is the natural highway. At the lowest point in British territory, on the west bank of the river, is Port Herald, whence a railway runs past Chiromo to Blantyre. Below Port Herald the Shiré is navigable all the year round.

See Zambezi and British Central Africa.

**SHIRE,** one of the larger administrative divisions, in Great Britain, now generally synonymous with “county” *(q.v.),* but the word is still used of' smaller districts, such as Richmondshire and Hallamshire in Yorkshire, Norhamshire and Hexhamshire in Northumberland. The Anglo-Saxon shire (0. Eng. *scir)* was an administrative division next above the hundred and was presided over by the ealdorman and the sheriff (the shire-reeve). The word *scir*, according to Skeat (*Etym. Dict.,* 1910), meant originally office, charge, administration; thus in a vocabulary of the 8th century (Wright-Wülcker, *Anglo-Saxon and Old English Vocabu­laries,* 1884, 40-32) is found *procuratio, sciir.* Skeat compares O. Eng. *scirian,* to distribute, appoint, Ger. *Schirrmeister,* steward. The usual derivation of the word connects it with “ shear ” and “ share,” and makes the original meaning to have been a part cut off.

**SHIRLEY** (or **Sherley), SIR ANTHONY** (1565-c. 1635), English traveller, was the second son of Sir Thomas Shirley (1542-1612), of Wiston, Sussex, who was a member of parliament during the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. and who was heavily in debt when he died in October 1612. Shirley’s im­prisonment in 1603 was an important event as in consequence thereof the House of Commons successfully asserted one of its privileges—freedom of its members from arrest. Educated at Oxford Anthony Shirley gained some military experience with the English troops in the Netherlands and also during an expedi­tion to Normandy in 1591 under Robert Devereux, earl of Essex, who was related to his wife, Frances Vernon; about this time he was knighted by Henry of Navarre (Henry IV. of France), a proceeding which brought upon him the displeasure of his own sovereign and a short imprisonment. In 1596 he conducted a predatory expedition along the western coast of Africa and then across to Central America, but owing to a mutiny he returned to London with a single ship in 1597. In 1598 he led a few English volunteers to Italy to take part in a dispute over the possession of Ferrara; this, however, had been accommodated when he reached Venice, and he decided to journey to Persia with the twofold object of promoting trade between England and Persia and of stirring up the Persians against the Turks. He obtained money at Constantinople and at Aleppo, and was very well received by the shah, Abbas the Great, who made him a *mirza,* or prince, and granted certain trading and other rights to all Christian merchants. Then, as the shah’s representative, he returned to Europe and visited Moscow, Prague, Rome and other cities, but the English government would not allow him to return to his own country. For some time he was in prison in Venice, and in 1605 he went to Prague and was sent by the emperor Rudolph II. on a mission to Morocco; afterwards he went to Lisbon and to Madrid, where he was welcomed very warmly. The king of Spain appointed him the admiral of a fleet which was to serve in the Levant, but the only result of his extensive preparations was an unsuccessful expedition against the island of Mitylene. After this he was deprived of his command. Shirley, who was a count of the Holy Roman Empire, died at Madrid some time after 1635.

Sir Anthony’s elder brother, Sir Thomas Shirley (1564-c. 1620), was knighted while serving in Ireland under Sir William Fitz- william in 1589. In 1601 he was chosen a member of parliament, but his time was mainly passed in seeking to restore the shattered fortunes of his family by piratical expeditions. In January 1603 he was captured by the Turks and he was only released from his captivity at Constantinople in December 1605. One of his sons was Henry Shirley (d. 1627 ) the dramatist, who was murdered in London on the 31st of October 1627, and one of his grandsons was Thomas Shirley (1638-1678), the physician and writer.

Sir Anthony’s younger brother, Sir Robert Shirley (*c*. 1581- 1628), went with his brother to Persia in 1598, remaining in that country when the latter returned to Europe in 1599. Having married a Circassian lady he stayed in Persia until 1608 when the shah sent him on a diplomatic errand to James I. and to other European princes; after visiting Cracow, Prague, Florence, Rome and Madrid, he reached England in 1611 and had an interview with the king. In 1613 he went again to Persia, but in 1615 he returned to Europe and resided for some years in Madrid. His third journey to Persia was undertaken in 1627, but soon after reaching that country he died at Kazvin on the 13th of July 1628.

Sir Anthony Shirley wrote: *Sir Anthony Sherley. his Relation of his Travels into Persia* (1613), the original manuscript of which is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. There are in existence five or more accounts of Shirley's adventures in Persia, and the account of his expedition in 1596 is published in R. Hakluyt’s *Voyages and Dis­coveries* (1809-1812). See also *The Three Brothers\*, Travels and Adventures of Sir Anthony, Sir Robert and Sir Thomas Sherley in Persia, Russia, Turkey and Spain* (London, 1825) ; E. P. Shirley, *The Sherley Brothers* (1848), and the same writer’s *Stemmata Shirleiano* (1841, again 1873).

**SHIRLEY** (or **Sherley), JAMES** (1596-1666), English dramatist, was born in London in September 1596. He belonged to the great period of English dramatic literature, but, in Lamb’s words, he “ claims a place among the worthies of this period, not so much for any transcendent genius in himself, as that he was the last of a great race, all of whom spoke nearly the same language and had a set of moral feelings and notions in common.” His career of playwriting extended from 1625 to the suppression of stage plays by parliament in 1642. He was educated at Merchant Taylors’ school, St John’s College, Oxford, and Catherine Hall, Cambridge, where he took his B.A. degree in or before 1618. His first poem, *Echo, or the Unfortunate Lovers* (of which no copy is known, but which is probably the same as *Narcissus* of 1646), was published in 1618. After proceeding to M.A. he was, Wood says, “ a minister of God’s word in or near St Albans.” In consequence apparently of his conversion to the Roman Catholic faith he left his living, and was master of St Albans grammar school from 1623-1625. His first play, *Love Tricks,* seems to have been written while he was teaching at St Albans. He removed in 1625 to London, where he lived in Gray’s Inn, and for eighteen years from that time he was a prolific writer for the stage, producing more than thirty regular plays, tragedies and comedies, and showing no sign of exhaustion when a stop was put to his occupation by the Puritan edict of 1642. Shirley’s sympathies were with the king in his disputes with parliament and he received marks of special favour from the queen. He made a bitter attack on Prynne, who had attacked the stage in *Histriomastix;* and, when in 1634 a special masque was presented at Whitehall by the gentlemen of the Inns of Court as a practical reply to Prynne, Shirley supplied the text—*The Triumph of Peace.* Between 1636 and 1640 Shirley went to Ireland, under the patronage apparently of the earl of Kildare. Three or four of his plays were produced by his friend John Ogilby in Dublin in the theatre in Werburgh Street, the first ever built in Ireland and at the time of Shirley’s visit only one year old. On the outbreak of war he seems to have served with the earl of Newcastle, but when the king’s fortunes began to decline he returned to London. He owed something to the kindness of Thomas Stanley, but supported himself chiefly by teaching, publishing some educational works under the Common­wealth. Besides these he published during the period of dramatic eclipse four small volumes of poems and plays, in 1646, 1653. 1655 and 1659. He “ was a drudge” for Ogilby in his translations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey,* and survived into the reign of Charles II., but, though some of his comedies were revived, he did not again attempt to write for the stage. Wood says that he and his second wife died of fright and exposure after the great fire, and were buried at St Giles’s-in-the-Fields on the 29th of October 1666.

Shirley was born to great dramatic wealth, and he handled it freely. He constructed his own plots out of the abundance of materials that had been accumulated during thirty years of unexampled dramatic activity. He did not strain after novelty of situation or character, but worked with confident ease and buoyant copiousness on the familiar lines, contriving situations