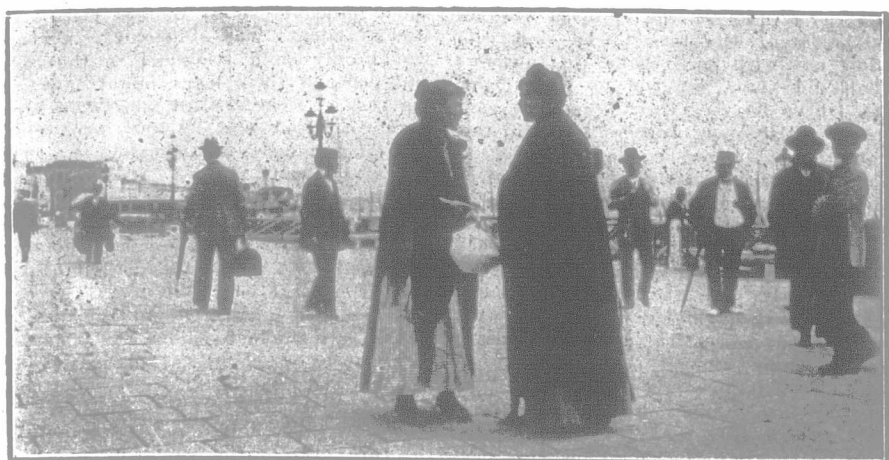




The Black Shawl is Universally Worn by Venetian Women.

Browning most feelingly. Harmony sang some sweet little sentimental songs, and altogether it was heavenly. I wish you had been with us.
Aug. 14th.

Harmony had a headache to-night, so Jack and I went out in a gondola by ourselves. We had the canopy over us and that makes you feel so isolated. We went over near the singing boats and listened to the tenor's solo. He has one of those lovely voices that make the tears come to your eyes. Jack was quite affected, although he pretended not to be. I joked him about it and accused him of dreaming of some of his early loves. He said he was. Then some way he drifted into personal reminiscences and told me about his hopeless passion for a girl who cared for him only as a friend. Poor old Jack! I was perfectly furious with the girl for making him so unhappy. Then he told me he was going to have a serious operation on his eyes, and might lose his sight altogether, and, of course, he would never think of asking any girl to chain herself to a sightless man.

I bristled right up and said that any girl who really cared for him would esteem it an honor and a privilege, and then—it came to me just like a flash, that I was the girl he was talking about. I was so stunned for a minute I couldn't speak, and then—well! the canopy was over us, and the gondolier couldn't see.

P. S.—Harmony says she knew it all the time, and stayed at home on purpose. But I think it was just Venice.
LAURA.

The Victoria Falls.

"Mosi-oa-Tunya" (Smoke that Sounds).

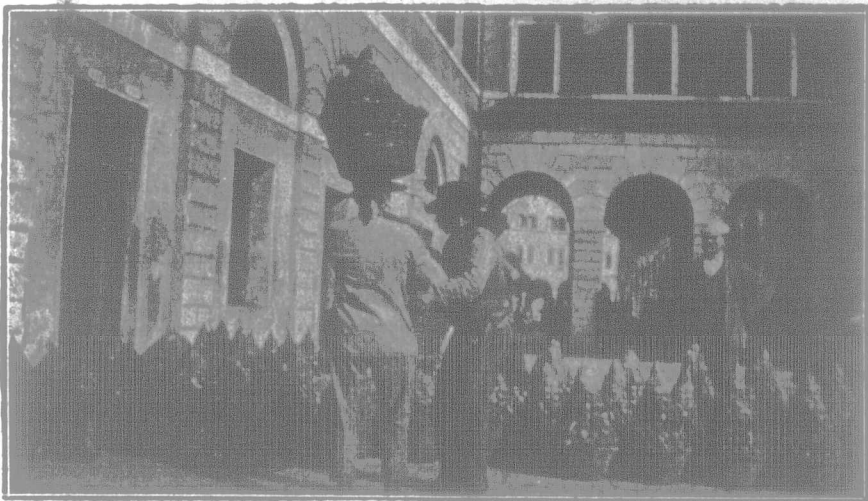
(By Robert Wilson.)

The plain, bald statement that the Great Falls of Victoria, on the gigantic Zambesi River, are twice as broad, and more than two and one-half times as high as the more familiar Falls of Niagara, conveys no idea of the impressive magnificence and indescribable grandeur of those mighty cataracts. Gazing on the stupendous masses of water hurled over the lip of these falls into the narrow chasm, more than four hundred feet below, we realize then, and then only, how man for once has failed to do anything like justice to the magnificence of this incomparable scene.

At the first sight of the Victoria Falls, the spectator stands aghast in wonder and astonishment at the vastness of everything; hitherto he has lived in a world in which the phenomena have been the merest pigmies by comparison. Everything here is on a gigantic scale, and cannot be grasped at first sight. Each day the grandeur and sublimity impress one more and more; the fascination and majesty increase; new and awful wonders are revealed, incomparably grand, grander, vaster, and nobler than anything ever imagined. The ordinary fancies fail to grasp the magnificence and magnitude of the panorama disclosed, and, it is only by association and familiarity with the whole environment that the spectator can bring himself to realize that this sublime spectacle has a place in real life. The placid, tranquil Zambesi, utterly unconscious of that which is ahead, rushes silently along to its fate, and plunges madly, recklessly, over the precipitous

cliffs to destruction in the uncertain obscurity and mysterious gloom of the vast chasm more than four hundred feet below.

The face of the Victoria Falls extends one mile and one hundred and sixty yards, and has a sheer drop of four hundred and twenty feet into a huge chasm or cavern below, which measures nineteen hundred yards in length, but less than two hundred feet across. At the north end of this cavern is a narrow gorge or throat, not more than one hundred feet wide at the entrance.



Peaches.

The porters carry three baskets, one on the head and one under each arm.

through which pass, the huge volume of water is hurled from the heights above. Some idea of the turbulence of these waters, as they enter this gorge or defile, may be gathered from the fact that, as they roll over the lip of the falls into the cavern below, they have, in order to effect an exit, to swirl and rush in a foaming turmoil, down the cavern, where at last they discover the gorge or throat, round which they madly course, at right angles, causing a veritable inferno, until they settle down calmly to traverse the forty miles of canyon connecting with the wider river beyond.

Who can attempt to describe the grandeur of it all; the ceaseless thunderous, deafening roar, as the water rolls, writhes and struggles in that seething inferno, fighting for the narrow passage which is destined by nature to carry them forty miles through a narrow, shadowy cavern, bounded by precipitous and overhanging rocky cliffs, to the lower and wider reaches of the great river beyond?

Who can witness the gorgeous rainbow effects, without becoming infected to an enthusiastic degree with the weird beauty of it all: the frothing mass of spray and foam, which, in their mad craving to escape from the turbid depths, recoil, and reach an altitude of three thousand feet, only to fall back again into the titanic whirlpool, or drift before the gentle African winds, moistening the soil and foliage of the enchanting "Rain Forest" near-by.

Probably by night, these lonely and gigantic falls—which have, unseen by the white man, been performing for countless ages the duties appointed them by nature—create their most fadeless impressions. The world stillness of the African night is completely wrecked by the crashing thunder of the meeting of

the waters in the rocky chasm beneath. The reverberations hurled at one, as the pandemonium is echoed and re-echoed from side to side of the massive rocky precipices, together with the trembling of the surrounding earth, create feelings of wonder and awe. The lunar-rainbow, suspending fairy-like on the clouds of spray; the humidity of the sub-tropical surroundings; the weirdness of it all; the scintillating waters of the stately Zambesi over and above this impressive scene, form a picture so indescribable, so beyond the power of man to portray, as to leave an impression on one's mind that will fade only with memory and life.

A short distance from the "Gorge" or "Boiling-pot," the canyon is crossed by the highest railway bridge in the world, over four hundred feet above water level, which was destined to connect the proposed line from the Cape to Cairo—one of the fondest dreams of Cecil Rhodes.

It was on the island named after him—just above the falls—that Doctor Livingstone, in 1855, landed, when he first discovered the existence of this great wonder, thus obtaining the most perfect and grandest view as his first impression. The tree on which he cut his initials, is still there, and pointed out to the visitor. He states in his book, "Travels in South Africa," in extenuation for this isolated piece of vulgarity, "This is the only instance in which I indulged in this piece of vanity."

It would be impossible to describe the

this indiscretion, this tribute to one of earth's greatest, noblest and most impressive sights, may be seen to-day by the visitor.

It is more than probable that the first man to gaze upon the Victoria Falls was Doctor Livingstone, and, for yet another thirty years or more, it is probable that they were not witnessed by another dozen whites. Now, however, many thousands have included it among their "sights," and it is no uncommon experience to meet in the great world beyond, those who have paid tribute to this, one of the world's greatest shrines of beauty and magnificence. In fact, it is not so very long ago that, the sculling championship of the world was rowed on a course, to the north of Loando Island, about three miles above the falls of the Zambesi. On that occasion, instead of an admiring group of naked savages, as might have been expected, a fashionable gathering of South Africa elite witnessed the race, in which a celebrated New Zealand oarsman came off victorious. In the vicinity of some rocks, between the falls and the regatta course, are to be seen, any day, a number of hippopotami basking in the sun. Truly Africa is a strange country.

Of the beauty, grandeur and fascination of the Victoria Falls—the native name for which is "Mosi-oa-Tunya," (smoke that sounds), much has been written, but it is quite impossible, from any written description, for the imagination to realize the magnificence of what has been described as "the most beautiful gem of the world's scenery."

The rugged and weird scenery of the Grand Canyon, bathed in eternal shadow, is well worth the special attention of the visitor, particularly the first and second zig-zag, where the most luxurious tropical vegetation abounds. The "Rain-forest" merits all the praise bestowed upon it. Here, in winter, as well as in summer, the tropical growth is abundant, owing to the everlasting supply of spray and foam blown up from the ceaseless turmoil of the raging waters below.

Becoming better acquainted with this colossal sight, we realize the presence of a power and vastness it has, hitherto, not been our lot to experience. If the inconceivable power of the Victoria Falls, as here exemplified—but a small portion of nature's titanic forces—so impresses us, can we not form some faint idea as to the omnipotence of the forces outside our little sphere, where all is infinite, eternal, and unknown? somewhat of the great preponderating power concealed behind the sun by day, the moon by night, the infinity of stars, and the countless stellar systems? We disbelieve in the power and the majesty of that which our competent reason fails to grasp. Here, on the Zambesi River, we are brought face to face with that which is almost an almighty force to our limited understanding; a force we would believe inconceivable, were it not there beyond all possibility of doubt; a force, a power, which man is now contriving and scheming to harness and turn to his own specific and selfish ends, despite the fact that, for countless ages,



The Rain Forest, Victoria Falls.