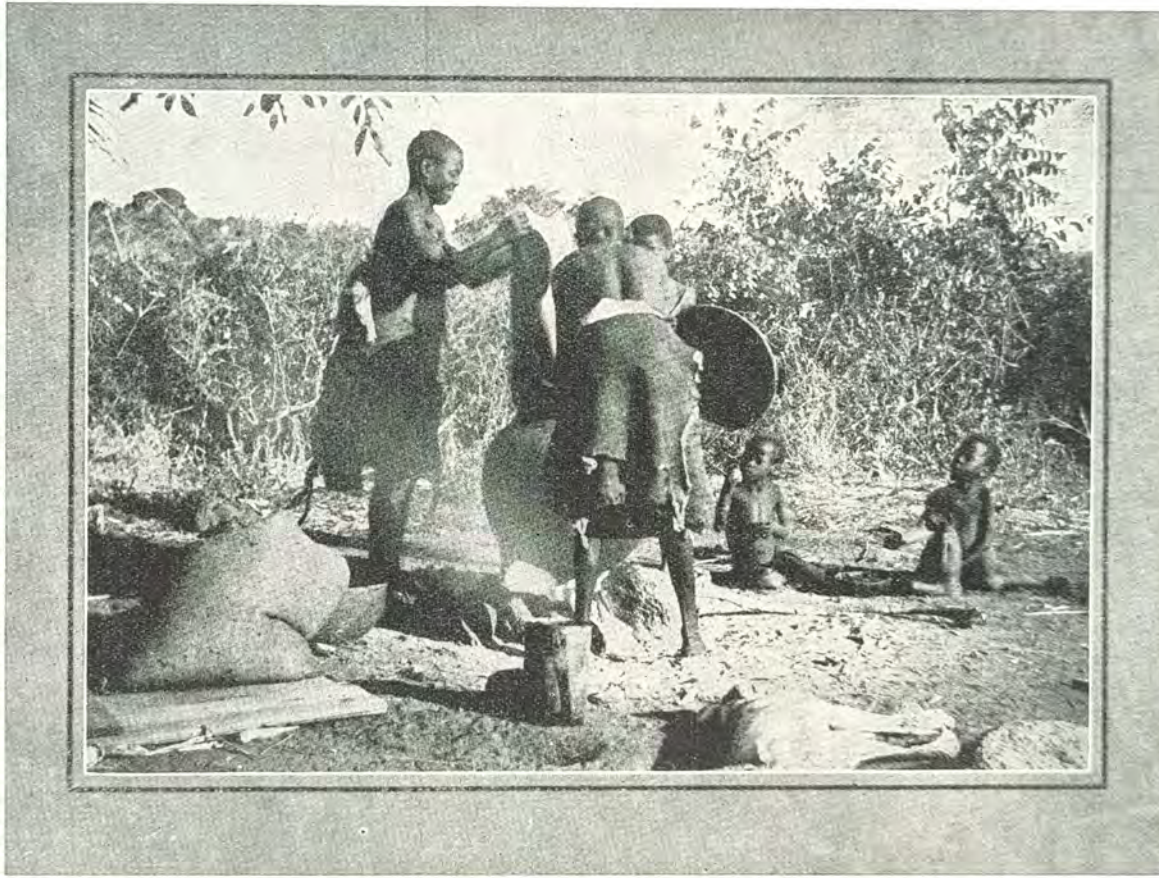
The king was understood to have said in private that he had not comprehended these things so well before. For a whole week the king

gave no sign. At last Mr. Thomson told him that his supplies were done, and that he must go home. Then he frankly said, "I give your Society that valley for a mission station as long as they like, under me as king, and no trader is to build there."

So ended the long struggle to obtain greater facilities to teach and help the MaTebele. What words can describe the joy and gratitude at this great victory!

Mr. Thomson set to work with vigour, to make the most of the time before the rains should set in. He employed a white man to build a wattle and daub house for him, during his absence at Committee at Kuruman; but the white man, after the manner of his type, took his ease, and the house was far from finished when family and stores were waiting for it. Under pressure of righteous indignation the house was hurriedly finished and scamped. Of course the roof fell in. That white man was a bad lot. Shall we say then, after the manner of some people in condemning an incompetent black man, "White men are no good at all"? We will not be so hopelessly silly. By the kind aid of two gentlemen visitors, Mr. Thomson soon finished the house sufficiently for occupation.

The making of a garden was a great labour. A dam had to be constructed for the irrigation of the garden. The stock of spades and shovels ran out, and recourse was had to the stores of friends. Workers were up to their knees in mud and water for days together, and some of the natives proved themselves of the same type as that white man, but with greater excuse. They appear to have thought it sufficient to start work about eleven o'clock in the morning and to finish about two p.m. This, with numerous intervals for snuffing, left little time for work.



COOKING LOCUSTS. MATABELE WOMEN.

Dame Nature also offered her contribution of worry in the form of locusts, which twice swept the gardens of every trace of greenery. But patience and perseverence proved once more triumphant.

The wattle and daub structure was good enough for a year or two, but something more permanent was necessary in a country where health and life depended, during a large part of the year, on shelter. Mr. Thomson brought up from Bechuana Land a builder, that the work might be well and quickly done, with as little interference as might be with the missionary's proper duties.

Immediately on taking up residence services and school had been established. The population was abundant, indeed the density which had characterized the Inyati district now belonged to Hope Fountain. This was largely due to the most excellent and sanitary habit the MaTebele had inherited of moving their towns every ten years or so. Without some such precaution life would have been impossible.

The king had long promised to pay Hope Fountain a visit, and in July, 1871, he came on horseback, and later on in his wagon. He had a good look round, took a great fancy to some of Mrs. Thomson's fowls, which she gave him; and was smitten by the satisfactory character of the bricks which were being made. He immediately set his own people to work to make bricks for himself.

Lobengula found this visit so much to his mind that in about a month's time he came again, this time in state. He was accompanied by his sister (not his wife, mark !) Umnce-ence, three wagons, and about 150 attendants. It was a great occasion. He drew up to the house, and outspanned at the front door; and his beer pots and other paraphernalia nearly choked up the little mission house. The royalties took their food with the missionaries; and Umnce-ence with the king's

children and attendants slept in the house. His majesty retired to his wagon for the night. It is impossible to imagine the feelings of Mrs. Thomson, as she yielded her home to the occupation of so unsavoury a crew. The amount of cleaning to be done afterwards ! It may perhaps aid the burdened imagination if it be added that this royal princess was easily the bulkiest woman that the writer has ever seen. She would have made the fortune of a Mr. Barnum. Before many years had passed she was strangled by her brother's orders.

Next morning the king examined the new house with surprised admiration. He must have one like it at Bulawayo. He liked the garden well, but the three little pigs called forth his loudest praises. Nothing would do but he must have some of the young when they should be born. Early next day the people came in increased numbers to greet their king, and for three solid hours they sang and danced before him.

Altogether it was a most notable honour that the king had done the missionaries, but its frequent repetition was likely to rouse qualms. The occasion of another royal visit to Mr. and Mrs. Helm afforded an amusing illustration of the fact that Matebele ways are not our ways. A large piece of roast beef had been provided, and dinner being finished, Umnce-ence with her own royal hands took up the very considerable remains of the joint and gave it to her slave to carry away home. It was strictly correct, for the breach of etiquette had she left anything of the meat so hospitably provided would have been grievous. This etiquette was at times a little harassing to white people visiting at the chief's ; for he was " given to hospitality " in Matebele fashion. What could the teacher do with a gallon calabash of beer ? or a huge mass of steamed beef ?

The long desired second mission was now established and its work in full swing. There remained the second missionaries to be provided. They were soon appointed, Mr. Helm to Hope Fountain and Mr. Elliott to Inyati. In due course they reached Matebele Land—Helm in 1875, Elliott in 1877. But almost immediately on Helm's arrival Thomson left to take up the establishment of the new Central African mission. It was an unfortunate move, for within a few months Thomson fell victim to the fever; and the much enduring Matebele Mission lost a strong man.

Mr. Cockin reached Hope Fountain to fill the vacancy in May 1878, but after a brief spell of work he too "passed to larger life," (Shoshong, February 1880). In 1882 Mr. Carnegie took up Cockin's "spear and shield" and the ideal "Two mission families at each of two mission stations" became an accomplished fact.

This remained the disposition and strength of the mission staff till Mr. Sykes was "called home," July 1887, after twenty-seven years of strenuous and almost thankless toil in the "hopeless" Matebele field. Would that he could have seen the glorious harvest of the seed he sowed! In January 1884, Thomas Sykes' first colleague in the pioneer work of the mission, had passed away. He was a great worker and gathered a small company of disciples round him at Shiloh, most of whom fell away after his death. Two remained, and remain still among the most faithful of Matebele native teachers, Baleni and his wife Lomaqele.

Mr. Bowen Rees had been appointed in Sykes' place at Inyati. He arrived in March 1888, and having sowed the seed, happily remains to garner the harvest. The same year witnessed the return of Mr. J. S. Moffat to the scene of his early life, as British Resident. The change

that he saw in the country and in the mission staff was great, but the change that he represented was far greater. English power was making itself felt at last in those remote regions, and would ere long strike a mortal blow at the tyrannies and devilries of Matebele rule. A new era was dawning, soon to flood the land of darkness and death with the light of the gospel and of civilization.

CHAPTER XV

THE BULLOCK WAGON

THE bullock wagon played so large a part for nearly forty years in the establishment and maintenance of the Matebele Mission that some account of that equipage—if so it may be called—is necessary to the completion of this sketch. There need be no tediousness about

INSPANNING: PUTTING ON THE REIMS.

such an account, strongly as the subject suggests it. Wagon travelling was undoubtedly extremely tedious at times, but in this story we will leave all that to be understood, and give only the incident. Of this there was indeed no lack, only it was thinly spread like jam on a thick piece of bread.

The South African bullock wagon is descended from the European Dutch vehicle of the seventeenth century. Where the Dutch went, there they took their wagon. The same type may be seen to-day in the Goole

district of eastern England. There the Dutch were once dominant in all things that made for utility, and there is their wagon. Put a canvas cover on hat, and you have an elementary South African bullock wagon. It is a wonderful construction, a triumph of genius.

When African roads are seen, the newcomer is certain that no wheeled vehicle can travel on them and live. The wagon carries him over them and both he and it survive.

The bullock wagon has no springs. It knows better. Springs only exaggerate the stones and tumps which characterize the "Interior" roads. They do nothing to alleviate.

The bullock wagon body is not fastened to the wheel structure in any way, neither by bolt nor thong. The roads are so atrocious in places that not infrequently the front axle inclines one way while the hind axle inclines the other way. If the body were fastened to the wheels under these conditions something would break, and break badly. The wagon body simply rests on the wheel structure and rides thereon like a boat on choppy waves.

The bullock wagon is hard to break and easy to mend. Anybody can mend it, that is anybody who has a notion of things. "If he has no ?" Then he had better stop in England where blacksmiths may be found.

The bullock wagon is not fitted up in polished mahogany like a gipsy van. It knows better. But it is fitted up, and in a way that will stand the twistings and screwings, the stickings and tumblings it has to encounter. The fittings also are hard to break and easy to mend.

The wagon has two coverings of sail cloth, until the thorns and bushes tear them to tatters, as they do sooner or later. A wagon coming out of the hunting veldt generally has its sail in ribbons.

Inside the wagon and about midway between front and back is slung the kartel, a stout frame laced with leather thongs, or supporting a wire mattress. This is the bedstead. Green baize curtains may divide the interior of the wagon into sections, nursery at the back, bedroom in the middle, and drawing room in front. Under the kartel are stores and heavy luggage.

The driver's seat is the forechest, which contains the pantry. Herein are cunningly stowed, with a skill born of experience, the enamelled iron plates, cups, etc., tea, coffee, cocoa, etc., for daily use.

Along the sides of the wagon are canvas pockets containing some of the impedimenta of civilization. Boxes are placed conveniently on the floor to serve as seats, if there be room. On a long journey there will certainly not be room. The wagon will be full up to the level of the bed, and perhaps higher. Indeed many a traveller has wondered as he surveyed his loaded wagon, "How am I to get into it?" He always does get into it; and besides things shake down wonderfully as the journey proceeds.

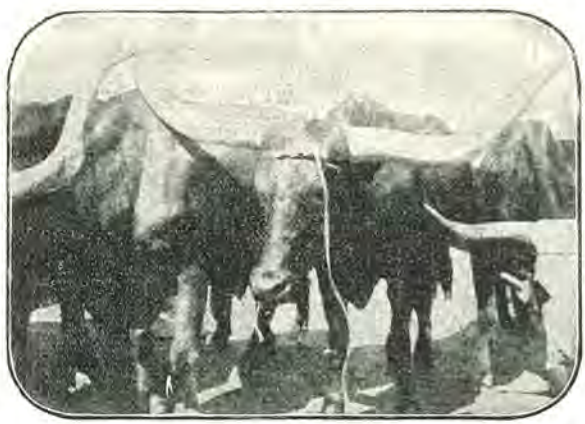
Stretched under the middle of the body of the wagon is an ox-hide, well bagged. This is the scullery. Herein are packed with dry grass (if you can persuade the boy to do it!) the pots and pans which usage requires. The native boys do with one pot. A water vaatje is hung on its appropriate hook and there tied lest it be jolted or dragged off by the bushes. A wagon jack and a tin of grease are necessary; the jack not only to assist at the greasing of the wheels, but also at the extrication of the wagon from a "stick."

At the back of the wagon, and also underneath, is the "trap," a wooden rail construction, useful as a step into the back of the wagon, and devoted to the carriage of the oven or baking pot. Here also are

tied the boys' blankets when not in use; for native habits forbid the presence of native blankets inside the white man's wagon.

The "dining-room" is on the ground, the "kitchen" also on the ground, but in such a position and at such a distance that the smoke of the kitchen fire may not be carried across the "dining table."

Sixteen oxen is the full team for a long journey or for a heavy load. Yet when so minded eight oxen will pull a wagon out of a "stick,"



INSPANNING: READY FOR THE YOKE.

when sixteen have failed. Such is ox nature. Wherein is a lesson full of philosophy as an egg is full of meat.

The trek chain is fastened to the end of the disselboom (wagon pole) and passes down the middle of the span. To it are tied at proper intervals, by means of thongs of hide the "yokes," stout wooden poles about five feet long, by means of which the oxen pull the wagon. The yokes rest on the necks of the cattle, and are prevented from shifting by the skeis which pass through the yokes one on each side of the neck of each ox. A twisted thong (strop) connects the ends of

each pair of skeis under the neck of the ox. This prevents the yoke from slipping. A long skin rope is passed round the horns of each animal, and when inspanned the ends of these ropes (reims) are wound round the horns of the near ox. Thus the harness is complete, and like the rest of the gear is hard to break and easy to mend.

A whip of thick skin, tapering slightly towards each end, is the driver's main reliance in driving. It is a fearful weapon in the hands of one who knows how to use it. In any other hands it is equally fearful—to the user. It is from ten to twenty feet in length, as thick as one's finger, and is fastened to a stick eight to ten feet long. A sjambok completes the equipment.

In a well ordered span there is a place for each ox, and no self-respecting ox will pull in any other place than its own. If the driver be thoroughly competent, he will be able to tell by inspection of the loose "span" (team) the two fore-oxen and the two after-oxen, and to make a good guess at the places of many other members. In the course of a day's trekking, he will have every ox pulling its best in its proper place.

A native boy is installed as "leader," his sole business being to "lead" the span by the reims of the fore oxen, and to herd them when outspanned. His work is heavy or light according to the character of the oxen and of himself. A well trained span will not need a leader except in difficult places: nor will they wander when outspanned unless in search of food or water.

Another boy cares for the cows, spare oxen and sheep in trekking, and attends to kitchen duties in camp.

Wagon travelling has been compared to prolonged picnicking. The simile is just if the travelling be at the best season, with good boys,

sound wagon, well trained oxen, light load and plenty of time. Needless to say these conditions do not always obtain, and the degree in which they are lacking puts a different complexion on wagon travelling. If the journey be taken during the rains there will be incessant "sticks"; if at the end of the dry season, the traveller may be days without water, and eager for a liquid at other times not to be used for washing the floors.

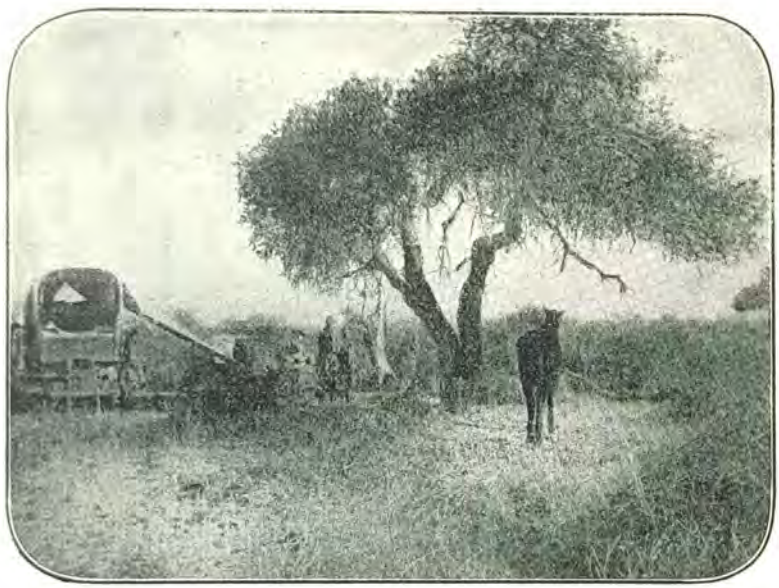
But under favourable conditions nothing can be more delightful. There is a spaciousness, a freedom, a constant change, an opportunity for the student of nature, for the philosopher and for the poet and for the hunter hardly to be found elsewhere.

What, for example, can be more idyllic than a well placed camp on a Saturday night, when there is to be no trekking on the morrow? Let the camp be among the glories of the Matopo Hills. Abundant water, abundant grass, marvellous beauty, perfect peace! Everything is snug, the cattle are lying down in the luxuriant herbage, too full to eat, too tired to wander. The toothsome steak has been grilled on the wood embers and eaten, a cup of veldt coffee (was there ever such coffee!) and a hammock chair are waiting. A blazing fire burns brightly, more for companionship than for warmth, the boys laugh and chatter in great contentment; the good fellowship of wife or other friend, and the fragrant pipe complete the luxury of wagon travelling. By and by tired nature asserts itself, and waiting the pleasure of the traveller is that ideal sleeping place, the bullock wagon, and veldt sleep.

The duties of the ordinary camp have a piquancy all their own—the baking of bread, the roasting and grinding of coffee, washing in some convenient river, and a thousand and one other domestic duties performed *al fresco*. Occasionally these same domestic duties have to

be done in a strong wind, or in a dust storm, sometimes in the rain, sometimes in the mud. At one time the thermometer may be standing at 100° in the shade, at another it may be necessary to melt the water left in the kettle from overnight.

What can be more impressive than night trekking! The wide



OUTSPANNED.

veldt, the wider sky! Trees and bushes bordering the road taking on queer eerie shapes, and the wide-eyed stars! The mighty silence, broken only by the shout of the driver encouraging his team, the rattle of the wagon or the cry of some wild animal disturbed from its sleep! It is very good; perhaps to some sordid minds that kind of goodness soon palls; then—to save the situation in the nick of time—comes a sand river to be crossed.

Oh, the wild excitement of those river crossings, whether by day or by night! Wagon heavy, sand deep, oxen straining, men shouting, whips cracking in hot endeavour to reach the other side without a "stick"! If the oxen prove refractory or lose heart then there is a big business on hand. Some oxen pull and some do not. Some turn in the yoke as if to examine the wagon (clearly not their affair). Some lie down and refuse to stir, till they are afforded the stimulus of a nip of the tail in a strong pair of jaws (there is no cruelty about it, gentle reader!). Some mix themselves up with their gear, and gear has to be cut to save their bovine lives. Some break trek-touw and skeis till all patience takes wings and flies away. But undoubtedly the greatest achievement of rebellious cattle is to break a disselboom or wagon pole. Outspanning is compulsory there and then, and several long hours of food and rest ensue. All the while the men have to chop a tree, bring it to the wagon, shape it and fit. Then try again!

Travelling in the rainy season provides experiences not soon forgotten. Here is an actual illustration! It was necessary for Mr. Thomson to travel from Hope Fountain to Kuruman when the rainy season was far advanced.

The first day the wagon stuck three times, and the party slept seven miles from home. That night the wolves drove away the sheep which were not found till next day.

On the second day they stuck twice, in a river and in the mud. On the third day the wagon stuck in a marsh eighteen miles from home. One side of the wagon sank badly in the mud, and only by long and severe labour with the jack could it be lifted and bushes placed under the wheels. A few yards further on the wagon sank again as far as it could go. After off-loading, a foundation for the wagon jack had

to be made. No stones were available and trees were cut for the purpose. In digging, each spadeful of earth was replaced by one of water, and the workers had to labour standing deep in mud and water ; all the while the rain pelted down. Mrs. Thomson and the children were in the wagon unable to stir outside, and there was no dry place to which they might be borne. There was no possibility of a fire. Nothing could be done in the darkness. The cattle could not lie down, but stood deep in water and mud all night long. As for the unfortunate work boys——! They were at work before dawn and in two hours pulled the wagon out of the " stick " to a dry place where they rested all day.

Another day they stuck four times. On the last occasion they stuck in the roadway, from which it was impossible for the oxen to turn out, there being no foothold off the road. That Sunday was spent with a stream running under the wagon, and rain pouring without intermission. On the Monday they off-loaded and found everything sodden. It took ten days to accomplish a journey ordinarily covered in two.

The record of another journey made by the present writer from Kuruman to Inyati in 1888, gives thirty-five " sticks," nine off-loadings, nine broken disselbooms, eight repairs to wheels, etc., and five oxen lost and never recovered.

But over against these terrors may be set the many journeys made in utter peace and quiet, when enjoyment and profit have been complete. Indeed it would be impossible to find a more perfect travelling sanatorium than is afforded by this vehicle of cozy comfort.

The glory of the bullock wagon has departed, and its dilatory spaciousness is voted out of date. Men prefer the train de luxe with its giddy speed of twenty miles an hour to the bullock wagon with its comfortable two and a half miles an hour. Everything for speed now-a-days,

but many a weary victim of rush looks out of the carriage window, and sighs for the good old days when he could outspan when and where he pleased; as for example in that delicious little nook of which he has caught a glimpse as the train rushed by.

CROSSING A SPRUIT.

CHAPTER XVI

NEMESIS

WEARILY passed the years. The missionary wagon laboured in the heavy sand in imminent danger of "sticking." The "Four-men-two-station" standard had been attained, but the darkness of hopelessness seemed unbroken. The promise of the early years of Lobengula's reign had disappeared, the result largely of the evil influence of certain Basuto "doctors" imported by the king. Frequent raids terrorized and desolated the tribes on the Matebele borders as of yore. Witchcraft still wielded its hideous power unchecked, striking down at will one after another the few flowers that adorned the foul rank herbage of heathenism. Moral and spiritual squalor, filthy insensate animalism filled the land as with a hot miasma.

Lobengula had relapsed into the old style of dress: but he favoured missionaries as much as ever. His attitude was puzzling, and some words he wrote to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony in 1874 increased the mystery. "The king is glad to have teachers living in his country to teach his people. God's word came to the white people first and they received it readily; now it has come to the king and his people, and they will follow behind the white people. The black people are very hard, and unwilling to leave their own customs, and to practise all the teachings of God's word. White men listened

readily (*sic*), but the black people will not listen. They will come to God in the year appointed them. The king has given his teachers liberty to teach all his people God's word, and has told them to listen to their teachers. He has advised them to send their children to be taught the white men's books. Some time ago he sent his own children to be taught and now one of them can read a little and the others are learning."

Again in 1882 the king said to the amakolwa (believers) at Shiloh, "I am glad some have believed, and I wish you all success." "Qinisani li funde lamandla" (Be strong and learn with all your might).

Were these royal deliverances mere diplomatic fooling? or were they the outcrop of his better nature? The "two natures" contended for mastery in Lobengula and his people even as they did in other species of human nature. At court and in public they showed their worst side, but something better was often revealed in confidential chats and on itineration "in the provinces." Then might be heard low murmurings of discontent at the tyranny of witchcraft and of the court (never a word against the king!) and whispered longings to learn.

That old staunch friend of the MaTebele, Mr. J. S. Moffat, wrote (1891)—"An awful gloom hangs over this land. After twenty-two years' absence I have returned and spent four years at the Matebele court, and the impression made on my mind is that so far as there is any change at all in these people, it is a change for the worse. The old Zulu strain, which had in it something of nobility, has been nearly weeded out by cruel murders till four-fifths of the nation are slaves, with all the meanness of their servile nature and all the arrogance of their tyrants. If I look for any benignant influence traceable to the

GROUP OF INDUNAS.

preaching of the Gospel, there is scarcely the glimmering of the tiniest star."

The impression was a true one with this qualification, that the "tiniest stars" were more numerous than a dweller at court could possibly know; otherwise had the darkness been insupportable. All three social grades showed some of them.

Among the Amaholi (slaves) were more disciples than among all the rest of the population put together. There were Baleni and his wife Lomaqele, Zhizhu (also spelt Jiju and Shishu), Hlangu, Makaza (Martyr), Tjibi, and many others more or less strong in their discipleship.

The Abenhla (middle class) contributed Kokotwana, Macala, Ndawo, Matambo, and others diligent in reading, in prayer, and in testimony.

They shared with the missionaries, but at closer quarters, the hatred and abuse of their home folk ; but they held on their dim way.

Even the blue blooded Abezansi (of Zulu descent) showed Mfogazana, Kwali and other adherents true and faithful. Said Mr. Sykes to Kwali one day, " Why do you come to the teaching ? " The reply was characteristically African, " Mnale, can you keep the cattle in the kraal when once they have tasted the fresh green corn ? " He could not, as the missionary knew to his cost.

There was no doubt about it, the people were thinking. Men said at times in an undertone, " If it were known that we were believing, we should not live long, but your words are finding their way to our hearts." One day a man said openly, " Some of the people are beginning to pray to the idlozi of Jesus (idlozi is the singular of amadlozi). They are afraid to say that they pray to Jesus, so they speak of the idlozi of Jesus. You will see that they will soon throw off the old amadlozi and will say that they pray to Jesus like you do." These are faint glimmerings truly, but even " tiniest stars " are precious when the night is very dark.

A certain girl, scholar of Inyati and of Hope Fountain, had become one of the most advanced readers in the land. The usual mean thing happened. Witchcraft was charged against the family and they were cast out. One day Mr. Thomson found the girl in an evil case, stripped of her clothes and books, friendless and homeless. By the king's permission he took her to his house, where Mrs. Thomson mothered her. She was very grateful, but asked that she might go in search of her parents, for her heart would not let her rest while they were not safe. It was at great risk that she started on her holy quest. After long search she found them, and as far as possible settled

them in a place of safety. Then she took up her abode at Hope Fountain.

The king, for some unknown reason, befriended these poor harassed folk, and made the people harvest and store their crops; and after a while they were permitted to form a little village of their own and live at peace. For three months the girl lived a quiet life under the missionary's care, always diligent and modest, when at Mr. Thomson's suggestion she wrote a letter to the king thanking him for his kindness to her and her family; for verily not many received the consideration that had been shown to them. The next day the missionary took the girl to read her own letter to the king. When he heard it he called some of his indunas to hear what one of their people could do. They exclaimed, "Hau, u likiwa" (she is a white person); and the king added, "Now I know that my people can learn, for I have seen what a little girl can do." But nothing came of this royal discovery and confession.

The work dragged wearily on, but the missionaries stiffened their backs, confident in God. They repaired and built churches at Inyati and at Hope Fountain; at their own cost, for neither stick nor straw would the people give. It was put strongly to the Inyati folk that the church was theirs, and that they ought to assist in its repair. Some women did bring bundles of grass for the thatch but when they found that the gifts were to be real gifts, that they were to get nothing for their grass, they took it away and strewed it about the veldt. One man (not even an adherent) brought a long pole, crooked and wellnigh useless, which he placed against a tree and hurried away, calling out to the teacher, "Here's a stick for the House of God." Probably that stick was the first freewill offering of the MaTebele to the Lord

Jesus Christ. There have been many gifts of great value since then, but that poor crooked stick stands out as one of the most notable.

In a casual sort of way Civilization had interested itself in Matebele Land for many years. A few visitors came and went, travellers, hunters and prospectors in disguise. They found the country healthy, wealthy and beautiful, and well supplied with game; but they mostly treated the people with disdain, mere instruments or victims. One or two visitors of a different quality came in the interests of the people. In 1878, the heroic M. and Mdme. Coillard passed a few unhappy days at court, harassed and insulted. The beloved Thompson (he was not Dr. then) came and saw, encouraged and inspired, but stayed not to conquer. The Bishop of Bloemfontein visited the land, prospecting for sites for mission stations.

Mcitwa and Yona, missionary volunteers from Umzumbi (ABCFM), Natal, gave brief devoted service at Inyati in 1888. They were sent by the Congregational Churches of Liverpool, but in three or four months husband and child were cut off by death, and the Lord brought Yona home again "empty."

Quite early in Lobengula's reign Civilization discovered that the MaTebele blocked access to the ancient gold mines; and grew angry when in 1878 certain emissaries of Britain were murdered by the Matebele king under the guise of accident.

In 1879 the Zulu war broke out, and the fight was watched with keen interest in the far interior. Isandhlwana (June, 1879) suggested that the white men were being swept into the sea, and the MaTebele grew more insolent and turbulent than their wont. But Ulundi (July, 1879) proved that the white men were stronger than the brushes; and the insolence and turbulence subsided.

In 1883 came another embassy, this time from a British military force in Bechuana Land. The leader was an old friend of Mzilikazi and diplomatic withal. His party escaped the fate of their predecessors and returned intact.

Civilization was now fully persuaded that there was still gold in the ancient mines, and openly sent prospectors and concession hunters, who buzzed about the ears of the Matebele king to his great embarrassment. In his doubt he determined to send "eyes and ears" to England to see what sort of a place it was, and what the mind of the great white Queen might be on this matter. One of these envoys was Babayana, the sage, the other Mtjete, the orator. They represented the best and the worst of the Matebele nature.

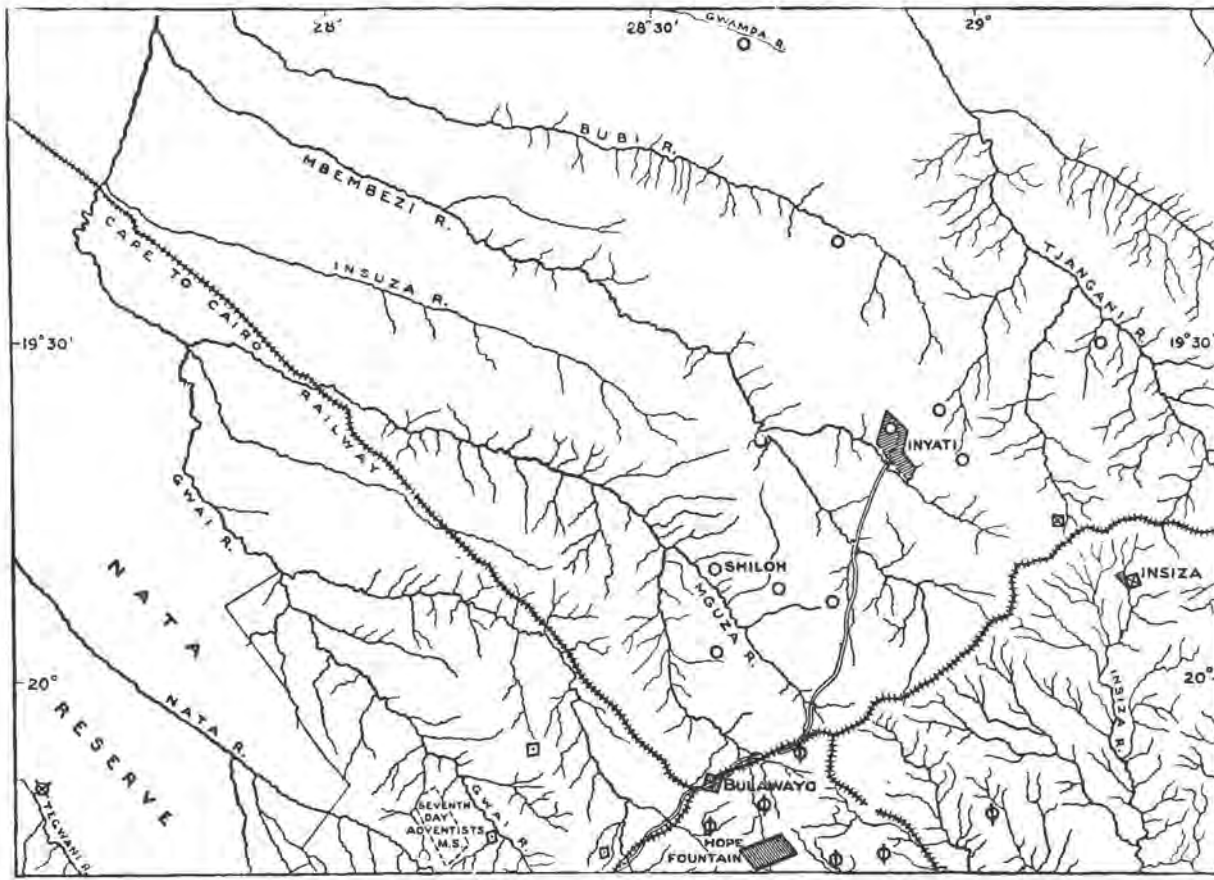
BABAYANA AND MTJETE, LOBENGULA'S "EYES AND EARS" FOR ENGLAND.
Mr. E. A. Maund (standing) and Mr. Colenbrander.

In due time they returned, accompanied by an embassy from the British Queen, consisting of the kind of men she sent out to fight her battles, a detachment of the Royal Horse Guards. They made their own impression, and the stories of Babayana and Mtjete deepened it. "Eyes and ears" outrivalled the white men in their report of the white men's land, saying with the Queen of Sheba, "The half had never been told."

While these men were away Lobengula, to escape the "buzzing," gave charge of all the minerals in his country to representatives of one Cecil Rhodes, a mighty man, but destined to become mightier far. But in his buck kraal the king said, "Thus shall I free myself from these pests, thus shall I get much gold, and by and by I can take my will of these white men." But he knew not what manner of man he had to deal with. Forthwith Cecil Rhodes, the Empire builder, became as Aaron's rod, and swallowed up all the gold-seekers from before the king.

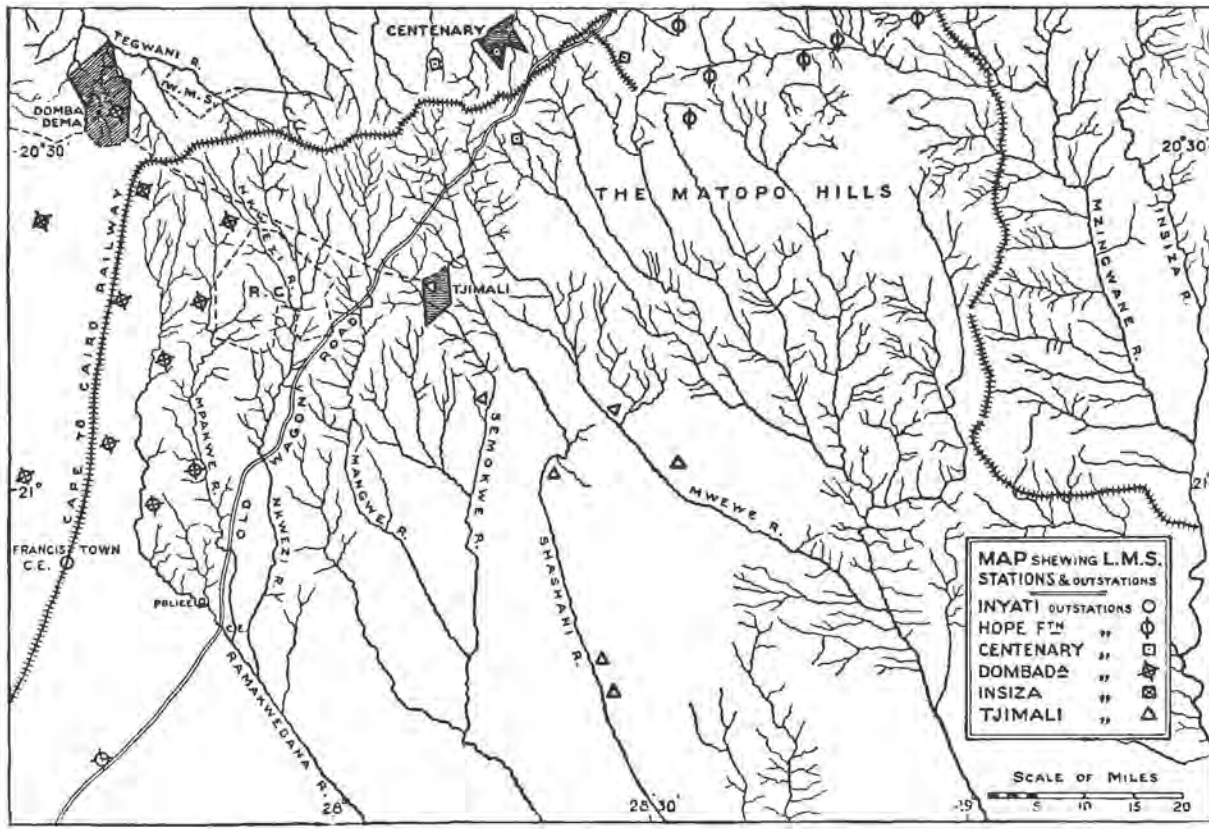
STATUE OF CECIL RHODES AT BULAWAYO.

Next year (1890) Rhodes' men, "The Pioneers" of the British South Africa Company, went in to possess Mashuna Land, and there settled down to work in the mines that the Sabaeans had left many centuries before. But the young men and other turbulent fellows of the MaTebele spoiled for a fight, and would not be restrained. In July 1893 Lobengula sent them to raid the MaShuna, on the borders of the land where the white men dwelt. They obeyed literally the orders given to them by the king, to leave the white men alone; but they raided and murdered the MaShuna who were servants of the settlers, to whom had been promised



NORTHERN HALF OF MAP.

SOUTHERN HALF OF MAP.



protection. It was the "superfluity of naughtiness" that the Matebele should do this folly. It might almost be put in the old-world phrase, "The Lord hardened the heart of the MaTebele that He might destroy them." They rushed on their fate. The white man arose in his wrath and smote them, and their power crumbled in the dust. Lobengula fled and died, and Cecil Rhodes reigned in his stead.

NATIVE POLICEMAN AND WIFE.

Nemesis had come. The blood of the murdered MaShuna had long cried aloud unto God; now God had spoken. The MaTebele were broken, and their country was given to the strangers they had despised.

Most of the missionaries were out of the country when the war broke out, but Mr. Bowen Rees and his family were befriended in a remarkable way. In the hour of disaster and death, "poor old Loben" was loyal to his friends, and sent them out of danger under escort. The few Christians were scattered or killed in the fighting, the mission stations were destroyed; and to outward seeming the labours and sorrows of thirty-three years were brought to nought. But foundations had been laid which time and war could not touch; and in the coming years missionaries were to build thereon a fair and beautiful church of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XVII

NEW INYATI

GLORIOUS was the dawn of the new day that heralded the coming of the nation's spring. At last the clouds and darkness broke

MISSION HOUSE, INYATI.
(Rev. W. A. Elliott and Rev. Bowen Rees.)

and fled ; and as they fled, the foul creatures of heathen night squeaked and gibbered in their impotent fury.

Mr. and Mrs. Rees were welcomed at Bulawayo by Makaza, and at Inyati by Matambo and such people as had ventured forth from their hiding. War and heathenism had done their worst, ruins and ashes abounded, the dear old homes were utterly destroyed ; but everywhere there was a great hope and a cheery life so different from

the old style of things that the returning missionaries could not but be glad. The spring had come at last to that wintry land.

Houses were restored, the walls of "God's Acre" rebuilt, the gravestones replaced (they had been used as oven-doors) and a new church taken in hand. The tide of civilization had floated into the country a contractor who was secured to undertake the building. The church itself was the gift of Civilization, and the foundation stone the special gift of the contractor.

Fifty-seven years before, Mzilikazi had massacred princes and indunas at Intaba 'zinduna (Hill of the indunas), because in his prolonged absence they had dared to assume his death and set up his successor. A terrible man was Mzilikazi! Now the hill that saw one of his most bloody deeds yielded the corner-stone for the House of God. That stone was laid by the aid of a silver trowel. In Matebele Land! Think on it! In Matebele Land!!

Such a spectacle as was provided at the opening of that church had never been witnessed in all the history of the country; never dreamed of. Oh! that the Moffats and Sykes and Thomas had been there to see the sight! Locusts had desolated the gardens and made the people poorer than the war had left them, yet gifts for their church poured in. Sheep and goats, fowls and eggs, clubs and spears, and a little cash made up the magnificent total of £9 9s. For the people brought a willing offering to the building of the House of the Lord.

In the many and arduous labours of re-establishment Makaza and Matambo did not spare themselves. They were only "niggers." Four out of five white men would have been blind to all but the colour of their skin, but their "hearts were white."

Makaza was a young man of keen mind and rich promise. He had

long been one of the best readers in the country, and possessed of smatterings of various knowledge. He was a true disciple, but the glory of the light had not yet come to him.

Matambo had been born on the station. Boy-like he preferred the veldt to the book, but once started he soon became a ready reader. He fell in with the life of the mission, and was an almost constant servant in Mr. Rees' family. What he heard and read and saw touched him deeply. Unobtrusively this young lad, nursed in the lap of the foulest heathenism, its life blood flowing in his veins, betook himself to prayer that the God of the white men would lead him into the light. The prayer was answered, and his life gave evidence thereof.

MATAMBO, AS A BOY.

There was grave anxiety in the mission house the Sunday morning that Matambo was baptized (October 23, 1892). What would Maqamula, his elder brother, do? He was one of the rowdiest members of the turbulent Insugamini regiment. What disturbance might not the mother of the boy make? She was a heathen drunkard. The eventful service commenced, and there sat the mother with Maqamula and a whole host of neighbours, come to see Matambo baptized. Service and baptism proceeded, and ended; while mother and brother sat silent and bound in the spirit.

Then Matambo spoke: "My own people and my friends, I tell you

I have turned from darkness to light. Now I begin a new life. All that I was before and all that I have done, I leave behind and follow on in the way of God. I intend going on straight like this (with a gesture), not turning this way or that. We have heard to-day about putting a candle under a basket where it cannot give light to any one. I am not going to put my light under a basket, I am going to put it on the top of the basket that all may see the light." That simple hearted consecration has been followed by noble service of men for Christ's sake.

The missionaries had barely surmounted reconstruction and settled down to expansion, when one night in March, 1896, such settlers as could be reached were called in hot haste to the shelter of Bulawayo. The MaTebele had broken out into rebellion and the country was in their hands. It was an awful tragedy that ensued. Some two hundred men, women and children were cruelly murdered in cold blood by the exasperated MaTebele. The mission families were able to reach safety through many dangers. But the horrors of it all can never be forgotten.

In their hurried flight Mr. and Mrs. Rees encountered a rebel impi at Elibeni. The young bloods were all for killing, but the induna remembered how these missionaries had been befriended by the late king at the outbreak of the former war, and he said "These vessels are not to be broken." Thus Lobengula, though dead, again saved his friends in the hour of peril. Within half-an-hour of the Rees' escape another white man making for Bulawayo fell into the hands of the same impi and was slain.

During this flight Makaza drove the missionary's wagon, and on his return to Matambo the two boys were taken and bound. They

had been specially marked out for vengeance, in that they had left the ways of their fathers and had gone over to the white men. Belonging to the same impi, though not actually engaged in the capture, was Maqamula brother of Matambo. No sooner did the young savage hear of the impending fate of his brother than he went at once to the induna, begging that he himself might be killed for or with his brother, whom he loved as his own soul. Maqamula was a great fighter such that the impi could not afford to lose: therefore was he allowed to set Matambo free that in the darkness he might escape to the hill of Indumba.

Makaza had no brother able to intercede for him. He stood alone among the angry savages with none to plead for his life, and in the early dawn of that March morning he was led out and stabbed to death for Christ's sake and the Gospel's.

In six weeks the rebellion was so far subdued that Mr. Rees was allowed to accompany a troop of horsemen to Inyati. The remains of five murdered white men were found and buried in the little graveyard of the mission; wherein also were interred the bones of Makaza. The station was utterly destroyed, and once more the labour of years laid in ruins. Verily the new Inyati was getting its baptism of blood and fire.

War left the usual legacies of famine and disease, and in addition the atrocities of the rebellion had hardened the white men against all black folk. The change from native rule to that of the white man was a work of tremendous difficulty to which the rebellion bore terrible testimony. A buffer gets blows from both sides, and such was the missionary in these trying circumstances.

Civilization poured into the land in a continuous stream, railway,

telegraph, daily papers, churches and canteens wellnigh tumbling over one another in the hurry of development. One of the wisest innovations was the stringent prohibition of all supply of intoxicating liquor to the natives, a measure due to the far-seeing wisdom of Mr. Rhodes. Other missionary societies also began to come in, and indeed it passed the power of the L. M. S. to meet all the demands for teachers. Stations must be multiplied, missionaries increased and a network of out-stations established, if even the narrowed belt of the country reserved for the old Society was to be at all adequately worked.

MSINDO, HEADMAN OF A FLOURISHING OUT-STATION OF INYATI WHICH DATES BACK TO THE DARK DAYS (1888).

This was the programme entered upon at Inyati after its rebuilding by Mr. Wilkerson, the new Industrial Missionary. One after another, as teachers became available, out-stations were established at Shiloh, Msindo's, Insiza, Mbelesini, Tjangani, Bubi and Siponggweni, till in the course of a few years Inyati became the centre of a diocese with the European missionary as bishop.

For many years Baleni and his wife Lomaqele had been "holding the fort" through the dark time following the "passing" of Mr. Thomas. He was prime product of Shiloh, and probably first professing native Christian in Matebele Land. He was of the Amaholi and in his day there was nothing but tribulation

for the disciple of the white man's God. Truly it did not much matter what a "dog of a slave" believed or did; but Baleni showed that he had the courage and devotion of a high order of manhood and sterling Christian character. Lobengula set him to make a garden where he might raise vegetables for the king's consumption, and, as a king's man, find protection from the incessant annoyance of his heathen neighbours. Baleni married Lomaqele, a convert from Hope Fountain, a true helpmeet in the service of Christ. At the king's garden these two humble Christians gave a fine example of civilized gardening and Christianized living.

Under the new régime Baleni became recognized teacher at Shiloh, where he reaped a rich harvest after a long sowing. In September, 1901, a great baptismal service was held at Inyati when thirty-four adults were baptized and admitted to church-membership. Thirty of these came from Shiloh, and had, during their two years' training, attended classes at Inyati, twenty-five miles distant.

A church-school had been built of wattle and daub by the enthusiastic people. It was a triumph of ingenuity, for it represented the adaptation of "native architecture" to the demands of a large building. It was indeed a huge native hut about 28 feet in diameter, so large that with an audience of a hundred it looked empty. At the opening (Nov. 25, 1901) a great congregation gathered at the usual place of meeting in the shade of a large tree. After hymn and prayer Mr. Rees led the way into the new church. It was crowded to excess, and many had to content themselves with outside seats. Nor was there any waste of room in these primitive buildings, neither pews nor aisles; the congregation sat jammed together as close as they could pack. It was a grand day, and the thanksgiving collection amounted to £6,

not bad for the "stingiest people in the world," whose wages would probably average less than 30s. a month.

Another station was started at Sipongweni, with Samuel as teacher. He had been getting £4 a month "all found" at Bulawayo. He left that situation and accepted the salary of native teacher at £2 a month, nothing found. Without help or hint from the missionary, and with the whole-hearted assistance of the people, he built a church of poles and clay thatched with grass. It occupied several months to collect material, and many sleepless nights for Samuel ere he could get the various parts of the building square. Your raw native can make very decent circles without aid from compasses or measures of any kind; but it is against his nature to make anything straight or square. Later, Samuel added a manse of two rooms for the comfort of his missionary when he visited the out-station, and stabling for his mules: all without a farthing of expense to the mission.

There came also a clamorous call from the Tjangani River, where Mtjugula and his people were most anxious to be taught. The only possible teacher was a little boy in the Inyati school. It was hard to send the little fellow so far from home among strangers; but he was plucky and the call urgent. His parents agreed to his going and Mtjugula promised to take all care of him, so he went. He lived in the induna's family, slept with his own children, and in the wattle and daub shanty that the people had erected, this child taught men, women and children to read the Scriptures. He stayed for three months, when another lad took his place. Manxiweni was his name, and a proud laddie was he when he received his present from Mr. Rees for the good service rendered. By and by Matambo took up this post, though he could be ill-spared from Inyati.

It was the same on every side, people crying out to be taught, congregations often crowded, and day-schools full to overflowing. There was depth as well as surface in the movement: the spirit of

THE INDUNA SIVALO WITH REV. B. REES' SON LLEWELYN.

prayer was abroad, and in home life were exhibited the changed hearts of the people.

In December, 1901, Rev. D. Picton Jones brought his valuable experience, gained through long years in Central Africa, to reinforce

the Matebele mission; but alas! the fever which drove him from Tanganyika was equally fatal to his hopes in Rhodesia.

Bowen Rees returned from furlough in September, 1902; twenty-three days from London! The Ancient Trekker gasps on hearing it, for he remembers the months of tedious trekking in the "good old times." With the missionary's return work received fresh impetus. Night schools were established for the herds, and a class for "housewifery," which rejoiced the hearts of the husbands in the Christian community. Women under the old tradition were mere chattels and beasts of burden; now they had much leeway to make up ere the home demands of the new life could be met.

In 1906 a beautiful new church was built at Inyati to accommodate 700 worshippers. It is one of Mr. Wilkerson's *chefs-d'œuvre*, a work which does him and his boys infinite credit. It was paid for by the

INYATI CHURCH, OPENED JUNE, 1906.

country, all classes, white and black, contributing. The collection at the opening services reached the splendid sum of £35. Did any of those present remember a certain crooked pole, the solitary contribution of the MaTebele of former days to church restoration? Old Manzini

GROUP OF COOKS PREPARING THE CHRISTMAS FEAST FOR THE SCHOOL CHILDREN, INYATI.

placed it against a tree not a stone's throw from the new church, nearly twenty years before.

That there were setbacks in the mission work goes without saying.

Those squeaking gibbering monsters of the heathen night did not take their ejectment tamely. Many an effort they made to recover their lost mastery. They turned the blessing of a full harvest into the curse of too much beer, with all the usual attendant abominations. Only after prolonged trial did the churches of Matebele Land decide that total abstinence *must* be the rule for church membership. Witchcraft made desperate efforts to recover lost ground, but without much success. These trials, resulting unfortunately in the falling away of some, resulted also in the confirming of the many; and the church grew in strength with the assaults made upon its fidelity.

Could the reader, with a vivid memory of the black past, be at Inyati on the occasion of the Quarterly United Communion, he would

GROUP OF WEDDING PARTY, INYATI.

find his heart at least singing the old refrain, "All hail the power of Jesu's name." Church members gather from the out-stations (some, thirty miles distant), carrying food and blankets for three or four days' camping out. Whole families come, men, women and little children; for they cannot keep away from this holy communion of children with

NEW DAY SCHOOL AT INYATI; OPENED 1910.

their Father, of disciples with their Lord. The proud Abezansi of pure Zulu descent are there, and there also are the Amaholi, who were their slaves. Strangers are there, belonging to the "wild Angoni" of distant Nyasa Land, welcomed as brethren in the Lord. Not one of them but bears some gift for the Lord, that others may hear the Gospel, which has become the joy of their own hearts. Some bring

double gifts, their own and their friends' who are unable to accompany them. Are these MaTebele? These the bloodthirsty tyrants, the insolent raiders? These decently-clad folk, clean and courteous, the filthy debauched heathen, the disgrace to humanity? Less than twenty years ago these same people were all that, and much more that cannot be told.

I asked them whence their victory came?
They, with united breath,
Ascribe their conquest to the Lamb,
Their triumph to His death.

INYATI ROLL.

W. Sykes, first arrival, December 26, 1859; "passed," July 22, 1887.

T. M. Thomas, first arrival, December 26, 1859; final departure, July, 1870. (Shiloh, June, 1875; "passed," January, 1884).

J. S. Moffat, first arrival, December 26, 1859; final departure, September 8, 1865, to Kuruman.

J. B. Thomson, first arrival, April 29, 1870; final departure, August, 1870, to Hope Fountain.

W. A. Elliott, first arrival, October, 1877, final departure, March, 1892.

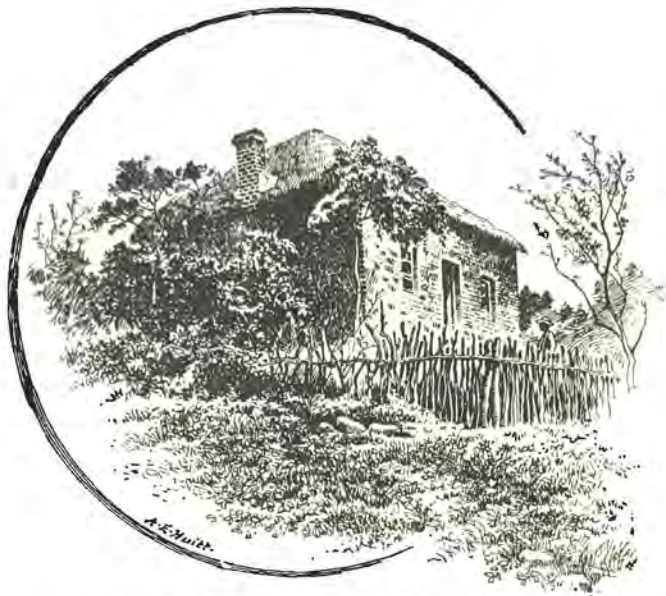
Bowen Rees, first arrival, March 12, 1888.

CHAPTER XVIII

NEW HOPE FOUNTAIN

AT his accession Lobengula built his capital at a place three miles from the valley where now stands Hope Fountain; with the result that the centre of population shifted away from Inyati to the neighbourhood of the royal town of Bulawayo, fifty miles to the south. Inyati was established near the former king's town in order that the missionaries might be under the royal eye, and in its turn Hope Fountain was similarly located that the king might be under the missionaries' eye. Relations were reversed: Hope Fountain became metropolitan and Inyati provincial. This reversal was confirmed when the capital of modern Southern Rhodesia was built under the name and near the site of Lobengula's old town.

Before the war the density of population round Hope Fountain gave full scope for itineration, which was undertaken mainly by Mr. Carnegie as junior missionary on the station. At first he took with him the "king's mouth," a man of position deputed by Lobengula to speak the king's word. This appeared to be wise in view of the rowdy character of the young men of that part of the country. Afterwards he went alone, or with his family, without difficulty. His main purpose, of course, was preaching, but like a good missionary he was ready for any service, from paring the hoofs of the induna's horse to pulling the tooth of the induna's wife.



OLD CHURCH AT HOPE FOUNTAIN; DESTROYED 1893.

At one town visited a certain lady occupying this exalted position asked for a medicine, not to be found in a chemist's shop, to enable her to read the white man's book. Apparently there was the desire in her mind to learn, though her notion of the *modus operandi* was of the haziest. Not only in the mind of that one woman did this desire slumber, but in many another, and the pity of it lay just here, that some adverse influence kept it asleep, or tended to its suffocation on waking. By camp fire and in native hut that adverse influence was found to centre in the king. "How can we learn when the king does not learn?" It was the same old complaint that had made the missionary, in the early days of the mission, the shuttlecock between king and people. Time had made it abundantly clear that behind

the king was a greater than he, tyrannizing over him and his people. National tradition was the fatal influence in Matebele Land, the assegai was king. But now war and rebellion had destroyed the tradition, and the glory of the assegai had departed.

As at Inyati, the years between the war and the rebellion were full of bright hopeful work. Everywhere the people showed themselves eager, and loud were the calls on all hands for resident teachers. The fact stood plainly revealed that, national tradition being destroyed, the people leaped to learn.

It was a cruel blow, therefore, to all this bright hopefulness when the rebellion broke out. The Helms had gone on furlough, and Mrs. Carnegie and Mrs. Rees with their children to the south. Mr. Carnegie's return home alone was doubly distressing. "Our beautiful homes are given over to bats and owls, and our people have been carried away." These Hope Fountain folk, many of them half Christianized, had long remained faithful, standing their ground right loyally in the face of bribes and threats, and guarding the mission premises as best they could. But presently the rebels appeared in force, and gave them the choice: Rebellion or Death. Of course they went where they were compelled to go; but what miseries they endured in the recesses of the Matopo Hills will probably be never told.

Our missionaries made several "raids" with the troops to Hope Fountain and Inyati, and during one of these Mr. Carnegie came under the fire of the rebels at "Fort Fountain," happily without harm. After some weeks both he and Mr. Reed were able to do a very good bit of work in going to the rescue of the Hope Fountain people, and with much risk and trouble bringing them back to their homes.

Over 100 spears and 20 guns were collected on that occasion in token of submission. This valuable service did much to improve the relations between the white men and the MaTebele, at that time greatly strained, and to convince the natives that the missionaries were their true friends. It followed well the never to be forgotten heroism of

FORT HALSTEAD, FORMED DURING THE REBELLION.

Mr. Rhodes, who, unarmed and unattended, save by an interpreter, went into the rebel stronghold and there negotiated peace.

The worst result of the fighting was the suffering entailed on non-combatants, chiefly women and children. They were reduced to the most pitiable straits of hunger; and while the rebels in the Matopo Hills were comparatively well off, the loyalists and those who had "come in" were starving. They ate baboons' flesh, they ground and

FEEDING THE HUNGRY AT HOPE FOUNTAIN (1897).
Photograph taken before the ruined Mission House. Rev. D. Carnegie in the foreground. Zhizhu in white at the top of the steps

cooked the skins of cattle dead of rinderpest ; parents sold their children, that the children might be fed and themselves saved. Nearly two hundred starving folk were fed for months at Hope Fountain, and many more at the other stations ; mainly at the expense of the Government. It should be noted well and not forgotten, that the MaTebele themselves paid high tribute to the humanity of the white men in their treatment of the wounded and of the women. Unfortunately there were miserable exceptions ; but they were exceptions, and not the rule.

After a year of full responsibility and heavy labour, Mr. Carnegie was reinforced by the welcome return of Mr. and Mrs. Helm. Mrs. Helm travelled by the primitive coach, but Mr. Helm ventured him-

self in a railway construction train along with the baggage, and enjoying much the same treatment. But this was soon forgotten, for as they neared home they were met by Zhizhu and the school children, with shouts of welcome and the singing of hymns. Then this unusual escort turned and raced the cart back to the station. Though Mr. Helm drove at the rate of eight or nine miles an hour, and repeatedly urged the people to come more quietly, they persisted in keeping up with the horses till Hope Fountain was reached. Only the little ones lagged behind.

A ruined station awaited the travellers, who were entertained by the aid of odd ends of broken furniture and sundry scrap crockery. Yet it was a glad home-coming, for the sufferings of years had done much to draw missionaries and people very close to each other. Now new relationships were to draw them closer still. For it must be remembered that the country had been conquered by the race to which the missionaries belonged, and that in the eyes of the MaTebele the teachers were masters as well as pastors.

To the native came freedom such as had never, not even in dreams, been his. For the first time his property was his own, his wife and children his very own ; and in the morning of that new freedom, his need of sympathetic guidance was very great. He had been conquered and had become free, now he had to learn to use his freedom.

To the missionary came the exhilarating consciousness that he was no longer, as in the olden days, building on sand, beating the air. The work that he was now to do would be suffered to remain and become fruitful ; and of this he saw rich promise both in church and in school. Men came in increasing numbers, and even the women attended. The congregations were not only larger, they were in

quality vastly improved. Now keen minds waited on the preacher's message, and bent their unaccustomed strength to the new learning. Never before had such sense of responsibility burdened the missionary's heart.

Strenuous efforts were made to deal with the new situation. Mr.

THE BUILDINGS OF THE DEFUNCT INDUSTRIAL INSTITUTION AT HOPE FOUNTAIN.

The Church and Mission House of the Rev. C. D. Helm are further down the valley to the right.

Wilkerson established at Hope Fountain the nucleus of an Industrial Institution, which it was hoped might in time develop into another Lovedale. For several years, he and his boys were in great request at one station after another, to rebuild, to build and to enlarge. Indeed his work seemed to be meeting a real need. But alas! conditions changed, and the Institute died of starvation. There came no

MR. WILKERSON'S HOUSE, HOPE FOUNTAIN.

more young men to be trained in handicraft; they were apparently more eager to earn than to learn.

When the reason was understood, this was not to be wondered at; for out in the world of Matebele life the black workman was boycotted by the white workman. The white artisan would not work on equal terms with the black artisan, equal though their skill might be. This in the black man's own country!

But in its short life the Institute fully justified its existence. Mr. Wilkerson and his boys built the principal churches and manses of the mission, as well as the buildings of the Institute itself; and if samples of satisfactory work be required, showing what progress can be made in manual training in a few years by these "savages," there they

stand. Moreover, the boys themselves, with hardly an exception, furnished examples of the handiwork of the Great Artificer, acquitting themselves well as followers of Jesus Christ.

In those hopeful happy years classes were formed for various purposes. Mrs. Helm instructed the girls in the mysteries of sewing and dressmaking; when, despite the clumsiness of fingers more accustomed to hoe than needle, excellent work was done. Did the girls of the ancient Britons or Anglo-Saxons do better when they began to stitch and sew?

One of the most interesting features of the work at Hope Fountain was (and is) the inquirer's class, held, during the season when the gardens demand close attention, at six o'clock in the morning. The attendance was large and the people keen. Searching questions were often well answered; and, not infrequently, the teacher was himself well "stretched" to answer questions put to him. For example: "How can Jesus be called the Son of David, when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and His descent is traced through Joseph?" And again: "How does the devil get power over men? Is he subject to God?" From this class Mr. Helm selected the most promising inquirers for further instruction and trial, with a view to baptism and church membership. Among the Matebele Christians it has been from the first recognized that membership of the church was a high and honourable distinction, the outward and visible sign of the inward life.

It was a great day at Hope Fountain, one of the brightest days the station had seen, when the fine new church was opened for the worship of God. The function was notable for the presence of representatives of all the missionary societies working in the country (ex-

NEW CHURCH AT HOPE FOUNTAIN.

cept one), who had been taking part in an United Missionary Conference at Bulawayo. But it was even more notable for the part that the MaTebele themselves took in the erection of the beautiful structure. It was the work of Mr. Wilkerson's boys, but the people of the station, in addition to much free and willing labour, contributed no less a sum than £180 to its cost.

One Sunday during service it occurred to Mr. Helm to tell his congregation of the needs of the L.M.S., and the Million Shilling Fund. The people had seen and heard Dr. Thompson not very long before, and it was hoped that perhaps £5 might be sent to gladden his heart. Imagine Mr. Helm's surprise and gratitude when some days later the people made up their gift to 1,220 shillings. Nor did this special contribution in any way trench on the regular offerings of the Church members.

One year the Harvest Thanksgiving collection amounted to £7 14*s.* 2*d.*, but the distribution of the money was more remarkable than the amount. Ten shillings was allocated by the church to their own poor, £2 8*s.* 1*d.* was ordered to be sent to the China Famine Fund (then being collected), £2 8*s.* 0*d.* to the Medland Hall Fund for the Homeless Poor of London, and £2 8*s.* 1*d.* to Dr. Barnardo. Let this collection be well considered, remembering that the donors were just emerging from one of the vilest systems of heathenism the world has seen.

These are but illustrations of the spirit cultivated in the Matebele Church. Last year the whole body of church members and adherents at all the stations gave to the service of the church a sum which, divided by the number of church members, would yield an average of close on 15*s.* each. In direct missionary work, also, the church members were taught to be diligent. Every one was expected to take some part in carrying the Gospel to all their fellow-countrymen within reach.

The young men of the Hope Fountain church evangelized among the villages within a radius of eight or ten miles every Sunday afternoon. On their return from this long walk, the young preachers met in class to report to the missionary what they had taught and how they had fared. Some of these reports showed poorly in their meagreness; but, on the other hand, some were full and to the point. For these young men a special class was held to fit them for work which to them was very arduous, and the most promising of them were carefully chosen for fuller training at Tiger Kloof.

Zhizhu was one of the first-fruits of Hope Fountain, gathered in the dark days. He was on probation for five years, and during the whole of that time showed a steady consistence of aim that witnessed

to the reality of his "change of heart." He never exhibited any wish to return to the hateful heathen practices in which he had been brought up. He has been a Christian for over twenty years, and a native teacher for a large part of that time. As such he has rendered splendid service in the establishment of several out-stations, often in very difficult circumstances.

He married Ndawo, a girl who in the old days took the bold and perilous stand that she would marry no man who had a second wife, no man not a Christian. She was of much higher birth than he, and lost caste in marrying him; but she understood wherein true superiority consisted, and their union has been true marriage. The example of their pure family life has had a gracious influence on the people wherever they have lived; for of necessity a native family circle is more open to native observation than that of the European missionary.

WIVES OF NATIVE TEACHERS.

The teachers mentioned in this book, and many others not named, have shown an elevation of aim and strength of devotion surprising to those who do not know how great qualities lie dormant in the African character. Loyalty is the cardinal virtue with the MaTebele, and for those who find their king in Jesus Christ there is no limit to their loyalty in His service. A man of Lobengula's day said to his teacher,

"I belong to the king, shall not he do as he will with his own." So he said and so he did, and in his obedience to those principles he laid down his life. In that spirit these teachers have often preferred the smaller wage of the Christian teacher to the far higher sum offered by civilization. They have so chosen for Christ's sake, that they might share more directly in the uplift of their countrymen. Amid much contempt and abuse from some who ought to have known better, in the conscious weakness of slender knowledge and experience, they stand strong and true for their Lord, and He honours them.

FROM THE LEFT, REV. DR. HELM (D.R. MISSION), REV. C. D. HELM (L.M.S.), REV. D. CARNEGIE (L.M.S.).

The diocese of Hope Fountain is large, and demands incessant and assiduous care. In addition to the head station, there are eight out-stations many miles apart, which require constant superintendence. Each is in charge of a native teacher, and each has several sub-stations. The thing would be impossible but for the loyal co-operation of teachers and church members.

The great need is teachers, more and better equipped. The harvest is indeed great, but the labourers are so few. An excellent start was made with an educational institution for the training of promising young men as native teachers under the care of Mr. Williams, but funds failed, and another hope died and was buried. Meanwhile the work grows apace, and the demands on Mr. Helm

and his native staff become ever more numerous and more exacting.

HOPE FOUNTAIN ROLL.

J. B. Thomson, first arrival, August, 1870; final departure, July, 1876, to Ujiji, C. Africa; "passed," September, 1878, at Ujiji.

C. D. Helm, first arrival, December 2, 1875.

J. Cockin, first arrival, May 28, 1878; "passed," January, 1880.

D. Carnegie, first arrival, October 13, 1882; final departure, October, 1897, to Centenary.

G. Wilkerson, first arrival, August 31, 1896; final departure, March, 1910, to Centenary.

J. Richardson, first arrival, June 3, 1904; final departure, December 7, 1904, retired.

R. C. Williams, first arrival, November 25, 1905; final departure, February, 1910, to New Guinea.

STUDENTS' QUARTERS, INDUSTRIAL INSTITUTE, HOPE FOUNTAIN.

CHAPTER XIX

CENTENARY

UNLIKE Inyati and Hope Fountain, Centenary station was the work of one man, David Carnegie. During fifteen years spent at Hope Fountain in happy comradeship with the Helms, he and his wife had grown to love it as their first and only home. But the glorious opportunity, long prayed for, long delayed, trumpeted out a call that could not be denied. So David Carnegie built his hut among the ruins of the old home till Mr. Helm should return from furlough, and then went forth into the wilderness to find a new people and build a new home. There may have been regret, but certainly no unwillingness; the Carnegies were too good missionaries for that. But there was sorrow enough at their departure among the simple black folk, who poured forth their love in many little gifts, and whose hearts went with the teachers in their great task.

In a quiet peaceful valley thirty miles west from Hope Fountain Carnegie found the place he sought (Oct., 1897). Its peacefulness and retirement, far from the madding crowd of gold-seekers,[1] proved very attractive after the rough experiences of rebellion and famine. The beautiful stream of clear water singing to itself in its sandy bed down the middle of the valley had a welcome for the wanderer. The

[1] The Matebele Gold Reef Co. had generously given the site for the mission.

rich fertile soil invited his labour. But most of all, people in all their deep unknown need, people who had called him from his home in bonny Scotland, and lured him from Hope Fountain, were there in thousands waiting to be taught. Twelve villages within three miles, and thirty within half a day's journey.

The valley was in much the same condition as when the tiny bush-folk wandered free over the country ages before, when elephants and lions made it their home. It contained nothing but the raw material of homes and Christians.

The Scotchman soon made a change. Men were employed to cut poles, women scuffled away the grass and cut down the bushes from the site chosen, and the children rushed round gathering grass for thatch. Three round huts were built, dining room, bedroom and kitchen; and in due course huts for the work-boys, goat kraal, and fowl house were added.

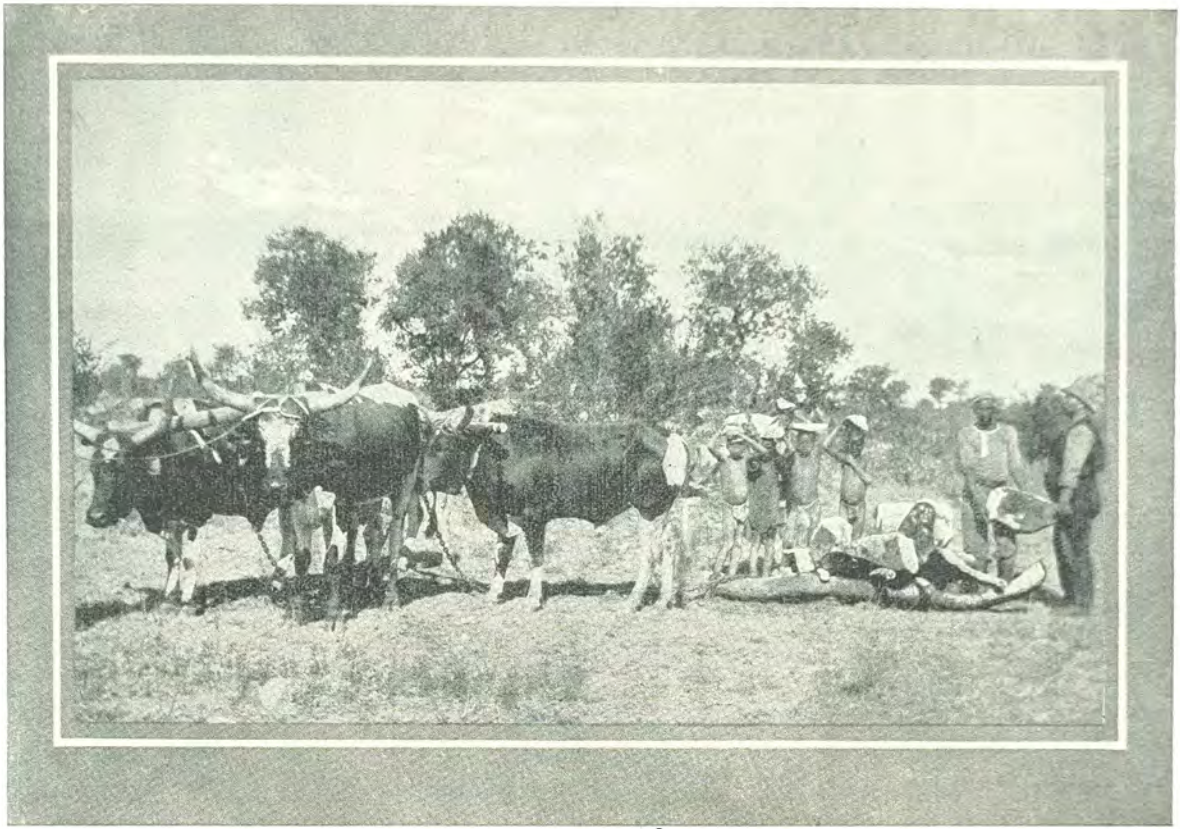
Under a tree, that will be remembered as long as Centenary is Centenary, the first thing was put first on the first night; and the first Sunday saw the gathering of the first congregation. As soon as shelter for the workers was provided, a small school house of poles and clay was run up. Alongside the school the wagon was drawn, and the space between school and wagon became workshop, with a sail cloth spread overhead for shelter. Down by the river the garden was fenced and dug, and therein planted every tree pleasant to the sight and good for food, so far as they could be obtained.

These labours filled very many months of strenuous toil, but at last the lonely man could think of bringing home, wife and bairns, then it would be home indeed.

At four o'clock one April morning (1898) the Carnegie family (all

TREE AT CENTENARY M.S., UNDER WHICH THE FIRST CONGREGATION GATHERED.

eagerness) alighted from the train that had brought them from Cape Town. They had spent a week in their compartment, till even that had become homely. Now it steamed away and left them alone on the wide veldt. No station, no porters, no cabs, not a soul, and home full five miles away! The railway truck containing their stores of food and building material was shunted into the siding (the only visible sign of station except the name board), and they were left to the task of getting themselves and their stuff transported over those five miles of rough veldt. It sounds pretty bad in English ears, but it meant very little to folk well used to the African veldt. Plenty of



HAULING STONES FOR THE CENTENARY CHURCH.

Rev. D. Carnegie and teacher.

firewood lay all around, and in a very few minutes the fire roared and the kettle sang. Presently came a neighbour with his wagon and took the travellers home.

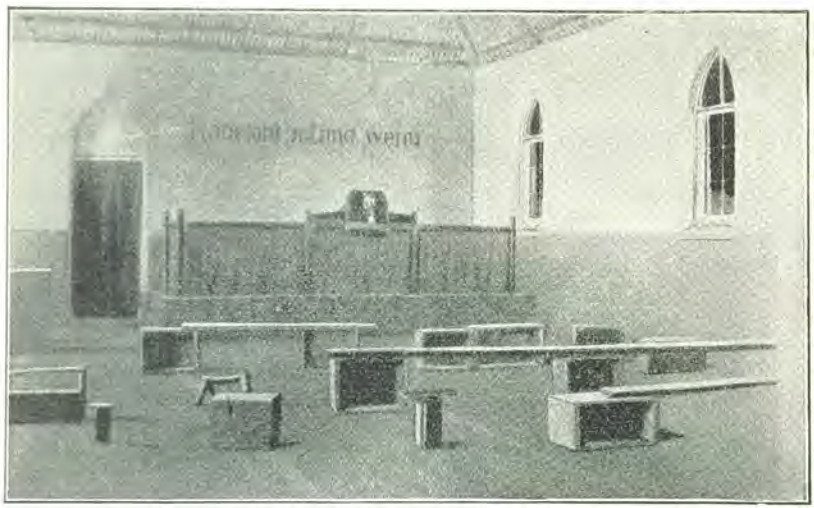
Despite the long hard work which had been put into the building of the station, it verily seemed as if everything had to be done and done at once. But things must bide their turn; it is no use being in a hurry in Africa. After some months Mr. Wilkerson and his boys

CENTENARY CHURCH.

came over and built a proper manse; and Mr. Carnegie got hold of another Scotchman to build a proper church. The missionary undertook the quarrying of the stones for the foundation, and was tempted more than once to wish he had left it alone. Scotchman kept Scotchman at it for all he was worth. That builder's industry fairly ate up the stones, and the quarryman groaned and set his teeth. But

they did well together. Missionary and builder were true men; both builders, and both missionaries.

Interest grew to excitement among the natives as the church went up, for they realized that it was their church. Every man and woman on the place had a share in it, every one gave a minimum of six days' free work to the building of the sanctuary.



INTERIOR OF CENTENARY CHURCH.

In October, 1899, it was finished ready for the opening. Three hundred people were supposed to measure its capacity, but after the manner of the country more could get into it. And on the opening day many more did get into it. (Will readers please remember that they are reading about the savage MaTebele?) Bright and beautiful looked the building, as its first congregation gathered within its walls. Round the church ran a dark dado with a comfortable pink above; while over the platform shone the words "Kanelani mLimo wenu!"

(Behold your God!). Messrs. Rees and Reed, Baleni and Zhizhu were there, but "Father" Helm was sorely missed. Alas! He was lying ill in Bulawayo Hospital.

Among the speakers was Mazwi, an induna of high descent, who had recently come to live on the mission station. He said: "What has been left to us in these days? Shields? They are eaten by the rats. Assegais? We cut grass and pumpkins with them. You see that book (pointing to the New Testament in Mr. Carnegie's hand), that is our shield. Come all of you on the Great Day and hear the word of God from our teacher, and send your children to the school." The service was most impressive, and many who till then had never been inside a church carried away fragments of new truths to fructify in days to come. The collection was notable—£18 16s., of which the natives contributed £8 (Mazwi 20s.).

This same Mazwi made a rule that no field work was to be done by his people on the Great Day. Some were not minded to obey, and he spoke again. "They who work on the Great Day shall have their hoes taken from them." Then they obeyed. The patriarchical (or autocratic) sense developed in these people through the centuries is not to be eradicated in a day or two.

Villages came and went at Centenary; chiefly came, rarely went. Not infrequently the natives found difficulty in living under the petty rule of new white landlords. Perhaps it was their own fault, perhaps it was not. Some of these settlers were "nigger haters," despising the black people and refusing them permission to live on their farms, or demanding such rent in money or labour as made tenancy impossible. Insults were common among white men of this class, and that the spirit of a people naturally courteous could not brook. This

also made for the furtherance of the Gospel, in that the people sought those farms where they would be fairly treated, chief among which were the mission farms. But it also made for hindrance as well as furtherance, for ill-treatment by one white man did not dispose natives to regard with favour another of the same colour. It took some of them a long time to distinguish between white men and white men.

For some time it seemed as if the old dark days of barrenness had returned. The people were so slow to respond to the efforts of the teachers in the best things. There were good attendances at church and school, but none to give their hearts to God. In April appeared the first green shoots of life. Mr. Carnegie had been preaching on the wisdom of putting first things first. Next day came four men with serious faces full of deep meaning: "Mnale, our hearts have told us to seek the way of life." The missionary was moved to the soul; but fearful of self-deception he tested the inquirers: "What will your neighbours say when they see you leaving the old customs?" The reply was prompt and clear: "Mnale, we have done with shams, bone-throwers we have done with them. We fear nobody, we long for peace. That is why we have come to you." Oh! this is too good to be true! caution may save sorrow to missionary and people. The MaTebele had a great horror of disease and death; it meant so much to the poor souls, and the beliefs of their childhood gave little help to them in that dire extremity. Hence the next question: "What will you do when illness comes to you, and death?" Their word was still the same: "We do not fear, the Great Father will do all that is well; we come to find the will of God." Then did the missionary out of a full heart show to these men the way they sought, and into which they had been already led by the Gracious Spirit. In a day or

two came three women, and afterwards five more men. From that time the work of the Lord went forward with power. The prayer meeting and the inquirers' class, twin signs of life, never failed.

Soon the time came for our missionaries to take their furlough, and with no small regret at parting they left their station and its work to the love and sympathy of Mr. Cullen Reed, and others of the missionaries remaining in the country. Not seldom did the Carnegies when in England miss the warmth and alertness of Christian fellowship that had developed among the savages. It seemed a pity that civilization should get the better, even by a little, of Christianity. And when the time for return came, there was not after all so much regret at leaving England in the prospect of meeting again the warm-hearted black Christians with their shining white hearts. Certainly the black-white folk were glad enough to get their "father and mother" back again.

When the train, the 11.30 a.m. from Cape Town, stopped at Fig Tree (a real station by this time!) and the family alighted, a mighty cheer from four hundred throats rang out again and again, re-echoing among the hills and waking the baboons from their afternoon siesta. The passengers crowded to see what important personage had been travelling in their company, all unknown. "Oh! a missionary! people seem fond of him." "Yes, sir! they are fond of him, and with good cause." And the train moved off to the gold mines. The cheers broke into a hymn, and the hymn into cheers, and so away home. Wagons were in waiting this time, and ready hands by the score made light work of handling the baggage. In the old days not one would have lifted a stick without promise of a "ntuso" (present). Now, in the day that they get their missionaries back again, not one

of them would dream of accepting a bead. What a Sunday it was! The people thronged in from the out-stations to add their welcome. All day long they were at it, and when night came the tired family said one to another, "It is good to be back again!" with a sigh for the little folk left behind at school in England.

The keen desire of the MaTebele for education astonished every one who knew them in the days of old. Mazwi's word was true enough that the day of the spear had gone, and the day of the book had come; but the mystery lay in this, that the MaTebele had so soon seen it. The hunger for learning showed itself in all classes. Old men and women, moved by the example of the young folk, might be seen going to school with the children, and like them carrying their books and slates. It was very hard for age, but the spirit of youth impelled them. The young folk of Centenary had made a chant for their physical drill characteristic of the spirit moving everybody. "What do we care. Learning may be difficult, but we will do it." Truly it was an amazing thing that had come to pass in this land of the shadow of death.

The red-letter day at Centenary, as at the other stations, was the Quarterly Communion. The new church was hopelessly too small for the congregation that gathered. Old men of the days of Lobengula, whose hands had been red with the blood of their fellows, young girls with wild flowers in their hair, mothers with their babies, racketty boys, young men and maidens, all were there neat and tidy. Under the tree that gave its shade for the first preaching they sat, rested and prayed till the hour of worship arrived. After the preaching came the baptism, with a short address to the parents. Then the great event, the Communion of the Lord's Supper; perhaps over one

THE CONGREGATION AT CENTENARY.

hundred communicants with two of the deacons taking part. It was impossible to think of, or take part in that service without being profoundly moved. It was in most marked degree The Triumph of the Cross.

There were clouds as well as sunshine in the mission story. The opportunities for making and keeping money proved a stumbling block to many. The inordinate love of beer destroyed more. Here as elsewhere abstinence was the only protection, and that could not be always maintained. The old folks especially, to whom beer had been as a food, found it a great trial to relinquish its use. Worst of all, there were not wanting those harpies, more demon than human, who traded on the fall of young girls enticed into Bulawayo.

But the out-stations! The missionary scrambled into his Scotch cart (what else could a Scotchman use?) and was away for days

together, enjoying (weather permitting) the glories of the veldt. The absence of a road, the luxury of sleeping out, the joys of native cookery, the friendship of insects, the intimacy of reptiles, were all his. And those glorious Matopo Hills, at every turn fresh beauties were revealed to him, for which familiarity could never breed contempt. Beyond the preaching there were quiet chats over the camp fire, when the work of the day was supposed to be over, and the witching hour of night invited confidence; what stories of experience were told, what secret struggles revealed! But those things are not for the public.

At old Mapisa's town the missionary was always sure of warmest welcome. He would generally arrive late in the afternoon, and after greetings would retire with the inquirers and others to some quiet place, where they gave themselves to earnest talk and prayer till long after the stars came out. Those black folk would pour out their hearts in thanksgiving, in prayer for their friends and for themselves that more of the glorious light of the gospel of God might be given them. Then for their missionary they would pray, and for the teachers across the sea in the white men's land. What a wonderful thing that prayer meeting among the Matopos was! Many a time those hills had resounded with the sounds of war and strife, shouts, shrieks and groans horridly intermingled. Not very far from Mapisa's village a whole town was wiped out by the orders of the Matebele king, in punishment for some fancied deed of treachery. Mapisa, who remembers to have seen Moffat on the occasion of his first visit to Mzilikazi at Mariko (1835), had seen strange things in his long life, but surely none stranger than this prayer meeting.

A man of energy was Mapisa, for on the occasion of Mr. Carnegie's

first visit, the workmanlike pulling of a tooth brought the prompt order from the old chief, "Go and fetch all the sick people to be healed." The missionary could not deal with all cases with the same promptitude, but the people kept him at it for six solid hours on end.

With such a head the village promised to be a good centre for the work of a native teacher, and were there not 2,000 people near at hand. One Mhotja, son of an induna and of the Abezansi, seemed likely to suit the population, which contained some of the best elements of the Matebele character. This young man could read and write, was clean in character, and looked to the Lord Christ. He was put here at Sizindeni (for so the town was called), that he might teach the people to read, and read to them the "Old old story." He was put there for one month, but he remained longer—the experiment was successful.

Mabuto followed him, and a translation of a letter of his will do much to show the spirit of the Sizindeni folk. One of the members had gone away, and this is how the bereft teacher writes of his loss "——also father! Maciyane has disappeared, and we do not know where he has gone. I have not seen him, and I fear he has chosen to go wrong. Because of this Bonko's heart has been very sore. He has been nearly dead because Maciyane has gone from us. Even now his heart is broken on his account. He mourns and weeps for his old companion. We are all troubled. This is all I have to say, father. Stay nicely, I am, MABUTO."

The story of the out-stations in Matebele Land should be written in detail, for it is worthy. Here space and time fail to tell of Donko-donko, the self-supporting, and "Friday," the teacher they loved;

of the stations on the Shashani and down the Gwai, where the people were determined to learn. In these and in many other places the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

CENTENARY ROLL.

D. Carnegie first reached Centenary, October, 1897 ; "passed," January 29, 1910.

G. Wilkerson arrived Centenary, February, 1910.

PHYSICAL DRILL, TIGER KLOOF.

CHAPTER XX

DOMBADEMA

MR. CULLEN REED reached Inyati in February, 1895, to take the place vacated by Mr. Elliott. The conquest of the MaTebele had made so great a change in the whole prospects of the mission that, in common with the other missionaries, Mr. Reed saw the urgent need for extension; and heartily fell in with the proposal to found a new station to the west of Bulawayo. Mr. Helm and he went prospecting, with the result that it was determined that Mr. Reed should build at a place called Dombadema (Black Rock), on the borders of the Matopo Hills. It was a thickly populated district, containing probably 10,000 people within reach of a day's ride on horseback. For the purposes of the mission three farms were given by Government, which were plentifully supplied with water and admirably suited to native methods of cultivation. A further advantage lay in the fact that the Native Commissioner of the district was the son of the Rev. T. M. Thomas, late Inyati missionary, a gentleman in full sympathy with missionary work.

The inhabitants were mainly MaKalanga (MaKaranga), descendants of the men of Mununutapa. Intelligent and industrious were they, the blacksmiths and agriculturists of the land, capable and needy, so deeply sunk in the black mire of sin that even the MaTebele professed to be shocked at some of their wicked ways. Among them had settled a

considerable number of MaTebele, themselves refugees in the district to which in the days of their mastery they had driven the miserable MaKalanga.

On his first Sunday Mr. Reed fell into conversation with the head man Mnigau on the relative merits of their respective religions. After listening for a while, Mnigau rose and called the principal men of the tribe, that they might hear for themselves the wonderful talk of the white teacher. Long they sat drinking in the strange beautiful story of the love of God. Through all the mists of most imperfect translation, something of that great glory shone upon them for the first time.

When the next Sunday came round the missionary was roused before daybreak by the tidings that there were very many men waiting to see him outside. Much surprised to find nearly two hundred men squatting there, Mr. Reed inquired why they had come. "To hear about Jesus," was the simple reply. Then he remembered that he had told them that it was the custom of the white men to think and talk about Jesus every seventh day. They had counted the days, and were come to hear more of the news which had fascinated their chiefs a week before. The interpreting was very poor; Tom, Mr. Reed's Zulu wagon driver, had some knowledge of Dutch and English, while Mr. Reed had already acquired a little Sintebele (the language of the MaTebele), and by such means the Gospel was preached. The missionary read portions of Scripture in Sintebele with short interpreted explanations; the Inyati boys sang some hymns, and the service closed with the Lord's Prayer, also in Sintebele.

It was a memorable service, the beginnings of great things. Sunday by Sunday it was continued, the people gathering in increasing numbers to "hear about Jesus." Happily the MaKalanga were passionately

A KARANGA BLACKSMITH.

fond of singing, and were therefore soon able to join, somewhat scrappily, in the singing of several hymns. It was a promising start for the new mission, and the work proceeded in full accord with the promise.

One evening in March, 1896, came word from the Matebele induna Langabi that Mnigau was "to remove the stump from his gate." The rebellion had broken out, and the missionary was "the stump" to be removed. Said Mnigau, "If Langabi wants the teacher killed let him come and do it himself," and he hurried off a warning to his teacher. He risked his life for his friend, for Langabi was not a man to be trifled with.

The same evening, the day's work being done at Dombadema, and the missionary sitting in his lonely hut writing home, when suddenly Tom burst in, breathless and half-dressed, "Master, we must fly, an impi is at Guqwana's (half a mile away) coming to kill us." It appeared that the confidential servant of Mnigau had secretly crept into Tom's hut, whispered the warning, and turned and fled. Mr. Reed, remembering the timid character of the MaKalanga, and the vague rumours that had been flying round, went down to Mnigau's, but could get no further news, only dark hints. He went on to Guqwana's, where the impi was said to be, but there he found everything quiet. He returned home, but had no sooner arrived than there came other headmen begging him to fly. They had done what they could at the risk of their own lives, now lest all should perish they entreated him to go. If he neglected their warning he would involve them as well as himself in disaster. Therefore did Mr. Reed decide to spend the night at his cattle post some seven miles away. It was a nerve-trying journey, for in the darkness he might at any moment walk into the arms of the impi seeking his life. Yet all unknown he was taking the way of safety. Within an hour of his departure, the

impi arrived to kill him, and failing to find any trace of their victim, pursued him in the direction of Bulawayo, whither he would be most likely to go. Next morning came a trooper, guided by a Hope Fountain native, to call the white man into laager. Their journey had been full of peril, for they ran the gauntlet of the vagrant bands of MaTebele destroying the white man and all his belongings.

LAAGER IN MARKET SQUARE, BULAWAYO.
Formed at the time of the Rebellion.

It was a sad six months before Cullen Reed could return to work again, though he had been able more than once to visit his flock and view the melancholy ruins of his home. He was doubly welcome, for in those days of turmoil and change the people felt secure when the teacher was at home. Mr. Reed had lived in closer touch with his people than had been possible for a married man. His huts were of the native type, and were built in the village somewhat after the style of their own head men. He ate in large measure the food of the coun-

try, he observed Kalanga etiquette, and insisted that on their side the natives should treat him as one of their own head men. All this gave greater opportunities of learning the language of the people, and their customs and habits. It enabled him to see more of their family life, and revealed to his dismayed mind hitherto unknown horrors of heathen life. He was always at hand to wield that most potent of all influences, the power of the Christian life. While he learned their manners and customs, they learned his. His life presented in an acute form the experience of all missionaries to the heathen. He was pulling them up; they were pulling him down. He was as a man at the edge of a horrible pit of miry clay endeavouring to rescue them that were engulfed below. By his rope of sympathy he tried to raise them to the solid ground whereon he stood; their dead weight operated to pull him into their disgusting slough.

At first teaching centred in the singing and memorizing of hymns, and a very useful method it proved to be. The people were great singers, singing on every available occasion, never tiring. "Stand up, stand up for Jesus" became a strong favourite with them all. But one day a deputation from the singing class waited on the teacher to ask when they might begin to learn to read. This was the missionary's opportunity, and joyfully he took it. The reading class was added to the curriculum. So the work progressed, classes being added to classes as the need arose, and the eyes of the people opened wider and wider.

Missionary life in Matebele Land is a very busy life, especially when the missionary is a bachelor. He is called to double duty. There is so great variety of work to be done, that at times it seems impossible to overtake the duties of the day. There is the ordering of the house, the

making of servants, the care of the cattle and the garden, buying food for self and boys, medical attendance (Mr. Reed pulled over 400 teeth in one year), the various services and classes, and the thousand and one calls of the people of every sort and kind. Beyond these there is

BUILDING A SCHOOL-CHURCH AT AN OUTSTATION.

the necessary study of the language, preparation of addresses, private reading, and itineration. A missionary's life in Matebele Land to-day is a life of constant overwork. So Mr. Reed found it.

In the multitudinous duties of the station he read clearly the call of the district; and saw that if he was to answer that call, he must

visit the district and know the people. This was no easy task when it is remembered that the district for which he was responsible was larger than Lancashire, was wholly unexplored by any white man, and entirely without roads. A large part of it lay in the Matopo Hill region, where rocky hills abounded, and wide morasses and streams with precipitous banks embarrassed the traveller at every turn.

On such a journey of exploration Cullen Reed started one Friday, with intent to visit a group of villages lying about thirty-five miles to the south-west, whence had come many calls for a teacher. He took with him four of the boys from the Dombadema choir to carry blankets, cooking-pot, etc. No rain had fallen for three months, and the bright hues of spring had changed to the drabs of drought; yet on every side the glories of the country side shone through its sombre dress. They passed from village to village, on every side the resounding cry, "When are you coming to teach us?" At night they camped on the "high veldt," the backbone of the country. The season was winter, and even with a large fire they failed to keep themselves warm. Sleep was impossible, and all were thankful when the dawn enabled them to resume the march and warm their starved limbs. This in the tropics! They reached Tjingababili's village in the afternoon of Saturday. The old man received them gladly, and at once set huts apart for their accommodation. It appears doubtful whether Mr. Reed accepted this hospitality, for an undesirable and dense population generally occupies native huts. The hospitality lay in the intention, and that was of the warmest. After a short rest, request was made that the children might be gathered for instruction. Tjingababili misunderstood, for the word sent round was to the effect that "Grown-up folk were too old, only the children were wanted." The youngsters shyly

crowded round the teacher, not quite sure of their ground, but sparkling with eagerness.

That evening round a huge fire in the middle of the village the young folk gathered for singing lesson, nor were the older people far away. It was a wonderful sight had some stranger suddenly come upon them. A poor, tumble-down, filthy group of huts dropped casually among those hilly masses of sublimity, the crowd of black folk, young and old, trusting to the fire and close contact to keep them warm, for of clothes they had none. In the bright light of the fire they stood and squatted, they kneeled and lay prone in every conceivable attitude, but all intent with eye and ear on the white teacher. No faultlessly dressed cleric was he, but to all outward seeming just a rough settler. And above them all the glorious cloudless sky, brilliant with its myriad stars and the Southern Cross. Two or three hymns were learned fairly well that night, with many intervals when the people listened intently to the choir boys singing to them the Love of Jesus. The congregation would willingly have kept it up all night long, but the travellers were wearied out, and ready for sleep under any conditions, so long as it were sleep.

Visitors from the neighbouring villages, eager to see the white teacher, began to throng his hut early on Sunday morning; and kept it up, a constant stream, the whole day long. About noon Mr. Reed tried to get them quiet for worship, but the chattering of the girls made anything in the nature of an address out of the question. However, there came a reading, and a learning of the Ten Commandments, all of which gave opportunity for short comments. The afternoon was similarly spent; not a soul of that congregation would move till they were quite certain that all was over. Many came from a long

distance and stayed all night; and just at sundown, when Mr. Reed was hoarse as a crow, came trooping in a fresh detachment who had just heard of the arrival of the teacher. They had to be satisfied, then, when nature would no longer be denied, and the wearied missionary was dropping asleep, he heard them arranging for another sing. Visits were paid to other villages in the neighbourhood, and on the Tuesday the mission party turned their steps homeward, where they arrived on Wednesday evening, tired out but happy.

A SCHOOL-CHURCH, NATIVE BUILT (WATTLE AND DAUB).

Tjingababili and other headmen were willing to build schools if only the missionary would send them teachers. But there was the rub! Where were the teachers to come from? At last the boarding school plan was devised, by which six of the brightest boys available were to come to Dombadema for three months' training. They came, densely ignorant of letters; and after they had acquired what was possible to them in the time, they returned to the towns which sent them and taught. They could not preach, they were not Christians; but their lesson books included a part of the New Testament. Six other lads were ready to take

their places at school, and in their turn they went as teachers, while the first six returned for a further spell of training. The plan worked well enough as a beginning, and into it the people entered with spirit; Tjingababili sending his own son and nephew among the first six. But how sore were the straits to which the missionary was reduced, how few were the labourers in this crisis of the mission!

A certain Watcher's Band in England had been praying for these first six, and on the day when the secretary wrote to Mr. Reed, "What news of the six, have any come in?" two of the six came in confessing Christ. Another of the six was a lad named Tjiliwa. The Gospel had touched him; his companions had seen and marked the change; but he had said nothing. Some evilly-disposed person, determined to put an end to the conversion of Tjiliwa, scattered blood about the village and at the door of Tjiliwa's hut. A great terror seized the villagers, for this was one of the practices of the dreaded witchcraft. The only one unmoved was Tjiliwa, who simply told the people they could do nothing but trust themselves to God. That is what he did, he betook himself to prayer, and soon the danger and the terror passed away. Needless to say that ere long Tjiliwa too entered the inquirers' class, and is now a valued native teacher. It may perhaps seem a little thing that Tjiliwa did, because Civilization can form no idea of the terrible hold that witchcraft has on the Matebele mind. The lad's action was heroic, an exhibition of such courage as the Spirit of God inspires.

It is only after prolonged instruction and trial that inquirers are admitted to Church membership. The foul degradation in which these people have been born and bred makes every precaution necessary in their own interest. Evangelistic work is their salvation. Every member of the church assists in this, and in seeking the salvation of

others they establish their own. Yet (as elsewhere in Christendom) some have fallen away, and in the spirit of love have been put back to the first steps. The most grievous blow fell on the church when the head teacher, a man loved and trusted alike by missionary and people, proved faithless to his Lord. His name was removed from its place, and after confession himself put back to the first steps. In no censorious spirit was this done, but in love and deep sorrow. After all, the standard of life is not nearly as high as might be wished, but in comparison with the state of the heathen around the advance is marvellous; the people are awaking as from a long sleep, and are becoming aware of the tremendous realities of life. As one of them put it in the usual picturesque way: "I have been relying on clay oxen, and all the while the Maker has sat by and laughed."

A corresponding change, mighty in character, has been shown in daily habits. Traders have said that formerly soap, etc., were almost unsaleable, but are now in great demand. In the stores of to-day,

MISSION HOUSE, DO'IBADEMA.
(Rev. G. Cullen Reed.)

instead of the calico, beads and blankets of the "good old days," are to be found calicoes and blankets indeed, but also dresses, candles, paraffin lamps, watches, etc. Formerly entrance to their burrow-like huts could only be made on their hands and knees, or prostrate ; now the hut is replaced by the house, with full-sized doors and windows. Within are tables and chairs, bedsteads and bookshelves, and boxes for the keeping of their clothes. The coming of clothes has unfortunately not improved the health of the people. Chest complaints increase, due no doubt to ignorance of the proper use of clothes. From within outwards is the best mode of progress.

One marked evidence of advance is seen in the opposition excited. Heathenism is losing and shows fight. It had been the custom from time immemorial for parents to betroth their baby girls to the highest bidder, in order that in his old age he might be provided with a young wife. Cattle are paid over, and by native law the infant, grown to marriageable age, is compelled to marry a man old enough to be her grandfather. In the event of the marriage not taking place the cattle had to be returned. Now these girls are beginning to learn, their whole nature is awaking, and they refuse to ratify so monstrous a bargain. Happily British law secures their freedom, and heathenism finds itself defeated on all sides. But it takes vengeance on the schools and the churches. One young girl, who had been repeatedly thrashed for attendance at school, was found again at church. She confessed that the thrashings were real enough, and added that she expected another when she reached home. Yet she came to church, and steadfastly refused to marry the old heathen polygamist who had bought her as a baby.

The new life of these people, with all the blunders and setbacks inseparable from their groping progress, cannot be set forth in pages,

A PICNIC IN THE MATOPO HILLS, NEAR DOMBADEMA.
Mrs. J. McKenzie (in black), Rev. G. Cullen Reed (with hat).

volumes would be needed. But they will be heard of in the day that the children of Africa shall assert their manhood.

DOMBADEMA ROLL.

G. Cullen Reed, first arrival, May, 1895.

CHAPTER XXI

INSIZA

IN the year 1900 it was found necessary to open a new station to the east of Inyati, in order to occupy effectively the district for which, in the missionary partition of the country, the L.M.S. had made itself responsible. To that end Mr. Rees turned explorer, and speedily found on the head waters of the Insiza River just the thing he wanted. The desired site was on the watershed which separates the basins of the Zambesi and Limpopo, and was therefore cold, dry, and healthy. In general features the locality was not unlike Hope Fountain, a valley well wooded and watered, a most desirable home for a white man's family. Moreover examination disclosed an attraction far greater to the missionary, a large population. Within a radius of twenty miles there were fully 350 villages, with some 20,000 inhabitants; and thirty-five of these villages were within five miles of the proposed station.

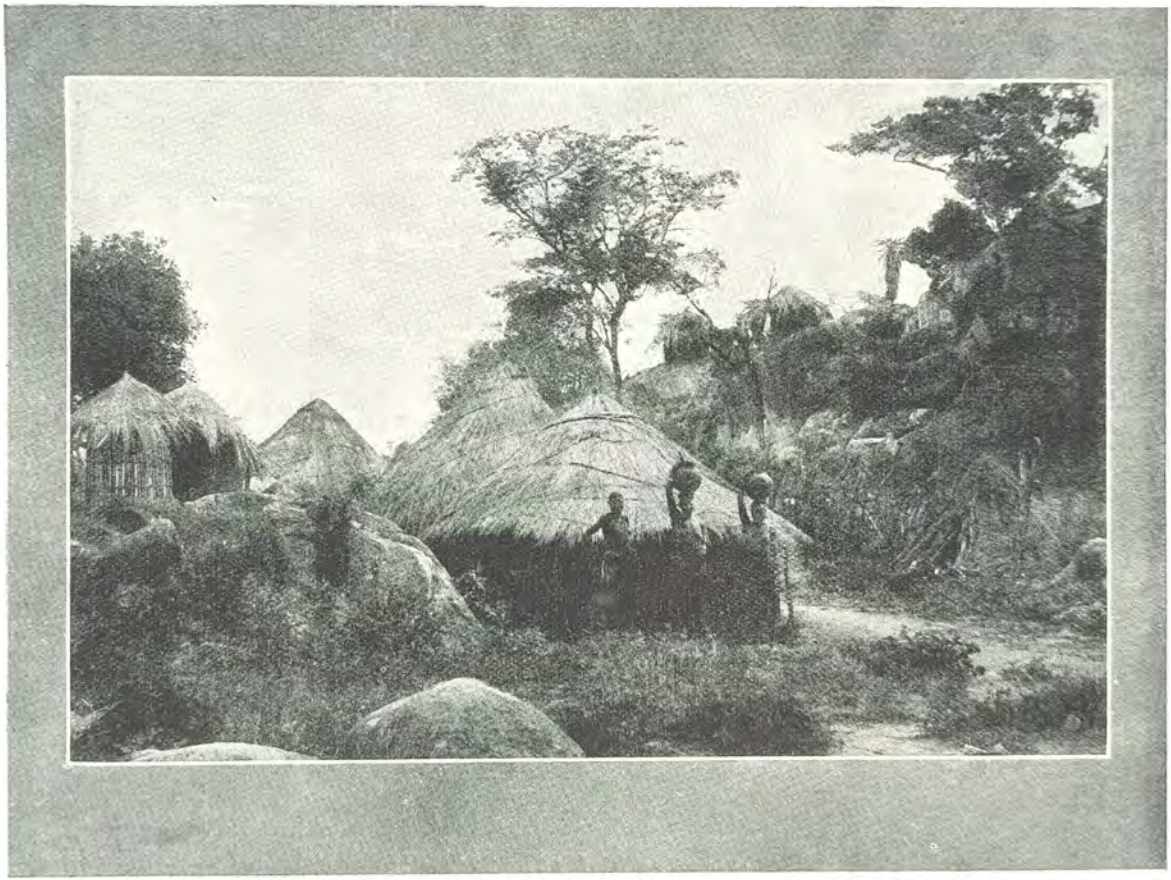
As in all other parts of the land, the missionary found the people delighted at the prospect of a teacher coming to live among them. The Native Commissioner of the district was sympathetic, and most of the white settlers received the idea with favour. One of them, Mr. Carlessen, generously offered three hundred acres of good land at a nominal rent for the purposes of the mission. The site is separated from the main bulk of the farm by a stream, one of the main branches

of the Insiza river; and is situated thirty miles from Inyati, sixty from Bulawayo, and eight from the railway.

Mr. Rees made strenuous efforts to work the new mission as an outstation of Inyati until a missionary from home could be sent to take charge. Alas, that day was long to be delayed! Truly Mr. Picton Jones (late of Central Africa) was at once appointed, and in due time arrived; but meanwhile Mr. Rees needed to take his furlough, and Mr. Jones was required to supply his place at Inyati, and was able to pay only one visit to Insiza.

Mr. Rees hurried back to Inyati, and did what he could by visits at long intervals to meet the more pressing needs of Insiza. But the new station was only one out of many clamouring for teachers, and no man can do more than he can do. No white missionary appeared to share the burden, and no native Christian was sufficiently advanced to be placed in charge. Mr. Rees could arrange for readers to teach as far as they had learned, as he had done elsewhere; and this he did. But something more was required by the large eager population at Insiza. It is not difficult to imagine the feelings of those Matebele missionaries when, after long barren years of waiting, the great opportunity presented itself, and they were unable to take it. No wonder a bitterness of soul possessed them.

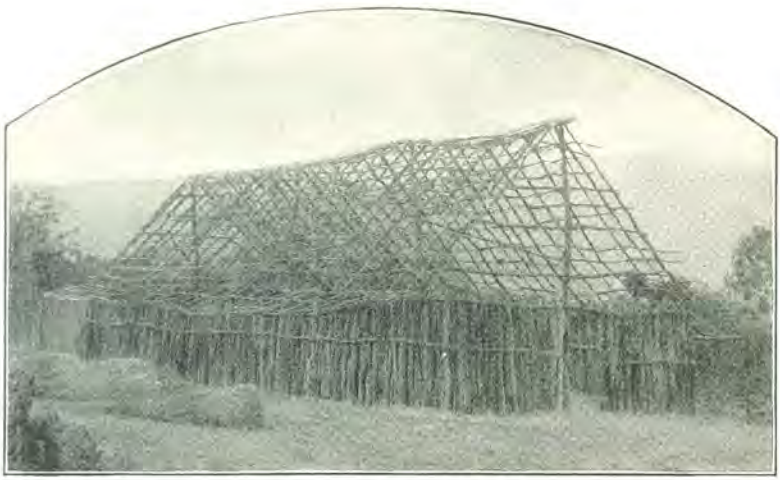
At last, when no missionary from home was forthcoming, Zhizhu was taken from another station and placed at Insiza. He soon had congregations of from 200 to 300 every Sunday. They were not gathered with effort and after great persuasion, they came readily and gladly. By their willing help a large school house and a teacher's house of two rooms were built, together with a stone kraal for the animals. For months the people laboured cutting poles and laths,



IN A KARANGA VILLAGE.

gathering grass and making plaits for the thatch, without any thought of reward.

In due course Mr. Rees was asked to go over to open the new building. It was a wonderful sight which met his eyes on the opening morning. Twelve months before that site had been bare and wild;



TO SAVE THE SOCIETY!
A native-built school-church. Labour and material gratis.

now it was crowned by the native-built school, and from north, south, east, and west came the congregation in Indian file, along the footpaths their frequent passage had made, to the worship of God.

Zhizhu's work was difficult. He was a Liholi (slave born), and that was as poison to the better born of the MaTebele. He was labelled "umtagati" (bewitcher), most opprobrious epithet in native ears. His work was made more difficult by the hostility of certain white men of the baser sort, who appeared to think that the only part black people were called to play in the economy of nature was to be the

tools and toys of his majesty "the white man." It was intolerable in their view that the "nigger" should be taught, doubly intolerable that a "nigger" should teach them. One such individual took it upon him to knock Zhizhu down for some fancied fault, whereupon the Native Commissioner promptly did his duty and fined the offender £5. Whole-heartedly seconded by his brave wife Ndawo, Zhizhu stuck to his post; and he will be long remembered for the faithful loving service which he rendered in those days.

How efficient his work was may be gathered from the report of Mr. Williams, Principal of the short-lived Educational Institute. He examined the school at the request of the District Committee, and in his report tells how the school had been established for no more than eighteen months, that Zhizhu had been working single-handed among a people who had never been taught at all. On the day of examination there were one hundred and fifty-three children present out of a roll of one hundred and sixty-six. They were quiet and orderly, well disciplined. Twenty-three presented themselves for examination in reading from the New Testament; eighteen of these gained "excellent," while out of the whole number of scholars only thirty-seven were unable to write at least a little. The hard-working painstaking teacher was highly commended, the more so that the school apparatus was of the poorest.

Now Jingeni was an outstation of Insiza, ready made so to say, seeing that it was handed over from Inyati. This Jingeni was founded on this wise. Another outstation of Inyati was Sipongweni, where Samuel, a teacher of repute, had established a strong church. Here two young men, Tandugudla and Egipiti, were much exercised in mind about Jingeni and its need of the Gospel. They resolved to go

on their own responsibility and preach to the people there. Somewhat to their surprise they were received with open arms by the young folk and very soon a school was built and regular teaching established under the care of these two young Christians, all without pay or hope of pay. Of course the missionary must come to open the school-church. The congregation was enormous and the whole service inspiring. The care of Jingeni now belongs to Insiza, and the results yielded are of the best.

At last came the long expected white missionary, Mr. Carleton, who had gained experience by long service in Zulu Land. He has been there two years, and is able to speak of one hundred and fifty young men under Christian influence, all anxious to improve themselves. In addition to their Christian ambitions, they look forward to their own brick cottages, better cultivated gardens, and irrigation. As at the other stations, they are turning from the idleness and indifference of the former times to industry and enterprise, and qualifying themselves to be worthy members of the Great Rhodesian State.

Here are three native teachers and twenty-five church members. Three day schools are attached to the mission, each presided over by a native teacher, with an aggregate of three hundred and twenty scholars. The contributions to the L.M.S. last year amounted to £5.

These figures do not at all adequately represent the developments in progress. Mr. Carleton is endeavouring to obtain a block of farms where the people can work out their lives in their own way and perhaps by and by support their own mission work.

CHAPTER XXII

TJIMALI

BECAUSE of the difficulty often developed between the new white proprietors of the soil and the native population, it became desirable to secure such farms as were possible for the occupation of the MaTebele under missionary guidance. Native reserves, figuring largely on the maps of the country, were not always fitted for cultivation, nor even for occupation. The rush of civilization had taken the people too hurriedly; it would have been far better had it been possible for them to have taken their civilization, so to speak, in smaller doses and at longer intervals. Now the L.M.S. part of the country included, as has been said, the Matopo Hills; a district much favoured by the MaTebele, because the soil was entirely suited to the native style of gardening, but chiefly because there were fewer white men there and no gold mining. Centenary and Dombadema were both on the borders of that district, and an opportunity occurred for the acquisition of a farm in the heart of Ematotjeni (so the MaTebele spoke of the district), which the Directors took. Ichabod was the name given to it by some despairing settler; but the missionaries, knowing that the glory had not departed, have reverted to the native original Tjimali. It is well situated from a health point of view, on the Semokwe River, well watered, of most excellent soil, and about sixteen miles from the railway.

There were very many people already resident and many more

GROUP OF MATEBELE WOMEN AND CHILDREN; THE RAW MATERIAL.

were coming, both of the MaTebele and of the MaKalanga. In 1909 three indunas and their following came from their former locations, because of the demand of the landlords for increased rent, desiring to settle on the mission farm.

In August, 1907, Mr. Whiteside went to take up his residence. He had to find the place by the beacons, and chop his way to it when found. Like the first pioneers, he built his huts and commenced *de novo*.

As a certain traveller in the South Sea Islands once said, some missionary societies appeared to coddle their missionaries; but the authorities of the L.M.S. seemed to take their reverend brethren by a certain part of their apparel and drop them in some wild spot, and bid them do as best they could. In some such way Mr. Whiteside was

dropped at Tjimali. He could get advice and sympathy from his brother missionaries, but they were far too busy to do more. Like all his predecessors in Matebele Land, he was cast on his own resources.

One of the Hope Fountain church members went with him to teach and help till he should have picked up some acquaintance with the language. Almost at once he found himself needing five native teachers.

A KARANGA VILLAGE.
(Two native teachers.)

In 1908 he obtained them, and now they are located at as many out-stations. From the first his congregations numbered well into a hundred, and they steadily increase. There are sixteen church members, and six day schools, with over a hundred children in attendance. The contributions to the L.M.S. last year were £4. It is still the day of small things at Tjimali, the seed time, but in due season the flower and fruit shall appear, as at the other stations.

CHAPTER XXIII

INGWALO

ONE branch of mission work, and that a most important branch, has not been referred to in this book, that is Missionary Literature. To the untutored savage a book is a species of magic. That a mere thing, a lifeless bit of something white, should be able to carry a man's thoughts, is to him utterly incomprehensible.

The word that stands at the head of this chapter is a plural word (singular *ugwalo*), signifying books, letters, or anything written or printed. It is derived from the verb *ugu-gwala*, to make marks, cut notches on sticks for the purposes of tally, etc. *Ingwalo* is a word applied to the decorative marks found on the wooden bowls of the MaShuna. These are for the most part meaningless, though in some cases representative in a rude way of animals. This appears to be the nearest approach which the native Bantu has made towards writing; nor are there words in the language for paper, slate, pen or pencil.

Now amongst the "golden youth" of the MaTebele great fondness was shown for extravagant head ornaments; and favourite decorations were the *ingwalo* of the white men. On one occasion the post bag was robbed; and when the cherished letters from home were recovered, some of them bore marks of having been pierced and strung for the ornamentation of the heads of the youthful marauders. In the dark days this was the only use books were put to by the MaTebele.

An illustration has been given on a previous page of the wonderment caused in high circles by Mr. Sykes' demonstration of the power of writing; another may be added here. One day a man went to Mr. Helm suffering from a disease requiring a medicine of which Mr. Helm's stock was exhausted; and he referred the man to Emhlangeni (as Inyati was then called). This same man appears to have been of an inquiring turn of mind, and seized the opportunity here offered for a little quiet investigation of his own into the mystery of the *ugwalo*. Said he to Mr. Helm, "Give me a note to Eliyata (Elliott), that he may give me the thing that I want." With this note the man held an advantage; he carried an *ugwalo*, and he knew what it was supposed to contain. There should be no jugglery while he had charge of this business; with his own hand he would give it into the hand of Eliyata, then let him tell what was in it if he could.

After the manner of the people he cut a stick, split it, placed the *ugwalo* in the split, tied the stick tightly together above and below the note; and went over to Inyati, forty miles away. Arriving, he handed the stick with the note to Eliyata, narrowly watching what happened. The missionary read the note, and told the man to sit down while he went "to get it." "Get what?" said the man. "Do you not want such and such a medicine?" "Yes," replied the applicant, "but how did you know?" "Did you not bring me the *ugwalo* asking for it?" "Truly, but I never heard the *ugwalo* speak to you." "Perhaps not," replied the teacher, "but I did hear it." Then did he try as best he could to make the mystery clear to the man; but it was hard work, merely bringing another repetition of the well-worn formula of astonishment, "Nin' amakiwa ka'l'ahlulw' iluto, ngogufa gupela." ("You white people are beaten by nothing, only by death.")

Instances might be multiplied, but this will suffice to show how dense was the ignorance, and how great the leeway the people would have to make up before they could become intelligent readers. That leeway has been made up, and to-day intelligent readers may be numbered by the thousand.

During the dark days every effort was made to induce the MaTebele to learn, but all to no purpose. The utter weariness of the time devoted to school defies description. Alphabets were painted on large sheets of paper, simple spelling books were printed, a reading book, a hymn book were put into their hands, all unheeded and useless. A few learned with difficulty real or simulated, some attaining to the alphabet, others to syllables, and a very few to easy sentences. Those who could read the New Testament with understanding could probably be counted on the fingers, certainly on the fingers and toes. As for buying books, the very idea was scouted as superlative folly.

In faith Mr. Thomas revised the Zulu New Testament, bringing it nearer to the SinTebele; the book was printed and published after his death by Mrs. Thomas. In faith Mr. Sykes also prepared with great care a new translation of Matthew's Gospel, and portions of the other Gospels. The entire stocks of these books perished in the war.

The passing away of the Matebele power and tradition brought a mighty change, and within a few years the demand for books became extraordinary. In the endeavour to meet it, the reading book was revised, the hymn book was enlarged, new editions of the Gospels and of the whole Testament were printed. Translations of *Line upon Line* and the *Pilgrim's Progress* were issued; a book of Bible stories and a catechism were complied. At first they were sold faster than they could be produced. The people were willing and eager to buy, and they bought

the best editions. If copies in cloth and leather were put for their choice, the leather was always chosen if by any means the money could be raised. They would go without food to afford a better copy of the New Testament or of the Hymn Book. Editions of 1,000, 2,000, 5,000 were exhausted one after another. Mr. Williams, the educational missionary, arriving fresh from England was astonished at the keenness of the desire to learn. He said he had seen nothing like it in any class in England, only in exceptional individuals. The MaTebele, he went on to say, were a capable and intelligent people, and only needed the opportunity to prove themselves worthy of a foremost place in the educational movements of the natives. They would hold their rank in peace as in war.

Examples of this eagerness to learn may be given to close this chapter. Many boys came a long way to buy books, and some, who had not brought enough money, were trusted to return with the balance. In not one single instance did they fail to do so. Some bought the spelling book when there were none in the villages to teach them. They bought in hope. One little fellow purchased a book, saying that he had a friend who had worked in Bulawayo and there learned the whole alphabet; he had promised to teach him. Some who had learned to read set up schools of their own, teaching and preaching and taking their fees. This obviously lent itself to great abuse; it was a sore pity when the missionaries were so pressed with work that they could not supervise these uneducated teachers.

AFTERWORD

THE harvest is great, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest.

Uguvuna gukulu, kodwa izibeleki zi lutwana: kulegani pela inKosi yoguvuna, uguba i tume izibeleki eguvuneni gwayo.

Sintebele version.

Kukowa kukuru asi bashoma baneite basa. Nyengatedzayi kuna She wo kukowa, kuti atumire baneite basa bainde ku kukowa.

Version in a dialect of SeKalanga.

Butler & Tanner, The Selwood Printing Works, Frome, and London.