

Solomon Islands.

Edge-Partington.

**Solomon Island Basket.** *By J. Edge-Partington.***46**

The largest basket that I have ever seen from the Pacific Islands has lately come into my possession. It was collected by Captain Cayley Webster ; unfortunately

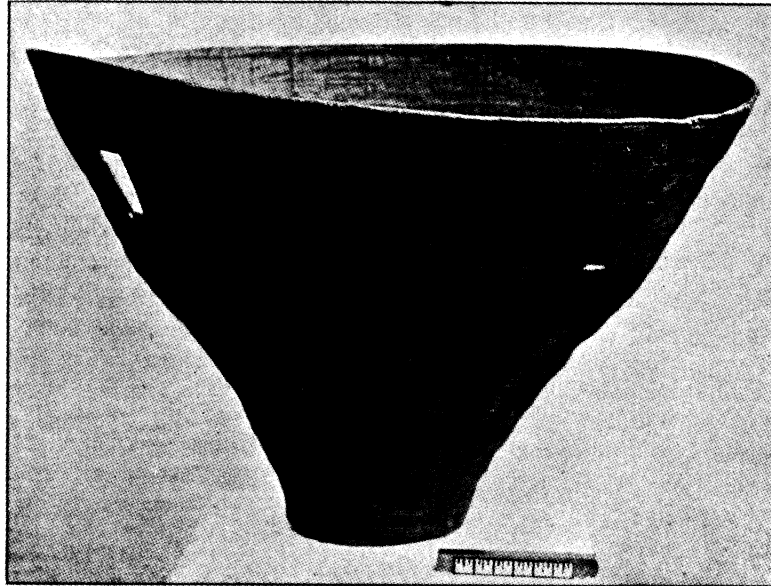


FIG. 1.

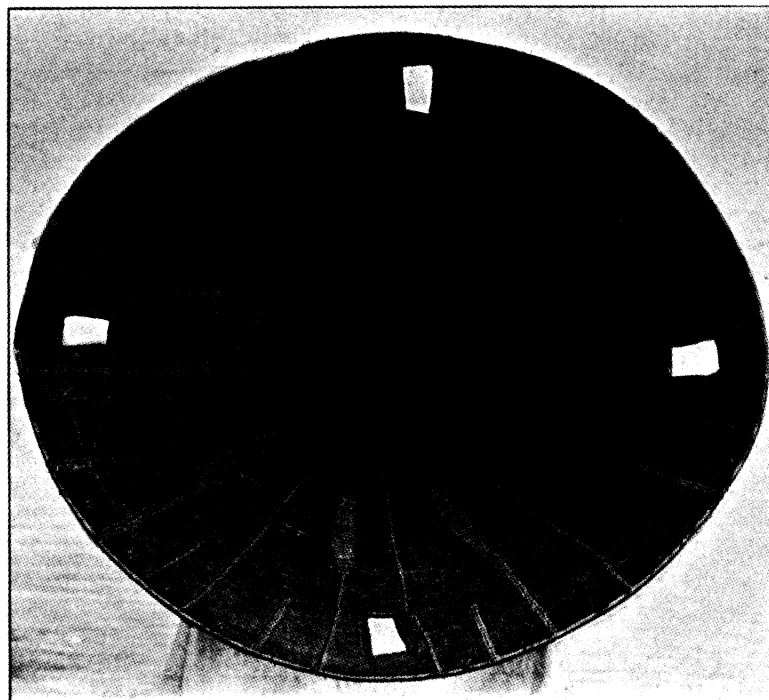


FIG. 2.

he makes no mention of it in his book. It evidently comes from the neighbourhood of Bougainville Straits. It is funnel-shaped with oval base, and measures 9 feet 11 inches

in circumference at the top, where the greatest diameter is 3 feet 4 inches, while at the base the diameter is only 9 inches. The height is 2 feet 1 inch.

It is composed of coiled reeds (?) (single rod coil), each coil being bound to its neighbour by strips of split rattan, having the glistening surface outwards; the ornament is formed by working over the coils, in a herring-bone pattern with split rattan, perpendicular lines reaching from the base to the upper edge; alternating with these are similar lines which reach only about a third of the way down and which terminate in long leaf-shaped designs. In the latter the rattan bindings are absent, and the reeds are served instead with split rattan with the dull side outwards. When the spaces between the upright lines are too great, shorter lines of a similar design are inserted. In the working of these lines, which vary slightly in width, one loop in each case has the glistening surface outwards. The remainder show the under or dull side of the split rattan. Just below the upper edge and between each of the lines are overriding cross loops, taking in four of the coils. The whole of these designs are repeated on the inside of the basket. The rim is finished off with a neat binding of finely split rattan worked in a herring-bone pattern; about 4 inches below the rim are four oblong holes ( $3\frac{3}{4}$  inches by  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches) at equal distances, which I take to be for the purpose of carrying the basket when full, probably, of food; not by means of poles as I at first thought, there being no signs of wear, but by the hands.

There are baskets of a similar manufacture in the British Museum, but very much smaller, and of a different form, with Bougainville Straits as a locality.

J. EDGE-PARTINGTON.

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#### REVIEWS.

##### Rhodesia.

MacIver.

*Mediæval Rhodesia.* By David Randall-MacIver. London: Macmillan, 1905. Pp. xv + 106, with 36 photographic plates. 29 × 22 cm. Price 20s. net.

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In our own time the glamour of oriental antiquity has suffered many severe blows. M. Salomon Reinach has brought forward a cloud of witnesses to prove that the oriental mirage is only that and nothing more, that the influences long thought to have come westwards from the ancient East really had their origin in a still more ancient West, and that if we are truly to grasp the bearings of the European civilisation of early times the evidence must be studied afresh.

The story of the ancient ruins scattered over South Africa has had a somewhat analogous career. For the last quarter of a century travellers, explorers, and scholars have visited, excavated, and described these enigmatical structures, and with so unanimous a verdict upon this remote antiquity that it needed a bold man even to whisper a contrary opinion. Mr. Theodore Bent, a traveller of experience with some archæological knowledge, was so convinced that the ruins of Zimbabwe were the work of early immigrants from Asia that he made a painful but fruitless journey into Southern Arabia to find their prototypes. There can be no question that in his case, as with others holding similar opinions, his judgment was, perhaps unconsciously, formed in advance, and was not the outcome of unprejudiced investigations on the spot. The conviction of the extreme antiquity of Zimbabwe and its neighbours might have held the field for another half century but for the fortunate circumstance that the British Association elected to hold its meeting in South Africa last year. The anthropological section very naturally took a prominent place in such congenial surroundings, and part of its programme was the determination on sound archæological lines of the age and origin of these interesting remains. No better man could have been chosen to make the necessary exploration than Mr. MacIver. His training on the ancient Mediterranean and Egyptian sites fitted him to deal with such a problem in a scientific spirit, and familiarised him with exactly those conditions that should prevail in South Africa if the