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## EUROPEAN PENETRATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

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## EUROPEAN PENETRATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

After two centuries of Dutch penetration and agricultural expansion in South Africa, from 1652 to 1806, came the occupation of the Cape by the British, who followed, and even caused, the northward march of the Dutch settlers. The discovery of diamonds gave birth to a great capitalism, allied to a British imperialism, which alliance explains the war and the British conquest (1899-1902).

Although, six thousand years ago, Africa was the home of the most civilised nation of the world, the work of the ancient Egyptians was nevertheless a mere scratch on the surface of the vast continent. Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans and Vandals occupied the Mediterranean fringe of the «dark continent», but none of these peoples ever penetrated beyond a narrow strip along the northern border. Even after its entire coast-line had been discovered in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries by bold Portuguese navigators in quest of a sea-route to the rich Far East, the vast interior of Africa remained closed to European penetration. In this respect Christian Europe had less success than Mohammedan Asia.

*Ex Africa semper aliquid novi*, however, remained as true as ever and it was left to a small nation on the North Sea to prove this true of another part of the Continent. The Dutch, during their golden era, were the first Europeans to realise the strategic importance of the southern extremity of Africa on the sea-route between Europe and the Far East and to establish a settlement on the coast of Table Bay in 1652. During the following two hundred years it was from the South and not from the North, West or East that European civilisation succeeded in penetrating and conquering vast stretches of the interior of Africa.

This was a tedious task, for the Dutch authorities were interested in the Cape Peninsula and its harbours mainly for strategic reasons and did little or nothing to encourage European expansion into the interior. As a matter of fact, the authorities were more often than not definitely hostile to European colonisation of the interior. The reasons are obvious: the quest for minerals had proved abortive and since, on climatic grounds, the interior was considered worthless, it was thus regarded as fit only for barbarous natives and wild animals. European settlement in the interior, according to the official viewpoint, would only result in embroiling the Government in expensive wars with hostile native tribes, and in making

the colonists, far removed from civilising influences, lawless and difficult to control. Such was on the whole the attitude of the Dutch authorities during the whole of their period of occupation, and, since 1806, for many years to come, also the policy of their British successors.

Nevertheless, European expansion did take place soon after Jan van Riebeeck had founded a settlement for the Dutch East India Company on the shores of Table Bay in 1652. Although free colonisation was contrary to the economic principles of the monopolistic Company, this body was forced to follow a colonising policy in South Africa in order to enable the Cape settlement to provide the scurvy-stricken crews on their long voyages to and from India with fresh supplies of water, fruit, vegetables and meat.

The first free colonists who made their appearance in 1657, were almost exclusively tillers of the soil, and therefore not of a type likely to penetrate into the far interior. During the half century that followed, they were settled on the « mediterranean », coastal strip which to-day comprises Cape Town, the Cape Peninsula and the agricultural districts immediately adjacent. Their numbers were augmented by fresh immigrants from Holland and Germany, and notably by the arrival of the French Protestant refugees in 1688, following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV. The authorities clearly desired a fixed and densely populated agricultural colony in the neighbourhood of Table Bay, and frowned on any dispersion of the colonists by penetration into the interior across the natural barrier of the surrounding mountains.

Towards the end of the seventeenth century the colonists, in spite of the Government's avowed policy, began to prefer freer means of making a living, such as hunting, secret trading with the natives and especially cattle-farming. Moreover, the prices fixed by the Company for the agricultural products of the colonists proved very unremunerative. Finally, scarcity of labour and difficulties of transport helped to make agriculture much less attractive than cattle-farming. It is, therefore, not surprising that towards the end of the seventeenth century a new type of colonist was beginning to develop: the cattle farmer. As their herds increased, the colonists were compelled to seek new grazing lands, and in a country like the interior of South Africa, with its long rainless seasons and periodic droughts, the cattle farmer became necessarily a mobile colonist.

After the colonists had crossed the first mountain barriers at about 1700, expansion into the interior proceeded rapidly. This was solely the work of the cattle farmers who became the great pioneers in South African history. The outstanding characteristic of South African history during the eighteenth century was the colo-

nisation of the interior by these hardy, self-reliant and self-sufficient pioneers who pushed the frontiers of civilisation further and further into the interior. Again and again they ignored the boundaries fixed repeatedly by a Government anxious to keep them within recognised limits. Thus in 1775 the eastern boundary of the colony was already extended to the Fish River, about six hundred miles from the centre of Government at Cape Town. It was at the Fish River that the colonists for the first time came into contact with the numerous and strongly organised Bantu tribes that were moving along the south-eastern coast in an opposite i. e. south-westerly direction. These Bantu or Kaffirs were to have a profound influence on South African history in general, and on European colonisation of the interior in particular. The impact between White and Black not only resulted in intricate frontier problems and a difficult frontier policy, but also in expensive and prolonged conflicts on the eastern boundary of the Colony lasting about three-quarters of a century. This impact was also responsible for diverting European expansion away from the coastal belt, with its more abundant rainfall, towards the more arid regions of the North.

When the British, owing to its strategic importance, occupied the Cape in 1806, they found the greater part of what is to-day known as the Cape Province settled by these hardy pioneers, whose evolution to a great extent formed the history of European South Africa during the eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup> In fact a new nation, the Afrikaner nation, with South Africa as its only homeland, and with undivided loyalty to this homeland, had been born. Unaided by natural land- and water-ways, harassed by savage native races, like the pigmy Bushmen with their dreaded poisoned arrows, tormented by droughts or floods as the case may be or by wild animals of all descriptions, these pioneers with their families in their lumbering ox-wagons had penetrated and colonised a country larger than half the size of France. As colonists they had adapted themselves very well to the peculiarities of their country. They had become expert horsemen and expert shots, accomplishments which proved indispensable in a country swarming with wild animals and savage natives, and with little or no support from the distant Cape Town Government. It was under these circumstances that the colonists developed their own military system, the famous Commando system. Each settler, moreover, learned to be his own carpenter, his own mason, his own blacksmith, his own cobbler, his own tailor. Thus self-reliance and self-sufficiency gradually evolved as outstanding characteristics of these pioneer graziers. Hospitality, almost to excess, developed as

<sup>1</sup> Dr. P. J. VAN DER MERWE, *Die Noordwaartse Beweging van die Boere voor die Groot Trek 1770-1842*, (1937). Also Dr. A. J. H. VAN DER WALT, *Die Ausdehnung der Kolonie am Kap der Guten Hoffnung 1700-1779*, (1928).

another outstanding characteristic of these South African farmers or Boers, as they came to be called. Isolated on his loan farm - a form of land-tenure which had developed with the grazier and which in no small way was responsible for the mobility of the cattle farmers and the rapid colonisation of the interior - and debarred from most of the amenities of European civilisation, the South African pioneer nevertheless never forgot that he was a European, a Christian white man. He carried his Calvinistic religion, his language, which, as time went on, differed more and more from the language of Holland, and other traditions of his race with him into the wilds of Southern Africa. The men were tall and muscular, many of them standing over six feet. Some of the women were as tall as their sons and husbands; they were fair-haired for the most part, a point of pride to people who had lived for generations in daily contact with swarthy savages.<sup>1</sup>

Far-reaching in its effects as European expansion in Southern Africa had been in the eighteenth century, it was mainly during the thirties of the nineteenth century that it received fresh and vigorous impetus in the emigration of some ten thousand colonists, persons of Dutch birth and farmers (Boere) in the main, from the Cape Colony into the unclaimed wilds of the interior. The great emigration, or the Great Trek as it came to be called, had its origin in the British colonial policy which had already lost for England her first colonial empire in America, and which, contemporaneously with the Great Trek, nearly led to the secession of Canada. As a matter of fact, the British Government, only interested in the strategic importance of the Cape Peninsula on the sea-route between England and the Far East, neglected the interests of its newly acquired subjects. The colonists, especially those of the frontier districts, had many grievances against the British authorities. One grievance certainly was the total lack of protection against Kaffir raids and plundering. There was also a multitude of regulations and restrictions, coupled with a total lack of official restraint upon the inherent vagrant propensities of an indisciplined and thievish coloured population. The Government of the time, whether in London or in Cape Town, very much under the influence of fanatical missionary negrophilism, was more concerned about the welfare of natives and coloureds than about that of its own European colonists. What is more, the colonists were more often than not officially blamed for the very abuses about which they were complaining. Grave resentment was also caused by the abolition of the official recognition of the language of the Dutch colonists, as well as other institutions which through long usage had become part of the spiritual

<sup>1</sup> Prof. E. A. WALKER, *The Great Trek*, (1934).

life of these colonists. Added to all this was the fact that, time and again, a deaf ear was turned to their complaints by the British authorities, while on the other hand, a ready ear was lent to criticisms and denunciations of the colonists by missionaries and natives. The great majority of the European population in the Colony was made to feel foreigners in the land of their birth, and nothing could be more bitter than the realisation that they were being deliberately misrepresented and their good motives distorted into everything that was evil and vile.

These emigrants or Voortrekkers, therefore, for no mere petty reasons, broke up settled homes, sold their farms for next to nothing, sometimes even giving them away, and deliberately subjected themselves, their wives and children to the disabilities and dangers of life in a new and savage country. They trekked in parties under party leaders, such as Trigardt, Potgieter, Maritz, Retief, Uys and Pretorius, with their families in their cumbrous ox-wagons, driving their numerous flocks and herds along with them as they went. They opened up and peopled the territories later known as Natal, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, territories which to-day make out the major part of the Union of South Africa. In their search for a country in desert and savage lands, where they could be independent, these pioneers were real blazers of trails into the wilderness. With none of the facilities and conveniences of modern inventions at their disposal, they encountered a multitude of obstacles and tribulations and their endurance and inventiveness was taxed to the utmost. These Voortrekkers had to blaze their way through a trackless veld, across uncharted mountains and unbridged rivers. They encountered dreaded tropical diseases which, as in the case of the Trigardt party, almost completely exterminated all human as well as animal members of the party. What is more, they had to fight savage and merciless foes, like the numerous and powerfully organised Matabeles and Zulus. After terrible suffering at the hands of treacherous foes - the bestial murder by the Zulu chief, Dingaan, of the unsuspecting Retief and his followers is one of many instances - European civilisation gained a decisive victory over African barbarism at the battle of Blood River, on December 16, 1838, now annually celebrated as a national holiday throughout the Union. The writer M. Nathan does not exaggerate when, in a recent publication, he states that these Voortrekkers « are entitled, by reason of their achievements, to the respect and esteem of all South Africans. Indeed, in the annals of pioneering throughout the world, none rank higher for fortitude and endurance, and none are entitled to greater praise as a colonising and civilising influence than these same Voortrekkers ». No wonder that the centenary celebrations of the Groot Trek, now taking place throughout

South Africa, are on a scale unprecedented in the history of this country.<sup>1</sup>

A century ago the authorities in State and Church were not so appreciative of the Great Trek. In fact, officialdom was definitely hostile to the Voortrekkers. The British authorities not only repeatedly refused to acknowledge the political independence of the Emigrants, but the British flag even followed the Voortrekkers into the Interior. Consequently the territories to-day known as Natal and the Orange Free State were in the forties annexed by the British Crown, thereby robbing the Voortrekkers of the fruits of victory for which they had suffered and sacrificed so much. It was only the well-merited fame of having freed South Africa of the scourge of cruel Bantu militarism - a boon to Blacks and Whites alike - and the achievement of having opened up the wilderness to European civilisation and enterprise, which British imperialism could not annex. The Dutch farmers or Boers had here for the first time, typical of what was to happen again and again later on, been the pioneers, to be followed by the Jewish pedlar, the English trader, the Christian missionary for the natives, and last, but not least, the British flag.

Of the newly acquired territories only Natal, with its coast-line and sea-port Durban, had any real value for Britain and her traders. Most of the Boers had, after the British occupation of Natal, emigrated from this territory into the Transvaal. As for the rest, troubles with Boers and natives had convinced the parsimonious « Little Englanders » who controlled the Imperial Government at the time, that the interior of Southern Africa was an unprofitable acquisition, in fact a hornets' nest. Consequently, British rule was withdrawn from the territory between the Orange and Vaal rivers and the sovereign independence of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State solemnly acknowledged in the treaties of Sand River (1852) and Bloemfontein (1854) respectively. British imperialism had reached its low water mark in South Africa. The building of the Suez Canal some time later even appeared likely to rob this country of its strategic importance as a British naval base.<sup>2</sup>

Unknown to the Voortrekkers and everybody else, however, the Boer Republics had been founded in territories in which nature had hidden the world's richest deposits of gold and diamonds. The interior of Southern Africa, fit only for wild animals, according to the official British viewpoint of the fifties, suddenly became a bone

<sup>1</sup> M. NATHAN, *The Voortrekkers of South Africa*, (1937). The chief authority on the Great Trek is the Afrikaans writer and historian, Dr. GUSTAV PRELLER, whose works include, *Lewe van Retief, Voortrekker-mense* (six vols.), *Dagboek van Louis Trichardt, Andries Pretorius*.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. C. W. DE KIEWIET, *British Colonial Policy and the South African Republics, 1848-1872*, (1929) and *The Imperial Factor in South Africa*, (1937).





of contention when diamonds were discovered about 1870 in the South-West corner of the Orange Free State. It was merely a question of time before British imperialism took a new lease of life in Southern Africa. Although it is now, rather belatedly, admitted in British circles that «legally and morally the Boers' case was unassailable and the British action in assuming possession of the mines, was indefensible»,<sup>1</sup> the diamondiferous part of the Orange Free State Republic, notwithstanding the Bloemfontein Convention of 1854, became part of the British Empire in 1871.

The discovery of diamonds in the heart of Southern Africa at a time when European powers were becoming increasingly conscious of the colonial potentialities of the Dark Continent, introduced new and powerful factors in opening up the Interior. Railway

<sup>1</sup> C. J. M. ALPORT, *Kingdoms in Partnership*, (1937).

and telegraphic means of communication with the rich diamond-fields were taken in hand by the Governments of the British coastal colonies. What is more, big capital, for the first time of real South African origin, thanks to the diamondfields, allied itself closely with a revived British imperialism, and made itself forcibly felt in Southern Africa. This combination, personified in the diamondfields magnate, Cecil Rhodes, with his all-British Cape-to-Cairo ideal, was firmly resolved on British territorial expansion towards the North.

However, when Rhodes was no more than the budding politician millionaire, the imperialistic Minister for Colonies, Lord Carnarvon, in the Tory cabinet of the imperialistic Disraeli, had decided in the seventies to obtain control of the Transvaal, because it was an unavoidable step towards the control of the whole of South Africa, with its now visible riches. This article leaves no space for discussing the alleged and real reasons - and they are very dissimilar - for the British annexation of the Transvaal in 1877 and other British annexations in Southern Africa since that time. It is, however, a fact that Carnarvon had notoriously violated the Sand River Convention, thereby committing a breach of international law almost without precedent. His methods, and also those of his agent in South Africa, Sir Theophilus Shepstone, were described by Gladstone as « dishonourable to the character of our country ». Unfortunately for the Transvaal, Carnarvon and Shepstone had caught the Republic on the wrong foot: the Boers involved in a war with the native chief Sekukuni, the Republic's treasury nearly empty, its European population sadly divided and at the head of the State a loquacious President, Thomas Burgers, who had any amount of good intentions but no sense of realities. The Boers protested against the Annexation: various deputations under Paul Kruger were at different times sent to London, a referendum was held which clearly showed that the overwhelming majority of the European inhabitants were strongly opposed to annexation and disproved the British contention to the contrary. All these constitutional methods, however, proved futile, and the Transvalers were forced to take up arms and fight for their independence. The War of Independence (1880-1881) ended in a glorious victory for the Boers. At Majuba Hill (February 1881) the chief British force under Sir George Colley was decisively defeated, Colley being amongst the slain. Majuba was to rankle in the British mind for many a year to come. The Boer victories, however, combined with the facts that the Gladstone Government (whose leader had, when in opposition, so strongly condemned the Annexation), was unwilling to continue the war and that the discovered gold deposits did not rise to expectations, led to the restoration of the independence of the Transvaal (Pretoria Convention 1881). This

independence was extended in scope a few years later (London Convention 1884).<sup>1</sup>

Rhodes, however, continued to see in the Boer Republics an obstacle to his imperialistic expansion towards the North. The territory on the Western borders of the Republics, which the Boers had always considered as their legitimate Hinterland, came into prominence at the time when the London Convention was being signed. It happened that this territory was of special significance to Rhodes; for not only did the road from the diamondfields (Kimberley) to tropical Africa run through this country, thinly populated by native tribes in perpetual war with each other, but the advent of Germany in South West Africa at this time made a possible union between the eastward expanding German colony and the westward expanding Boer Republics a serious menace to Rhodes' ideal of an all-British territory from the Cape to the mouth of the Nile. Aided by an Imperial force under Sir Charles Warren, Rhodes was able to nip possible German and Boer expansion in the bud, to secure for Britain a huge territory known as Bechuanaland, and, what is more important, the road, or as he termed it, the «Suez Canal» to the North. This was another step in the direction of British encirclement of the Boer Republics, and more were to follow.<sup>2</sup>

The discovery of the rich Witwatersrand gold deposits in the Transvaal shortly afterwards (1886) brought Southern Africa once more conspicuously within the lime-light of European interest. Foreigners from all parts of the world, but chiefly of British and Jewish origin, flocked to the goldfields and created a heterogeneous European population, with all its complicated problems, in the centre of the Boer Republics. The construction of railways and telegraphs followed, thus linking up the goldfields with the coastal ports and speeding up the opening of the interior. A highly industrialised gold-mining centre, with a foreign population, was thus created amidst a pastoral and agricultural community of Boers, who, however, controlled the government of the country. Although this government adapted itself remarkably well to the changed conditions, and the excesses committed under similar circumstances on the goldfields of California and Australia were conspicuously absent in the Transvaal, nevertheless the British foreigners on the Rand, politically exploited by imperialistic and capitalistic wire-pullers, agitated for prompt and revolutionary reforms, thereby causing strained relations between the old and the new inhabitants of the Republic. It was a duel between Paul Kruger, the Dutch Republican champion and Cecil Rhodes, who was soon to become the most powerful Englishman in Africa.

Before the Imperial Government made the «Uitlanders» question

<sup>1</sup> Dr. C. J. Uys, *In the Era of Shepstone*, (1933). Also Prof. S. P. ENGELBRECHT, *Thomas François Burgers*, (1933).

<sup>2</sup> B. WILLIAMS, *Cecil Rhodes*, (1921).

one of policy, Rhodes was instrumental in extending British influence in another part of the Sub-Continent. The territory to the North of the Transvaal, like Bechuanaland, had never been mentioned in the treaties between Great Britain and the Boers and the latter had reason to consider this land, Matabeleland, as their legitimate hinterland. The Transvaal Government actually enjoyed exclusive treaty rights with the Matabele chief, Lobengula, and was represented there by an energetic consul, Grobler, well-versed in native affairs, and popular with the chief. The discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand had made people like Rhodes search for this precious metal in other parts, notably in the northern hinterland of the Transvaal. Signs of its presence were not wanting. Consequently Rhodes obtained mining concessions from the unsuspecting Lobengula, and the Transvaal, with promises of an outlet to the Indian Ocean, which never materialised, gave up its treaty rights.

The mining concessions which Rhodes obtained in Matabeleland were nothing less than the beginning of British dominion, which soon reached to the Zambesi River, the Northern limit of Southern Africa. Lobengula himself « was bluffed, flattered or hustled by men of whose major designs he was entirely ignorant ». The British South Africa Company, with Rhodes at its head, was duly formed, and a gold-rush on a colossal scale was anticipated. Dr. Jameson, the intimate friend of Rhodes and administrator of Rhodesia, as this new country (Matabele-Mashonaland) came to be called, had said that it « consists, not of one, but of fifty Rands ». The new country was in fact « mineralized » and a column of « scallywag pioneers » was duly organised, ostensibly only as « police » but in reality as « Conquistadores ». Money, as in every plan of Rhodes, was to be the stimulus and the reward.<sup>1</sup>

However, instead of the « fifty Rands » predicted by Jameson, there was no « Rand » at all. The gold in Rhodesia was to be little more « than a tantalizing geological curiosity » and what is more, Rhodes' Company, the British South Africa Company, was soon in danger of sinking under a heavy burden of debt. The Company could, however, be saved if the rich Transvaal could be brought under the control of Rhodes *cum suis*; for, it is a remarkable fact in the South African history of the time that, while disturbing political activities under the leadership of Rhodes were clearly leading towards a crisis in South Africa, a boom in gold shares exhilarated the markets of London. It was therefore partly to save Rhodes' Company that Dr. Jameson, the administrator of Rhodesia, suddenly at the end of 1895 invaded the Transvaal with an armed force. The whole civilised world, was profoundly

<sup>1</sup> C. E. VULLIAMY, *Outlanders*, (1938). Very illuminating also Dr. HANS SAUER, *Ex Africa*, (1937).

shocked. Great Britain for a brief space of time was dangerously isolated, and the Transvaal threatened to become an issue of European importance. The congratulatory telegram which the German Emperor had sent to President Kruger, on the latter's capture of Jameson and his raiders, did not improve matters.

The dismal failure of the Raid, and of the « Revolution » on the Rand in support of Jameson, was a severe set-back to British prestige and broke the political power of Rhodes, who had to resign as Premier of the Cape Colony and as Chairman of the British South Africa Company. It was clear that local British Imperialists and « money-bags » were not sufficiently powerful to destroy the political independence of the Boer Republics. Rhodesia had demonstrably proved a broken reed. The « Imperial factor » which Rhodes, in the hey-day of prosperity, had been so anxious to « eliminate », now came into prominence in South Africa and in a way « eliminated » Rhodes himself. The case of the Uitlanders now became a matter of Imperial policy, under the directorship of Joseph Chamberlain himself, the « pushful » Minister for Colonies and the spearhead of British aggression against the Transvaal. The political power of Afrikanerdom had to be broken and the humiliation of Majuba and the Raid wiped out.<sup>1</sup>

However, important preliminaries were absolutely essential before the South African problem could be solved according to British wishes. The first was a strong man to represent Great Britain in South Africa, in a way a successor to Rhodes. Such a man was found in Sir Alfred Milner, a High Commissioner after Chamberlain's own heart. Milner from the very start did all in his power to promote crises in South Africa. According to him, South Africa after the shock of the Raid did not require a « rest cure » but a « surgical operation ». The evidence that has lately come forward through the publication of the Milner Papers, proves beyond doubt that the Anglo-Boer War which followed in 1899 « was just one man's war: Milner's ».<sup>2</sup>

Another essential preliminary was that British public opinion should be converted to the side of « pushful Joe » and Milner. Consequently a newspaper campaign was brought into action. The grievances of the Uitlanders were exaggerated beyond all recognition. According to Sir William Butler, the *locum tenens* of Milner, while the latter was on leave in Britain, « the English newspapers (in South Africa) were wholly under the influence of Mr. Rhodes » and they were « outrageous in their language of insult and arrogance »; furthermore nearly all « the information sent from the Cape to England were being worked by.... a colossal syndicate for the spread

<sup>1</sup> R. I. LOVELL, *The Struggle for South Africa*, (1934).

<sup>2</sup> SARAH G. MILLIN, *General Smuts* (two vols.), (1936).

of systematic misrepresentation». <sup>1</sup> Needless to say that this intensive newspaper propaganda under the directorship of Milner, Rhodes and their Jewish collaborators worked wonders in British public opinion.

A third and perhaps most important preliminary, was to effect a change in the international political constellation hostile to Britain. It is well known that the sympathies of the Continent and America had been on the Boers' side at the time of the Raid. It is enough to mention Fashoda, Afghanistan and the Kruger Telegram to illustrate the strained relations between Britain and the great Continental powers during the late nineties. Even in March 1898 Chamberlain had to curb the impatience of Milner who was working up to one of his periodical crises on a purely internal Transvaal issue (Kotze's case) by emphasising that « we (England) have on hand difficulties of the most serious character with France, Russia, and Germany ». <sup>2</sup>

However, every one of these Continental powers was « colonially squared » shortly afterwards. In the case of Germany, a secret agreement had even been concluded according to which the Portuguese Delagoa Bay, « the key to the Transvaal », had been earmarked for Britain. <sup>3</sup> The stage was now set and the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) was the inevitable result. The Boer Republics, completely isolated, had to be content with the sympathies of the peoples and the neutralities of the governments of the Great Powers. As a result of this war, which certainly yielded a most heroic struggle on the part of the two tiny Republics against overwhelming odds, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State were incorporated in the British Empire.

The British flag was now flying from the Cape to the Northern limits of Southern Africa. The Dutch and the English, however, were not the only Europeans to penetrate into the Sub-Continent. In 1884 Bismarck, after a hard diplomatic duel with Britain, planted the German flag in South West Africa. During the thirty years of German occupation the Germans (as in other parts of South Africa), did valuable colonising and civilising work. As far as minerals are concerned this territory is, however, little more than a « geological museum » and for climatic reasons is not likely to support a large European population. This German colony, as a result of the Great War, became mandated territory to the Union of South Africa.

England's « most ancient ally » Portugal, the discoverer of the coast-line of Southern Africa, is still in possession of Mozambique, a swampy and unhealthy tropical country, whose chief importance is

<sup>1</sup> Sir W. BUTLER, *Autobiography*, (1911).

<sup>2</sup> C. HEADLAM, *The Milner Papers* (two vols.), (1931-1933).

<sup>3</sup> *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914*, vol. XIV.

due to Delagoa Bay, the natural sea-port and consequently the « key » to the Transvaal. Delagoa Bay has been a much coveted objective of British Imperialism in the past. The railway, linking the Rand with Delagoa Bay, was of great commercial and political importance to the land-locked Boer Republics, all but surrounded by British territories. The Portuguese, however, for climatic reasons and owing to their system of colonisation, never penetrated far into the interior. Even today the economic mainstay of this colony is the rich Transvaal hinterland.

European penetration in Southern Africa, therefore, has been accomplished by, and is to a great extent the result of, conflict not so much between civilised Whites and savage Blacks but between Europeans and Europeans. The outcome of this struggle was British dominion over the whole of Southern Africa, with the exception of Mozambique. The Union Jack, however, was not accompanied by large numbers of British settlers. The Britishers, on the whole, neglected agriculture and were content with positions in the civil service, commerce and the mining industries of the bigger towns. The Afrikaners, therefore, still make out the majority of the European population of Southern Africa. What is more, the Britisher is gradually being ousted by the Afrikaner from spheres over which he used to enjoy a monopoly. The Britisher in South Africa is to-day clearly on the defensive. His economic position has also been undermined by the Jew, to whom Southern Africa with its mineral wealth and racial disunion, is a real promised land. Nevertheless, the Europeans of Southern Africa are a small minority in comparison with the millions of Natives and non-Europeans. This is Southern Africa's major problem as far as the future is concerned. From being a dormant question for several hundred years, it is fast becoming a question of all-absorbing interest to all concerned, White and Black. Civilisation is spreading fast to the coloured and native races and with new knowledge new problems arise which could be ignored in the past, but will demand all the thought and energy of South African statesmen in the future.

*Stellenbosch (South Africa), The University.*

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