

A BUCKETFUL OF DIAMONDS

**Was Property of Chief Mag-
ato, King of the Kaffirs,**

WHO SHOWED IT TO RHODES

\$20,000,000 Worth of Precious Gems
Stolen From Kimberley Mines by
Subjects of Magato.

London, Aug. 23.—A bucketful of diamonds, worth \$20,000,000, and hidden by old Chief Magato, who long years ago ruled the Kafir tribes of Rhodesia, has put all of South Africa in a turmoil of feverish excitement. In

Transvaal, in Cape Town and Kimberley, Pretoria, Mafeking, Johannesburg, Swartszman's Kop, Ladysmith and Pocheefstroom venturesome men are making up expeditions to search Rhodesia and the mysterious wilderness lying for north of the Limpopo River to the Zambesi for these diamonds. Newspapers in South Africa are full of excitement. Nothing else

out Chief Magato and his bucketful of diamonds. Cecil Rhodes saw the big bucket filled to the brim with diamonds of the finest color and perfect luster. With Cecil Rhodes at the time were Sir John Willoughby, Justice Lang and D. C. de Waal. But with all his craftiness, Cecil Rhodes was unable to make a bargain with the old chief, who was willing to give

The existence of this almost fabulous wealth of precious stones became known in January, at Johannaesburg, in a trial before Chief Justice Sir J. Rose-Innis, and the details of hidden treasure, including stories of the dis-

book filled with golden sovereigns buried bullion and secreted diamonds set all of South Africa agog with their blood-curdling sensationalism. The story of the now-famous meeting between Cecil Rhodes and old Chief Mago of Rhodesia dates back to 1890 when Rhodes, accompanied by Sir John Willoughby, Justice Lang and

D. C. de Wail, M. L. A., came to the Transvaal from the newly-acquired territory now called Rhodesia. The party traveled via St. Tuli, and entered the Transvaal at a point near the possessions of the then great Kaffir chieftain, Magato, known, from his power and contempt for the Boer regime, as "the lion of the north."

venturesome Boer pioneers. To set foot in his realm was to court death. Across Rhodesia his fearless black warriors, a living hedge with bristling spears, barred the way to Zambesi River. But if Magato was fearless, so was Cecil Rhodes. The empire builder who had not feared to go alone to the heart of Lobengula's country and make

the dark continent did not hesitate to pay a visit to Magato.

Almost alone Cecil Rhodes ascended the mountains of Rhodesia, at the top of which Magato had built his rugged but almost impregnable fortress. Almost alone the empire-builder threaded the maze of crooked paths that led to the wily old chief's dwelling place.

Finally Cecil Rhodes and Magaree, the "lion of the north" and the "lion of the south," were face to face. A long and earnest talk followed. Cecil Rhodes explained to Magaree why the

white men wanted to come to Rhodesia. He told him of the railway road to be built, of the cities to be started, of the farms to be laid out. His own personal magnetism communicated itself to the old chief and Magato and Cecil Rhodes had come close to an understanding.

During the conversation Magato

Africa by reputation, and who was dazzled by the fame of the great white chief from Kimberley, who had become ruler of the powerful nation, and who, moreover, was the chief owner of the wealthy diamond mines of Kimberley, where thousands of Magatoto's men used to work from time to time, became confidential, and, as the story

Mr. Rhodes, to whom the question brought memories reviving the history of the amalgamation of the Kimberley mines (De Beers), answered that he had on one occasion. Magato, thereupon spoke to an induna, and within a few minutes two natives arrived of the scene carrying a bucket filled

The bucket was placed in front of Mr. Rhodes, who, having examined some of the stones and found them to be valuable diamonds, asked where Magato got them.

It is stated that after an intimate from Mr. Rhodes as to the diamond having been stolen and the response of the chief that it would require more than the Transvaal police to recover them, Mr. Rhodes again carefully regarded the diamonds and estimate their value at from \$15,000,000 to \$20,000,000.


The story was noised abroad, and several private syndicates were afterwards formed to try and obtain the diamonds or a portion of them from Magato, but notwithstanding a large outlay of money none of the syndicates could get Magato to sell the stones if he had them, which he invariably denied or found out what had happened.

As a matter of fact, the narrative itself began to be regarded as a myth but it was resuscitated when just before Magato's death, a large and valuable diamond was sold by the chief himself to a local trader. Renewed efforts were then made to get hold of the diamonds, but Magato himself de-

any. There are traders in the Spelonken who have stated more than once that though they never saw these diamonds themselves, they had often been told about them by Magato's indunas. But that apart, one fact which nearly every trader in the Spelonken can bear witness to stands out prominently, and that is that every native who

returned from the Kimberley mine gave the storekeepers diamonds in payment for goods bought. Moreover, there was an established custom for natives coming from any outside places to present to the chief (Magato) on return some of the minerals as parts of their labor; and as each would so create at least five or six diamonds for their labor.

been going on for years, it is not conceivable that the statement that Magato had at one time a bucketful may be correct. So far the theory has



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