as is not to be had in regard to any other European stock.

“...The springs from which we have to create the knowledge of early Indian life are essentially different. None of the Phoenicians employed by Hiram and Solomon to sail to Ophir, bringing back the Ape with his Sanscrit name kapō, or kapē, described for us the folk with whom they had dealings of trade. Nor has India produced a Homer to herald their migration into Hindustan. We have to get our knowledge of the popular life by collecting the scattered hints found in the acknowledged lyrics of the people of the time.”

Graphic 8 Sept 1883

GOLD IN THE TRANSVAAL

Where was Tharsis, whence Solomon’s navy brought, besides gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks? Tartessus, says the schoolboy. No, my young friend; that Spanish port might account for transportable merchandise like ivory; you may even say that the apes could be got at Gibraltar, possibly, in those early days, on the mainland of Spain itself; but how about the peacocks? Tharsis, you may depend upon it, was a long way off, as far, perhaps, as those Egyptians sailed whose account Herodotus disbelieved for the very reason which proves the truth of it to us, because, after going ever so far down the African coast, they began to see the midday sun to the north of them instead of to the south. Where, again, was Ophir, whence the navy of Hiram brought gold (always gold) and alming trees? It is no use asking. Such questions belong to Sir Thomas Browne’s “What song the Sirens sang, and by what name was Achilles called when he bid himself among the daughters of Lycomedes?” As well we might inquire the whereabouts of that “River Pison, which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold, and the gold of that land is good.” One thing these old geography notes make clear, that the ancients knew more of the world than we fancy; and such, too, must be the first feeling of any one who comes across the old mine workings in the Transvaal. There, where the very use and value of gold had wholly died out, where to the Zulu it was absolutely worthless until the other day, we taught him that it would buy muskets and “Cape smoke,” are workings which show that in relatively prehistoric times somebody did get out the gold, and get it out in a very scientific and civilised fashion. Phoenicians? Oh, yes; they gave its name to Cornish Wheal Hermon, and their Hebrew brethren, who naturally followed in their wake, left (no matter what Prof. Max Müller might say) the stamp of their sorrow on Marah-Zion. And what more natural than for Mr. Matthew Arnold’s dark-eyed sailor, indignant at being disturbed by the pushing young Greek, to shake out his sails and get away beyond the Pillars and round the Cape, or to steer up the Nile and cross over into Necho’s Suez Canal, and so coast down to the thirtieth parallel South? But could these wonderful Phoenicians
The Transvaal gold mines are very rich; there is plenty of water-power, and Kaffir labour at 34 a month, food included. The yield is at least ten ounces a ton in the quartz, and half an ounce in the slate. It is, as most people know, a very healthy country—the air so dry that they are beginning to send consumptive patients there. "Four hundred square miles of gold-bearing rock, including the richest mine I ever saw or heard of, besides garnets, and rubies, and copper," that is Mr. Stewart's report. One wonders that the usual rush has not begun long ago, and that men are not as eager about claims as they are in the neighbouring Diamond Fields.

The reason is that the Boer Government (which we have found must have its own way) does not like that kind of thing. Under our rule, any Crown district that is proclaimed a goldfield is open to individual diggers. Under Boer Law an intending miner must get a concession from the Government, never given except to the landowner, and must agree to pay a royalty, in the shape of a percentage on net returns. Boerland, therefore, is shut to the individual gold-digger. He can't take up a claim, and then, if it turns out badly, sell it to some new comer, if he can find one green enough to buy, and move off to another digging. Which plan is the fairer it is hard to say. Both have their good and bad points. The Transvaal appears to be fabulously rich in gold. Will English companies care to buy land, and put themselves under Boer Law?

H. S. F.
A WALK UP A TREE.

To the eye of the voyager across the hot Indian Ocean from the east or west, Ceylon unfolds a scene of loveliness and grandeur unsurpassed by any land. It enjoys two monsoons or rains in the year, and the abundant supply of moisture thus afforded, clothes it with perpetual green. Its slopes are enamelled with verdure; flowers of gorgeous hues deck its plains, palms of all descriptions abound, climbing plants rooted in the rocks hang down in huge festoons, and trees dip their foliage into the sea.

It has with reason been regarded as the country whither the ships of Solomon came for “gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks” (1 Kings x. 11, 22); and “the almug trees, and precious stones in abundance from Ophir,” are still amongst the productions of Ceylon.

Child's Companion ca 1884

Times 27 Feb 1884
“King Solomon’s Mines” is the suggestive and attractive title of an exciting story. We are warned beforehand of sensational discoveries of long-forgotten treasure; and, as we are prepared for adventurous exploration in untravelled regions, we stand on the tiptoe of expectation. Contemporary writers of romance are always on the search for novelty, and Mr. Haggard has made much the same kind of successful coup as Mr. Stevenson in his “Treasure Island.” The only unfavourable criticism we have to make is that the story would have been more effective had it been shorter. The search for mines that are popularly believed to be mythical is full of fresh excitement at each step in advance; and the extremities to which the adventurers are reduced are natural, considering the circumstances, and only reasonably exaggerated. To be sure, they have one almost supernatural piece of luck when, guided by the rough scratchings of a quaint old map, they hit off the only pool of water in a boundless and waterless wilderness. But, after all, the writers of thrilling romances must have ample elbow room, otherwise they would be cramped at every turn within the tame limits of the commonplace. Moreover, the characters of the three heroes are all cleverly and humorously drawn, though perhaps the veteran elephant-hunter who takes the lead of the party harps too constantly on the constitutional timidity which his gallantry as constantly belies. Where the tale inclines to drag is in the descriptions of Kukuanaland, of the manners and military customs of the warlike savages, and of the sanguinary campaigns in which the English strangers played a conspicuous part. We heard much the same thing.
strangers played a conspicuous part. We heard much the same thing a few years ago in the letters of our Correspondents from Zululand, and the Kukuanas, though they do not enforce celibacy on their soldiery, adopt precisely similar tactics to the Zulus in their semi-lunar formation of attack.

But the story of the discovery of the mines is full of life and spirit; although sufficiently marvellous and fantastic, it is quite possible to make a pleasant pretext of believing it. Far beyond the limits reached by the white traders and hunters stretches a shadowy range of lofty mountains. Hitherto the country behind them has been effectually barred against intrusion by the broad belt of inhospitable desert. But a resolute Englishman, moved by generous remorse, has determined to follow the trail of a missing brother, said to have gone and lost himself in that direction. He picks up an ally in the stout old elephant-hunter, who chances to be in possession of an ancient map, which locates the Ophir of Solomon in that inaccessible country. They take their lives in their hands, hardly hoping ever to return. With intolerable sufferings from thirst and hunger, they stagger forward through the very jaws of death, only to fall into the power of bloodthirsty barbarians. But in the midst of that savagery they come upon stupendous remains, showing that the emissaries of a high civilization have been there before them, and that they have not mistaken their road. They make their way into the mines, where the wonders and their hair-breadth escapes nearly culminates in a tremendous catastrophe. But though they discover inestimable treasures, and even carry away satisfactory samples, the dénouement is far from encouraging anyone else to attempt the adventure. In fact, Mr. Haggard has happily hit off the mean between the romantically improbable and the absolutely incredible; though we think that, like Bret Harte, his strength would be best shown in the comparatively rare knack of telling a short tale dramatically.

93:

(Septic and industrious people.

To many of you, I have no doubt, there will be no more interesting point in connection with East Africa than what I will call the monumental evidence which exists of a settled occupation in ancient times of parts of this country by a people far advanced in civilisation. This evidence consists chiefly of the ruins of buildings, of curious shape and structure, very unlike anything erected by the Arabs or Portuguese, who have dwelt for centuries past upon the coast. In Zanzibar territory, as well as in Mozambique, these ruins may be seen; but they are met with in greatest abundance and best preservation in the country south of the Zambesi, and a little distance in the interior. I will describe them more minutely hereafter; sufficient now to say that I allude to the “ruined cities” in that portion of Eastern Africa to which Sofala is the natural outlet.

Respecting the origin of these cities there has been plentiful speculation. None of the early records of geography or commerce upon this coast make any allusion to them, and no inscriptions have been found to throw light upon them. The absence of all clue to their origin, together with the fact that the ruins are situated in the heart of the country reported by the natives to be the richest of all South Africa in gold, and the discovery of old surface gold mines in the district in which they stand, have not tended to diminish speculation regarding them.

Some, you doubtless know, have gone so far as to place the site of the Ophir of the age of Solomon here. Such an assertion is founded upon little but conjecture. It is, however, well to bear in mind the extreme divergence of opinion, even amongst experts, as to the site of Ophir. The Himalayas, the coast of Malabar, Ceylon, Arabia Felix, even Peru, have respectively found advocates in regard to this site. Those who have added East Central Africa to the countries I have just enumerated, no doubt have felt that its claims were at least equal to some of these.

I have, however, no intention of entering, as an advocate of East Africa, into that well-thrashed-out field of contention, the site of Ophir. That question is purely one of archaeological interest, and may be left for archeologists to determine. The subject of the early civilisation of East Africa is interesting to us for other and more practical reasons. The country south of the Zambesi may never have been the site of the Biblical Ophir; but, with fair reason, I believe we may conclude that it formed in ancient days one of the sources of the supply of gold. Wherever the mines of Ophir, and whatever their richness, it is impossible to think they formed
more than one of the sources whence that metal was extracted. And
when we consider the great abundance of gold in early ages, and remem-
ber that the great gold-producing countries of the present day were then
unknown, we feel more than ever convinced that the sources of that im-
mense supply are not all known to us.

The proofs in Holy Writ that the ancients held gold amongst the
precious metals in at least as high estimation as the moderns do, are too
numerous and well known to every reader of Scripture for me to quote
many of them here. More than 1500 years before the Christian era, gold
appears to have been plentiful in Egypt, for we are told that the Israelites,
“their wives, their sons, and their daughters,” even when they went out
from their captivity, wore earrings of pure gold.\footnote{Exodus xxxii. 2.}

Not five centuries

\footnote{Exodus xxxii. 2.}

after this we read, in 1 Chron. xxi. 14, that David had “prepared for the
house of the Lord one hundred thousand talents of gold;” and we further
learn that of this he himself contributed “three thousand talents of gold
of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of silver,” and that, of
gold five thousand more talents, and of silver ten thousand more talents
were presented “by the princes of the house of Israel.” Again Solomon
received gold from Hiram, king of Tyre,\footnote{1} from the Queen of Sheba ;
\footnote{2} from all the kings of Arabia,\footnote{3} and, in addition to this, obtained periodical
supplies\footnote{4} from Ophir in his own ships, guided by “shipmen that had a
knowledge of the sea,” sent from Tyre.\footnote{5} Ezekiel, who prophesied about
the year 595 B.C., gives a most detailed and picturesque account of the wealth
of the Phoenician city of Tyre,\footnote{6} and most of the other prophets refer to the
wealth and prosperity of this nation. Solomon, we know, called to his
aid Tyrian artists and mechanics in building the Temple at Jerusalem,\footnote{7}
and made a special treaty with King Hiram, by which he procured in
exchange for the products of his country —wheat, barley, wine, and oil—
the costly timbers, cedar, fir, and oak, of the forests of Lebanon and
Bashan. A simple enumeration of the articles imported by Tyre will
be sufficient to convince the most sceptical of the vastness and wealth
of her commerce, and the variety of countries and climes visited by the
Phoenician vessels for the purpose of trade. Silver, tin, lead, and vessels
of brass; slaves, horses, mules; carpets, ivory, ebony; pearls and silks;
wheat, barley, honey, oil, and gums; wine, wool, and iron, were chief
amongst the products which were carried to Tyre by sea or to its fairs by
land. When to this profusion we find Tyre re-exporting a portion of the
gold brought by her fleets from the East, we are better able to realise the
truth of the saying, that “Tyre heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold
as the mire of streets.”\footnote{9}

Silver, we are very frequently told by ancient writers, was to be had
The Indian and Colonial Exhibition is doing the greatest good in familiarising the public with the produce of the African colonies, and displaying the resources of the dark continent with a view to trade. It would really seem as if overheated and overstrained by the burning moral atmosphere in which we live, that we are compelled to fly to the torrid zone to find the refreshing coolness we so much need. The excitement produced by Haggard's fantastical journey in search of Solomon's mines amongst our boys is destined, like adversity, to have its uses, for it is believed that many of the "fictitious facts," as the French call the well- devised falsehoods of authors, have some foundation in truth. Many travellers have become acquainted with the tradition of a road existing from a chain of mountains in the heart of the savage country seen from afar, but never explored by Europeans. This road leads, so says the rumour, straight to the coast, and still remains in excellent preservation. WHAT further proof can be needed by a man of imagination to convince him that that road must have been made by King Solomon to convey to Jerusalem the gold and diamonds he lavished so magnificently upon the building of the Temple? Of course these diamonds and this gold were to be found in the mines hidden in the mountains still unexplored. Who can doubt, being thus helped by imagination, that here stood that Ophir which still remains a mystery? One of the most famous of the African missionaries now in London to attend the May meetings declares that he has received innumerable letters upon the subject. He says that the suggestions were treated by him with contempt at first, but that he has since begun to think that it may become advisable to examine the subject after all. The very hint of any possibility of gain in search, to bring speculators

Cornishman 20 May 1886

SOLOMON'S GOLD-MINES.—The Ophir of Israel is said to be situated in the side of a hill and worked as an open quarry. It is now overgrown with tropical trees and plants, but its base still shows a reef of quartz 20 ft. wide—grand looking quartz for the production of gold. The place is in Ceylon.

**Pall Mall Gazette** 18 Dec 1888, “Disinheriting Our Democracy”:

> What are the facts about Bechuanaland? Our democracy at home has taxed itself to the tune of millions to acquire and to hold a vast tract of fertile and auriferous territory under the British flag lying to the north of the Cape Colony and to the south of the Zambesi. Here there are vast reserves of land capable of affording food and shelter for the swarms of our redundant population. Part of the territory, that which lies to the north of the Transvaal, is peculiarly rich in gold. It is probably identical with the land of Ophir, where lay King Solomon's mines, and the whole of it is under our Imperial protectorate. We acquired this property at our own expense. We have all the responsibility for it, and we at home have the right to profit by it. “Not at all,” cry the speculators at the Cape. “Not at all; you have no doubt pulled the chestnuts out of the fire, but they must now be made over to us for our exclusive profit and advantage. Give us Bechuanaland, give it us for nothing, and then if we choose we shall forbid a single emigrant from the old country settling upon the lands which you have conquered and reclaimed—for us.” And Lord

Financial Times 12 March 1889 lists two different South African mining companies on its share list: the King Solomon and the Ophirs.


**Manchester Times** 4 Jan 1890

> Former discoveries in the Transvaal have led to the supposition that the Ophir mentioned in the Bible was situated in this district. A Boer, living in Middelburg, travelling through Matebeleland, has discovered the ruins of an ancient city, whose inhabitants must have been highly civilised, and it seems quite clear to the people of the Transvaal that this city was no other than Ophir, whence Solomon's ships brought gold.
“Our Eastern Empire,” *All the World* (March 1890)

"We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the ex...

The hour is come, and the man, might well have been said of Arnolis Weeresooriyee and The Salvation Army in Ceylon at the time of his conversion. "Lunka," the "pearldrop on the brow of India," was known to ancient voyagers as far back as the time of King [Solomon](#), of whose [Ophir](#) and Tarshish many believe Ceylon to form a part. The story of its beauty, its jewels and its spicy breezes was very familiar to the Greeks and Romans, and, since, to the Mohammedan world at large, who, to this day, regard the island as the Elysium provided for Adam and Eve to console them for the loss of Paradise. To the people of India, to the Burmese, Siamese and Chinese, "Lunka, the resplendent," was equally an object of interest and admiration, so that it has been well said that no island in the world, Great Britain itself not excepted, has attracted the attention of authors in so many different countries as has Ceylon.

Kandy, the last capital of the native kings of


See also D. Howard Gwinn, *The Gold of Ophir* (1898); US novelist.
KING LOBENGULA’S MINES.

Being the Adventures of Rudd, Maguire, and Thompson at the King’s Kraal, Bulawayo: how they won, and kept, the great Concession; and what they saw.

The fortunes of the British South Africa Company, the gigantic enterprise which is to add the Land of Ophir to the British Empire, are based upon two things: the Concession from King Lobengula, and the Charter from Queen Victoria. The Charter, as everybody knows, was the work of Mr. Cecil Rhodes. “The Concession,” wrote Mr. Rhodes the other day to Mr. Frank Thompson, “I regard as throughout due to you.” The story of how that Concession, upon which the whole fabric of the Company is built, was obtained in the first instance, and afterwards secured in the face of the most critical difficulties and dangers, until the final step of the Charter was achieved, is a story which reads more like Rider Haggard than sober fact. It happens that the three men who between them are able to tell that story are all in England at the present moment. There is Mr. Rudd, whose name has been most prominently associated with the Concession. There is Mr. Maguire, M.P., who drew it up, and who figures as the Captain Good of this new story of King Solomon’s Mines. And there is Mr. Frank Thompson, who had more to do with the Concession from first to last than any other man, and who alone can tell the tale of the whole eighteen months at Lobengula’s kraal—during eleven months of which he was alone. When the concession of all the gold in the country was first proposed to the Indunas in council, “Muf baba,” was the cry, “yo, yo, ghoo?” “Mother of Angels, listen to this madness!” It was Mr. Thompson who then approached the King in his private sanctum, and who managed to convince the Grand Vizier and the other Indunas that it was only a choice between the Company and a crowd of Boer and Portuguese irresponsible adventurers. Gifts went freely round, the King being presented with a bag of sovereigns at the outset. At last one day he said to Mr. Thompson, “If you are sure you are not coming after grass and ground?”
Simultaneously there has been a shower of letters descriptive of the Mashonaland expedition. It is very interesting reading, and as there is plenty of mystery there is play for the shuttle in weaving the web of romance. A few archaeologists of the calibre of Mr. Evans ought to belong to the expedition, if we may hazard a conjecture as to their usefulness from the following passage in the Daily News:—"It has long been known that there are a number of very ancient stone forts dotted about the country, and that gold may be obtained in certain places like Tati. There is no record, no tradition even, as to who were the builders of these ruined walls. They are made of uncedented stones, carefully hewn, and sometimes laid with some pretension to a rude architectural effect. The whole structures are so unlike the handiwork of any modern native tribe that they are commonly attributed to Asiatic colonists long previous to the days of the early Portuguese explorers. Hence it is the fashion to believe that in Mashonaland Europeans have at length discovered the long-sought Ophir, the land of the real King Solomon's Mines." Archaeology is probably of small concern to any of the leaders of the expedition; but in good time we may hope to learn something definite about these ancient structures.
AMONG "KING SOLOMON'S MINES."

Sketches of Ruins in the Land of Ophir.

What a strangely potent magic there is to the children of a modern civilization in all that concerns those more ancient ones which have had their day and ceased to be ages before our own was heard of. As a vein of romance it is inexhaustible. In "Salammbô," in the "Last Days of Pompeii," in Mr. Rider Haggard’s subterranean creations, it is the same old spell which arrests the fancy. Relics of the power and pride of immemorial peoples whom the earth knows no more have an equal charm for the antiquarian and the man in the street. To this, we suspect, almost equally with more substantial attractions, is due the general interest in the work of the British South Africa Company. Mashonaland is a vast and rich possession; the Matabele are a fierce and interesting race of savages, and the name of gold is now as ever a talisman to conjure with. But what an added lustre the expedition gains when the scene of its labours is identified with the Land of Ophir and the object of its search with the real King Solomon’s Mines! And whether that particular identification of the remains which strew this barbarous country be well founded or not, there the remains are—ancient, massive, mysterious, contrasting in startling fashion with the primitive barbarians who dwell about them and with the jungly wildness of surrounding nature. Each stone in them is, as it were, a mute challenge, a petrified inquiry; and the curiosity aroused in 1871 by the descriptions of the German traveller Mauch, whom the learned world half suspected of romancing, will receive a keen stimulus from the accounts in which the pioneers of the Chartered Company now confirm and amplify his observations. This, however, is obviously a case for the pencil, rather than the pen; and we are, therefore, glad to be able to place before our readers a series of sketches made upon the spot by members of the force.

To begin with the most important example yet discovered—the ruins of
Can we ever read the riddle of these stony sphinxes of Mashonaland, of which the public can now, for the first time, form a clear idea? So far, the only clue we have is that of which our Special Correspondent lately wrote as follows—

Who were they, those soldier-workmen of a vanished civilization, and at whose bidding did they force their way into this barbarous place to dig for gold? . . . The country is dotted with strange broken relics of their work. The furnaces which they built to smelt the ore, the strong round keeps which they raised against the alarms of some besetting foe, the great stones in which they scored in undecipherable characters the record of their labours, perhaps the clue to their price—these things remain and move the awe of the Makbanele and his Mashona vassal. . . . "And they came to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to King Solomon." 

"Now the weight of gold that came to King Solomon in one year was six hundred threescore and six talents of gold." The mysterious folk who have imprinted on Mashonaland the traces of an ancient quest for gold were conjectured, than those quick, adventurous Phoenicians who, in the days when the Red Sea was the Mediterranean of ancient commerce, and the Mediterranean its Atlantic, brought "gold of Ophir, fine gold," and "great plenty of almug trees and precious stones" to the Oriental monarch whose magnificence is still a proverb upon modern lips. To-day, then, the Englishman is in the land of Ophir . . . opening afresh the treasure-houses of antiquity, equipped with resources of which the old Phoenician never dreamed. It may be that he will come upon such relics among the abandoned workings as will throw a new light upon the story of his predecessors, and re-write a page of the world's history. It may be even that he will stumble into chambers of subterranean wealth such as Mr. Haggard has imagined, secured with labyrinths like those of the Pyramids, with sliding stones, and all the appropriate witchcraft of an age when human life and human labour were of no account. At least, before many years are out, we may expect to see the image of Queen Victoria stamped on the gold with which King Solomon overlaid his ivory throne and wreathed the cedar pillars of his Temple.
ANCIENT RUINS IN AFRICA.

THE “LAND OF OPHIR.”

“And they came to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to King Solomon . . . Now the weight of gold that came to King Solomon in one year was six hundred three score and six talents of gold.” Where was this mysterious Ophir, the treasure-house of the world? and who were the enterprising people who brought from it the gold with which King Solomon overlaid his ivory throne and wreathed the cedar pillars of the temple? It would almost seem that we are on the eve of receiving an answer to at least the first of these questions, and that one result of the establishment of the British South African Company will be the discovery of the real King Solomon’s mines. The pioneer column despatched by this company are at present engaged in exploring Mashonaland, a vast and rich level of country, inhabited by a fierce but interesting race of savages. Already the explorers have discovered wonderful traces of a past civilisation, and yesterday’s Pall Mall Gazette reproduces a number of sketches made by members of the pioneer column. It is true that the discoveries are not entirely new—nearly
THE LAND OF OPHIR.

STORIES ANCIENT AND MODERN OF A COUNTRY TEEMING WITH GOLD.

The prospect of a mining boom in Matabeleland and Mashonaland gives peculiar interest to any information obtainable as to the mineral resources of those countries. The excellent special number of South Africa, the issue of which we noticed a few days ago, contains a mass of entertaining reading as to the archaeology and history of those little-known lands, together with graphic descriptions of the customs of the people and narratives of travellers. What our contemporary has to say of the mineralogy of the countries demands, however, special attention, now that that great enterprise the British South Africa Company is endeavouring to develop in Africa a new El Dorado.

The theory, in which South Africa joins, that within the territories over which that company holds sway was the Scriptural land of Ophir, estimated to have supplied King Solomon with gold to the modern value of £3,000,000,000, may be put aside as a moot point in antiquarian lore. There seems, at the same time, to be evidence that at an earlier period that region of the earth did produce gold in great abundance. In a book bearing the imprint "Londini, 1600," entitled "A Geographical Historie of Africa, written in Arabeoke and Italian, by John Leo and More, borne in Granada, and brought up in Barbarie,"
it is stated that "all the gold in a manner that is taken out of those manifolde and endless mines of Sofala and all the Inland-countries thereabouts is here exchanged unto the Portugales for cotton-cloth, silkes, and other commodities of Cambaia, all which is thought yeerely to amount unto the summe of two millions of gold." The words "all the Inland-countries thereabouts" would clearly point to the territories over which the powers of the British South Africa Company extend. At a later stage of the same book it is stated, concerning the Emperor Monomotapa, whose territory was a portion of the lands which now own Lobengula as sovereign: "Throughout all this emperor's dominions is found infinite quantitie of gold, in the earth, in the rockes, and in the rivers." Another curious old book, by Samuel Purchas, printed in 1614 in London, refers to gold in Manica, which country immediately adjoins Mashonaland. The author states: "The Mines nearest to Sofala are those of Manica, which are in wide champaines compassed with mountaines, ninetie myles in circuit. The places where the Golde is, appear and are knowne by the drynesse and barrennesse of the soile, as if Nature it selfe could not hord up Gold in her spacious chest, but shee must needs prove bare and barren of her wonted good works." Again, in a bulky volume on "Africa," published in 1670, "illustrated with notes, and adorned with peculiar maps and proper sculptures by John Ogilby, Esq., Master of His Majestie's Revels in the Kingdom of Ireland," references to the gold abounding within the Empire of Monomotapa appear on every page. Hangings in the Emperor's palace are described as "cover'd over with plates of gold," and the wealth of the country is described as consisting "in gold, found in Mines and Rivers, which, though littel valu'd yet they narrowly search for, because
valued yet they narrowly search for, because they find it necessary for the purchase of outlandish merchandises." It was added, "There are found several Gold mines in the Bowels of the Earth, and also in some of their Rivers, for which the Inhabitants dive in the Stream, and take it up with the bottom from the Mud, and so pick it out; which Gold-diving they also practise in divers great lakes, spread far and near in this Kingdom; for which cause the King of Monomotapa is not without reason call'd by the Portugese the Golden King." And there is much more to the same effect. On what authority all these statements rest is not apparent, but they at any rate tend to support the theory that the kingdom of Lobengula is a rich gold-bearing country.

Cites Murchison’s RGSL speech;

Mr. Frank Mandy, who has lived for twenty years in Matabeleland, recently delivered at Johannesburg, and also at Cape Town, a lecture in which he described that country as, throughout its greatest extent, one vast and very rich goldfield. The Matabele have never allowed any search for gold in the land actually inhabited by them, but the lecturer stated that the signs which greet the traveller’s notice—the immense waves of promising quartz which seam the country, cutting through the soft, soapy slate in a north-easterly direction; the numberless old workings to be found in every direction, and the inability of some of the reefs to hide their gold, all tend to prove the wonderful mineral wealth. He added that right through the Royal town of Bulawayo runs an immense reef of visible gold. Close along Umvotcha (the country residence of Lobengula) streams another great reef, also unable to hide the gold imprisoned within its bosom. Two miles to the north-east of the old capital is yet another grand quartz reef with “visible.” And to the north of Gangane lie what he believes will eventually prove “the alluvial gold fields of the world.” The neighbourhood of the
Amazon River he describes as "a veritable El Dorado," and states that he has seen ignorant natives, with the rudest appliances and practically no knowledge of gold working, wash large quantities of gold from the surface soil. Surprise having been expressed at no nuggets being found, the superstitions natives are said to have stated that they did often come across large nuggets, but invariably threw them back, having a firmly fixed belief that an awful curse would fall on those who removed them.

Such travellers' stories as these, coming on the top of traditional beliefs in the auriferous wealth of the country, naturally excited a sensation throughout South Africa, and many adventurers prepared to flock into Lobengula's land from the Randt and other districts. Should the seductive narratives be confirmed, and hopes and suppositions realised, blessed will it prove for those who have invested their money in the work of the British South Africa Company. But the delay in reaping a portion of the golden harvest said to be so abundant has lately excited some degree of scepticism. This is reflected in our last letter from Johannesburg, dated 21st February, in which our correspondent pertinently asks, "If there is so much gold, how is it some of it has not already been extracted and sent away?"
THE ANCIENT GOLD FIELDS OF AFRICA.*

This book is evidently written with a purpose, which the reader will not be long in discovering. It purports to give a history of gold mining in Africa from the earliest times, in a series of selections from various writers, from Solomon and Herodotus down to the author's last contribution on the subject. Much of the information afforded is extremely interesting from an anecdotal point of view, while the statements and statistics showing the production of African gold at various times and places are such as to astound the uninitiated, and render a poor man liable to an attack of gold influenza, causing him to see golden bubbles everywhere dancing in the air. A possibility is broadly hinted at of realising from African soil the dreams of the alchemists. Ethiopia and the West Coast are first considered, and we are reminded that in the former undefined land prisoners were, according to Herodotus, bound with golden chains. The nearest approach to this that modern times can offer seems, according to the author's authorities, to be in Ashanti, where old ornaments and common crockery are patched and mended with gold instead of brass. From the Gold Coast the reader is somewhat abruptly transported to the other side of the continent, and the remainder of the book is taken up with the wonderful auriferous capabilities of Mashonaland. The descriptions being often repetitions one of the other, prove somewhat tedious. That part of the East Coast called Sofala, now under Portuguese dominion, was once supposed to have been the ancient Ophir, the territory of the famous Queen of Sheba, and the locality of King Solomon's mines. Extending far into the interior of the continent is Mashonaland, a part of which is believed to...
is Matabeleland, parts of which, Mashonaland and the Manica country, adjoin Sofala. The accounts given of the various expeditions and explorations of the Portuguese and others during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are interesting so far as they go, but the extracts rarely extend in any other direction than gold mining. Much sentimental importance is attached to these districts owing to the supposition that the Queen of Sheba had her diggings there, and the author seems to have some dim impression on his mind, which he would like to transfer to his readers, that this ought to be a very great inducement to the modern British adventurer and capitalist. Throughout this Manica country and parts of Mashonaland are the ruins of curious fortifications among the ancient mining excavations, showing the presence there in remote times of a highly civilised people. These have, of course, been ascribed to Solomon and Sheba. The most reliable account of them, as well as the most trustworthy description of the character and capabilities of the country, will be found in the proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society for November, 1890, in a paper read by Mr. Maund, reprinted in this book. The opinion then expressed by Mr. Theodore Bent in the discussion that followed the reading of the paper was that the ruins were not Phoenician at all, but probably the work of the Persian monarch Khosrau (Chosroes) II., of the Sasanian dynasty, under which the Persians conquered extensive districts in Africa about A.D. 600. To anyone contemplating an adventurous life in East Africa the book may be useful, owing to the many references to travellers who might be consulted on other subjects than gold prospecting. It is characteristically got up, and its spangled boards and gilt edges are evidently intended to add to the attractions within. The three maps of ancient Africa are useful in their way, but as nine-tenths of the book refer to Mashonaland, and to the new complicated state of affairs in the neighbourhood, a more modern local map showing the present aspect and territorial boundaries might have been added with advantage.

*The Ancient Gold Fields of Africa, from the Gold Coast to Mashonaland. By J. M. Stuart. London: Effingham Wilson,
Financial Times 28 Sept 1891

It is announced from Denver that Mr. William C. Wyncoop, editor of the Mining Industry of that city, has been engaged by an English syndicate “to go to Africa and search in the supposed locality of Ophir for King Solomon’s Mines.” It is, of course, the most natural thing in the world that an English syndicate should send to Colorado to find the right man for so onerous a task, and William C. Wyncoop is evidently the very individual they require. We are led to this belief by Mr. Wyncoop’s assertions that he expects to be absent three months, and that a visit to London is included in this modest period. Our explorer has determined, however, that he will not leave England until he has received a substantial deposit in advance, which proves that William C. Wyncoop has more in common with King Solomon than one might have at first imagined.

Manchester Times 30 Oct 1891

THE SPOILED CHILD OF GEOGRAPHY. — Flattery be dangerous to its recipient, then Ceylon is the spoiled child of geography. From the remotest period to the present time it has been the subject of constant laudation. It is supposed to have been the Ophir and Tarshish of Solomon. It was the terminus of the Groks and Romans, who were curious over its spicy breezes, its natural beauty, and its abounding jewels. The Mahometans of the East, continent have always looked upon it as the abode provided for Adam and Eve after the fall in order to console them for the loss of Paradise. The Brahmins call it Lanka, “the repulient.” The Hindus poetically style it “the pearl drop on the brow of India.” The Chinese know it as the Island of Gold; English poets break into raptures over it. Geographers
regime, and the story ends pleasantly with a marriage. A Romance of N’Shabé, by A. A. Anderson and A. Wall (Chapman and Hall), is appropriately entitled A Record of Startling Adventures in South Central Africa. Sufficiently startling these adventures are. They begin with sport, à la Harris and Gordon Cumming, and they go on to a discovery of strange cities and races à la Rider Haggard. As for the sport, that is faithfully described, for it is the fruit of Mr. Anderson’s thirty years’ experiences. And probably the desperate field-fighting with Bushmen and Damaras is likewise founded upon facts. But the sensations which outdo Mr. Rider Haggard stagger reasonable credulity. The N’Shabé, who have hitherto been unknown even to rumour, have arsenals, and any quantity of guns and ammunition. It may be fairly presumed they are of Jewish extraction, as they talk tolerably pure Hebrew; and, indeed, the theory is that they have inherited that land of Ophir to which King Hiram and Solomon were in the habit of trading. When we add that the N’Shabé are in possession of balloons, to say nothing of Greek fire, the marvel of their long seclusion seems the more portentous. The Bisscher, A Romance of Mashonaland, by Ernest Glanville (Chatto and Windus), is another of those endless tales of the quest for fortune. We hardly dare to hope that before
Mashonaland is a disappointment. Lord Randolph Churchill seems as cocksure of this as he is of everything else on which he condescends to express an opinion. He has seen a good deal of Mashonaland. He hopes to see a good deal more. At least that was his wish when he wrote the letter published in the Graphic yesterday. Whether he may think better of such an intention and return, though not by the way that he went, we should be sorry to conjecture. That he will seek some new route homewards would seem probable, for it will be remembered that one of the best vessels on the South African line failed to supply the fastidious taste of Lord Randolph with such delicacies as he desired, even although a flying fish had been generously thrown in by a fellow passenger anxious to please him. It is not improbable that during his more recent journeyings the noble explorator has been doomed to share even less sumptuous fare than that provided on board the Grantully Castle; but the shadow of disappointment seems to have followed him, and now he is disposed to give up Mashonaland as unworthy of his further patronage. There were some who looked upon that new country as a veritable Land of Ophir, and who believed that the gold of that land was not only good, but that the mountains would yield it in handfuls. Lord Randolph has been compelled to temper any such expectations with a caution. Many mines have been visited and inspected, but nothing very promising has been seen—nothing to justify the formation of a syndicate or company and the expenditure of money to work such a company. Reef after reef has, he says, been tried; but, though some
reef has, he says, been tried; but, though some of them are fairly rich on the surface, yet, so far as they have hitherto been worked, all of them are found to be "pinching out" to nothing at a depth of twenty-five to fifty feet, or degenerating into quartz containing little gold. "What I have seen since I commenced my travels in South Africa," writes this distinguished explorer and hunter of lions, "has led me to the conclusion that no more unwise or unsafe speculation exists than the investment of money in exploration syndicates." Already there has been much money "finely wasted," he adds, though there is a crumb of comfort left even for the gold-seeker, for hopes are still centred in the Hartley Hill district; and even if disappointment should follow him in that direction, there is still Manica to fall back upon, of which territory, "for reasons which he cannot precisely define," Lord Randolph personally entertains great hopes. Everyone will trust that his lordship's confidence in Manica may not be misplaced, though he fairly admits that there is a good deal of evidence to suggest that, as with the famous cupboard in the nursery story, someone has been to those possible goldfields before. Who those early gold-seekers were is a matter for investigation for those who refuse to accept the ingenious theory of "King Solomon's Mines."

It is not only as a field for the gold-seeker, but as a field for the emigrant, that Mashonaland has proved a disappointment to Lord R. Churchill. In the absence of gold discoveries "I cannot," he writes, "yet perceive that Mashonaland has much to offer to, or much to attract the British emigrant." The climate is fine in winter, but much of the country is unhealthy, and tracts
but much of the country is unhealthy, and tracts of it are flooded like a vast swamp. In time, of course, things will improve; but he thinks he cannot be unwise to check the formation of hopes too high as to the value of this most recent acquisition to the British Empire. This is the substance of Lord Randolph's latest deliverance on the subject, and it has this amount of corroboration, that it is supported by what he has said in a previous letter. It would, however, be unfair to leave this side of the story without doing equal justice to the others; and it was only a few days ago that the Times published a long letter from Mr. A. R. Colquhoun in which a very much more hopeful view was taken of the outlook generally. Mr. Colquhoun writes with the knowledge of one who has spent twelve months in the colony as representative of the British South Africa Company; and if it be suggested that his views are tinted by a little official partiality, it must be remembered that Lord R. Churchill can only speak from a very superficial experience, and express views very hastily formed. If one observer has been tempted to build rather too brightly on the future it seems exceedingly probable that the other has been too easily disappointed as to the present. For instance, that reference to a "vast 

etc.