

THE STRUGGLE FOR SOUTH AFRICA

1875—1899

A Study in Economic Imperialism

BY

REGINALD IVAN LOVELL

Ph.D. (HARVARD)

NEW YORK

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1934

All rights reserved, including the right of reproduction
in whole or in part in any form.

COPYRIGHT, 1934,
By THE BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH
HARVARD UNIVERSITY AND RADCLIFFE COLLEGE.

The Bureau of International Research has aided the
author in carrying on research for this book and in
publishing the results. The Bureau assumes no re-
sponsibility for the statements or views expressed.

Set up and printed.
Published January, 1934.

SET UP BY BROWN BROTHERS LINOTYPERS
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BY THE FERRIS PRINTING COMPANY

TO THE MEMORY OF
CLAUDE HALSTEAD VAN TYNE

Vouchsafe to those that have not read the story,
That I may prompt them; and of such as have,
I humbly pray them to admit the excuse
Of time, of numbers, and due course of things,
Which cannot in their huge and proper life
Be here presented.

Shakespeare, *King Henry V.*

PREFACE

THIS book is, essentially, a pioneer attempt to relate with its wider context the history of interstate and international relations in South Africa down to the outbreak of the second Boer War. It covers the period of European expansion, so-called, in Africa; and, as a study in economic imperialism, it has to do with the aims, methods, and achievements of the various individuals and groups interested in securing control of the area south of the Congo.

Of such individuals the most active, the most successful, and the most famous was Cecil Rhodes. Rhodes's policy, therefore, is examined here in detail; and stress is laid upon the extent to which it was anticipated and supported by the British government, down at least to 1895. Rhodes was so supported largely because his policy of expansion furthered the established British policy of peacefully promoting confederation by encircling the Transvaal. But all those concerned in South Africa, British and Boers, Germans and Portuguese alike, gained in some degree the support of their respective governments. Their rivalry therefore was affected by, and affected, international relations in general more closely than has hitherto been brought out.

In this connection Anglo-German relations¹ were of supreme importance; because Portugal was too weak to oppose e.g. the British ultimatum of January, 1890; while France (though alienated from England by the occupation of Egypt) was

¹ See Raymond Walter Bixler, *Anglo-German Imperialism in South Africa 1880-1900*, University Research Monographs, No. 13, Baltimore, Warwick and York Inc. 1932. This book was published after my work on the subject was well under way. It sets forth in detail the phenomena of Anglo-German economic rivalry in South Africa, but makes no attempt to explain these, or the general European background of Imperialism. Nor does it examine or even summarize the policies of the British government and Cecil Rhodes; while, apart from the agreements of 1898 and 1899, it ignores the Portuguese colonies.

scarcely interested in South Africa, and Russia not interested at all.

During the years covered in this book there were two periods of acute Anglo-German friction; 1884-5 and 1894-6. Both had important international consequences; and the second culminated in the Kruger Telegram in which the German Emperor congratulated the Transvaal President on the defeat of the Jameson Raid. The general rule, on the other hand, resumed in 1898, was acquiescence by Germany; and this complaisant attitude permitted England to gain the lion's share in the partition of Africa, north and south alike.

Pending the opening of the archives a definitive study of British foreign policy from 1885 onwards is, of course, impossible. It is, however, clear that South Africa as well as Egypt (and the Sudan) played a large part in it. It is equally clear that the British leaning towards the Triple Alliance down to 1902 was not due solely to a philanthropic desire for peace. On the contrary, Lord Salisbury went out of his way, in 1885, to escape isolation by conciliating Germany; and a close Anglo-German *entente* was built upon his secret Mediterranean agreements of 1887 and the Heligoland treaty of 1890. The latter, incidentally, and the possibility it advertised of England's advancing to full membership in the Triple Alliance, had much to do with the Franco-Russian *entente* of 1891. Thereafter the Anglo-German *entente* lapsed somewhat, particularly under Lord Rosebery (1892-95); and Salisbury failed to restore it. The Kruger Telegram has even been interpreted as designed to frighten England into alliance with Germany by showing her the dangers of isolation. If this was its aim it failed lamentably; none the less the ghost of Salisbury's *entente* seems to have long haunted Downing Street as well as the Wilhelmstrasse. No doubt it had its uses during the Dongola campaign and the Fashoda crisis; and it seems significant that the negotiations of 1898-1901 for the German alliance which Chamberlain publicly advocated, lasted almost until the end of the South African War.

The difficulty of the task here attempted—i.e. of integrating

European diplomacy with the scarcely less complicated story of South African relationships—will be appreciated by anyone familiar with either field. All I can hope is that some new facts may have been brought out, and some new forces revealed. But the problem of presentation proved extraordinarily difficult. Too many names, facts, dates, and details have, I feel, been given; there has been some repetition; and, it may be, an excessive disregard of chronology in favor of topical arrangement. To avoid multiplying footnotes I have avoided cross-references in the text; but these are given freely in the Index, and it is hoped that this and the Table of Contents will be useful and used.

As to quotations, it may well be that these also have been used excessively, but in most cases the points they bear on are controversial and the evidence meager; it then seems fairer, if possible, to give a writer's own words. Permission to quote at length was generously granted me by the authors and publishers listed in the Bibliographical Note; the editors of the *Times* and *Contemporary Review* should be added to the list. I am also heavily indebted to Professor Eric A. Walker of Cape Town, from whose *Historical Atlas of South Africa* (Oxford University Press) my frontispiece was drawn.

Nearer home I have heavier obligations. The book is published by and at the charge of the Bureau of International Research of Harvard University and Radcliffe College. It was written during a year's respite from teaching likewise financed by them. To the Bureau, then, my best thanks are due; and especially to Professors W. Y. Elliott, Sidney B. Fay, and G. G. Wilson of the Committee, and to Professor Wilson's secretary, Miss Haley. Help was received also from Professors W. C. Abbott, W. L. Langer, and C. K. Webster; though none of those mentioned, nor the Bureau, is in any way responsible for my errors of commission or omission.

A special debt is owing, however, to Professor Fay, who bore patiently with the work throughout. Many major and minor errors were corrected by him; many helpful suggestions made. The work developed, I may add, out of my Doctor's

Thesis, *The Anglo-German Estrangement, 1894-1896*, written under Professor Langer. From him I have learned much as, I hope, this book testifies. For quiet encouragement and constructive criticism through five years when both were badly needed I owe him infinitely more. The same, needless to say, applies to my wife, who read proof tirelessly, slaved at the Index, and bore the burden and heat of many days.

Through Professor Abbott, finally, I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. John Hays Hammond at Gloucester, Mass., and the privilege of helping with the preparation of his Memoirs. He told me more of the inner history of the Johannesburg conspiracy at first hand than could be squeezed belatedly into the footnotes added to my chapter on the Jameson Raid. An intimate friend of Cecil Rhodes, Mr. Hammond remains—an ardent and persuasive admirer. As such, he will dissent strongly from much that I have written. But, with due respect to Mr. Hammond's judgment, I suspect that he saw only the best side of Cecil Rhodes. And, while not ignoring Rhodes's good qualities and great achievements, I yet remain critical both of his major premises and of his political methods.

In this, and in other matters, I have not hesitated to reveal my own opinions. This involves disagreement with other writers—disagreement perhaps too pointedly expressed. But I have not sought to give offence in any quarter; and I hope I have not. I have tried to deal impartially with a still inherently controversial subject; and to state as cogently as possible what I sincerely believe to be true.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I—INTRODUCTORY

	PAGE
CONFEDERATION, ANNEXATION, RETROCESSION, 1874-1881 . . .	1
(1) The separation of South Africa	1
(2) Lord Carnarvon and Confederation; the annexation of the Transvaal	11
(3) Sir Bartle Frere, and the Zulu War	19
(4) Majuba, and the retrocession of the Transvaal . . .	25

CHAPTER II

THE PRETORIA AND LONDON CONVENTIONS, AND THE WARREN EXPEDITION, 1881-1885	36
(1) The Pretoria Convention and its making	36
(2) Bechuanaland and the Boers	43
(3) The Rev. John Mackenzie and the natives	47
(4) The Cape, the British government, and Bechuanaland .	51
(5) The London Convention and the Suzerainty question .	58
(6) Mackenzie and Rhodes in Bechuanaland	62
(7) The Warren expedition, its causes and results . . .	66

CHAPTER III

THE ANGLO-GERMAN COLONIAL CRISIS OF 1884-1885: ANGRA PEQUENA AND ST. LUCIA BAY	75
(1) Prince Bismarck and German colonial policy	75
(2) The Angra Pequena Problem; Lüderitz, the Cape Ministers, and the Colonial Office	81
(3) The Intervention of Count Herbert Bismarck	95
(4) Heligoland and the despatch of May 5	102
(5) Zululand and St. Lucia Bay	107

CHAPTER IV

SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICS AND THE APPRENTICESHIP OF CECIL RHODES, 1885-1889	114
(1) Cecil Rhodes, his policy and ideals	114
(2) Hofmeyer and the Africander Bond	121
(3) Railway politics of South Africa, 1885-1889	126
(4) The Moffat treaty and the Rudd Concession	134
(5) The British government and Matabeleland	142
(6) The granting of the South African Charter	150

CHAPTER V

	PAGE
RHODES IN POWER—THE CAPE PREMIERSHIP, AND THE CON- QUEST OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA, 1890-1896 . . .	159
(1) Rhodes, Hofmeyer and the Bond	159
(2) The Swazieland question and the Adendorff trek . . .	167
(3) Mashonaland and the Pioneers	178
(4) The Victoria incident and the Matabele War . . .	187
(5) The native question and the Rebellion of 1896 . . .	197

CHAPTER VI

THE ROUNDING-OUT OF RHODESIA, 1881-1891	203
(1) Nyasaland, the north-east, and the Ultimatum to Portugal	203
(2) Manicaland and the "arrest" of d'Andrada	220
(3) Gungunhana and Gazaland	229
(4) The "forcing" of the Pungwé	234

CHAPTER VII

ENGLAND AND GERMANY, 1885-1892; AND THE HELIGOLAND TREATY	243
(1) The significance of the Heligoland treaty	243
(2) Zanzibar and East Africa, 1885-1890	249
(3) The Anglo-German rapprochement	256
(4) Uganda and Heligoland—the Cape-to-Cairo route . .	264
(5) The Anglo-German entente	269
(6) Italy and the Mediterranean	275

CHAPTER VIII

BRITISH IMPERIALISM AND THE JAMESON RAID	285
(1) A geographical accident and its effects	285
(2) The Rand and the Uitlanders	290
(3) The Commando crisis and the Loch plan	300
(4) Jameson, Rhodes, and the Uitlander conspiracy . . .	305
(5) The "flag-question"	310
(6) The Colonial Office and the "jumping-off ground" . .	318
(7) The Raid, and the question of Chamberlain's complicity	328

CHAPTER IX

THE ANGLO-GERMAN ESTRANGEMENT AND THE KRUGER TELEGRAM	342
(1) The Delagoa Bay railway, and German "penetration" .	342
(2) German "intrigues" and the <i>status quo</i>	347
(3) The Cowes interview of August, 1895, and its effects .	355

CONTENTS

xv

	PAGE
(4) Germany and the Jameson Raid	361
(5) The Kruger Telegram, January 3, 1896	368
(6) The effects of the Telegram	371

CHAPTER X

THE DIPLOMACY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR, 1896-1899	379
(1) The Suzerainty and the Franchise—the Invitation to London	379
(2) The crisis of 1897, and Milner's Commissionership	386
(3) Foreign complications—Harcourt's views	396
(4) The "Great Deal," and the "helot" despatch	405
(5) The Bloemfontein Conference and the "temporary tangent"	411
(6) The Franchise negotiations and the Transvaal ultimatum	415
CONCLUSION	422
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE	427
INDEX	431

MAPS

Central and Southern Africa to Illustrate European Expansion South of the Congo, 1866-1914	<i>Frontispiece</i>
South Africa to 1899, Indicating Boundaries	117
East Africa, 1885-1894	245
South Africa, Strategic Frontiers, 1879-1899	319

CHAPTER I—INTRODUCTORY

CONFEDERATION, ANNEXATION, RETROCESSION, 1874—1881

[(1) The separation of South Africa. (2) Lord Carnarvon and Confederation—the Annexation of the Transvaal. (3) Sir Bartle Frere, and the Zulu War. (4) The Boer War, Majuba, and the retrocession of the Transvaal.]

THE policy of Confederation was pressed upon South Africa at the beginning and towards the end of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, with excellent intentions but disastrous results. In 1877, in order to promote it, Lord Carnarvon annexed the Transvaal. In 1879 his headstrong lieutenant, Sir Bartle Frere, sent out to carry Confederation, embarked without authority upon the Zulu War. Censured for this by the Beaconsfield cabinet, from which Carnarvon had resigned during the Near Eastern crisis, Frere failed to carry Confederation. He was recalled in 1880 by the Gladstone government; which retroceded the Transvaal belatedly after an unsuccessful war in 1881. In 1895 Cecil Rhodes, like Lord Carnarvon, wished to force the Transvaal into a South African federation. Rhodes subsidised a revolution in Johannesburg for the purpose. But the Raid of his headstrong lieutenant, Dr. Jameson, ruined the revolution. It also paved the way for the second Boer War of 1899-1902. Had Carnarvon's and Rhodes's policy succeeded, neither war would have occurred; the problems discussed in this book, and other South African problems, would not then have arisen. *Dis aliter visum*. Confederation was not a new policy when Carnarvon took it up in 1874, and attempted the right thing in the wrong way. It was, in fact, rejected by him in 1859. In short, it played so large a part in South African history before its final adoption in 1910, that it seems worth while to trace it back to its beginnings.

Until 1836 there was but one civilized government in Africa south of the Vaal river. This was Portuguese till the middle of the seventeenth century. It then became Dutch. From 1806 onwards the Cape Colony was British. It was granted representative government in 1853, and responsible government in 1872, when it had a white population of some 235,000, three-fifths Dutch, with some admixture of French Huguenot blood. Meanwhile the Great Trek of 1836-1846 had brought about a major cleavage.

The causes of this movement go back to 1815 and even earlier, when the despotic and monopolist policy of the Dutch East India Company caused minor emigration movements away from its jurisdiction. It is easy to overstress British oppression as the sole reason for the dispersion of the Boers, which was, in fact, a long-continued movement due largely to a temperamental preference for an isolated pastoral life—a movement comparable in some ways to the westward movement in the United States:

The gipsy life in their covered wagons, says a recent writer,¹ appealed to them (the Boers) and they always hoped that the next day's horizon would discover for them a Promised Land flowing with milk and honey, a Utopia where sparkling rivers ran and game abounded, where there were vast valleys of fertile soil, and rolling plains with fattening grass, and where the climate was always afternoon. Bad government or good government—it made no matter. When the trek-lust seized them, the idea of industrious farming through the long years in a settled community appalled them; and they cracked their long whips and set their oxen dragging their tented wagons across the veld, seeking the adventurous road that led to the wonder life of the wilds and, perhaps, to easy fortune.

In 1815 there occurred the famous "rebellion" of Slachters Nek.² Five Boers were condemned for treason by Dutch judges after a rising caused by the punishment of a Dutch

¹ Julian Beckford, *Khama, King of the Bamangwato*, London, 1932, p. 81. See also Hon. H. Cloete, *The History of the Great Boer Trek*, London, 1899; and of Eric A. Walker, *The Frontier Tradition in South Africa*, Oxford, 1930.

² See H. C. V. Liebrandt, *The Rebellion of 1815*. Cape Town, 1903.

farmer named Bezuidenhout for ill-treating a Hottentot. The five were hanged together from one beam, which fell down; and the Governor refused to reprieve them. In 1896 the beam was brought to Pretoria; and there were threats of using it a third time for hanging the leaders of the Johannesburg revolution. Part of the Boer resentment was due to the sentimental views of what Carlyle called the nigger question, current in England in the early years of the nineteenth century. These were encouraged by such propagandists as the Rev. John Philip, superintendent from 1820 to 1845 of the London Missionary Society. In the Manifesto of the Emigrant Farmers,^{*} published at Graham's Town in 1837, there were bitter and not unjustified complaints of the odium cast on the Boers by "interested and dishonest persons, under the cloak of religion, whose testimony is believed in England to the exclusion of all evidence in our favor." Such testimony was, in fact, the only thing which kept the Mother country interested in South Africa. Of all the colonies it was the least popular, owing to its remoteness, its poverty, and its complicated native wars which made Imperial garrisons necessary and deferred the granting of self-government. In defiance of the prevalent "ripe-fruit" theory the Cape Colony refused to ripen; and the only pleasure to be gotten from it was vicarious humanitarian effort on behalf of the down-trodden black brethren.

The *voortrekkers*, as the Boer migrants were called, had more serious grievances than religious prejudice. In 1820, under the Governorship of Lord Charles Somerset, some four thousand British emigrants were sent out to relieve unemployment. They soon formed an English colony in the eastern section of the Cape, centering at Graham's Town and Port Elizabeth. Five years later English replaced Dutch as the official language. In 1828 it was made obligatory in the law-courts, where equal rights were granted the free blacks, and for petitions. The Dutch system of local self-government was abolished; and paid magistrates replaced the *landroosts*. In

^{*} The Manifesto of the Emigrant Farmers is given in G. W. Eybers, *Select Constitutional Documents illustrating South African History, 1795-1911*. London, 1918.

the nominated Representative Council of 1835, neither Dutch nor English farmers could make their voices prevail against those of the merchants, lawyers, and officials. In brief, the theory that England had learned wisdom in colonial policy from the American Revolution was disproved in South Africa. Meanwhile, in 1834, slavery had been abolished. It is said that 98 per cent of the *voortrekkers* came from districts containing only 16 per cent of the emancipated slaves. But if the *voortrekkers* suffered less than others from the inadequacy of the compensation which was made payable in London, abolition was a distinct cause of offense. The remoter districts were those most exposed to native attack, and to the depredations of vagrant freedmen. The trekkers' Manifesto deprecated slavery, and promised to uphold "the just principles of liberty." But the Boers were determined also to uphold such regulations as might suppress crime and "preserve proper relations between master and servant," and to defend their persons and effects against every enemy that might be found in the wild and dangerous country to which they were going. In practice they seem to have fought with barbarous cruelty against their savage foes; ' but in that they were not unique, unfortunately, in place, race, or generation.

From the first British officialdom looked askance upon the *voortrekkers* as potential rebels, who would aggravate the already complicated native problem. Hence the Boers' "full assurance that the English Government has nothing more to require of us, and will allow us to govern ourselves without interference in future" was disappointed. They were still regarded as British subjects; and jurisdiction was asserted by the Cape Punishment Act of 1836. In the previous year the petition for annexation of a group of English settlers around Durban had been rejected. But in 1843 the policy, long continued, of heading the Boers off from the coast, was begun by making Natal a British colony. Some thousands of British came there to replace the Dutch, most of whom withdrew,

* See J. A. Agar-Hamilton, *The Native Policy of the Voortrekkers*. Cape Town, 1928.

leaving the whites vastly outnumbered. For that reason largely, responsible government was not granted to Natal for another fifty years.

Some further illustrations of this zig-zag policy of the Colonial Office must be given. Due ultimately to the conflict between the Manchester School and Exeter Hall, it gave the unfortunate impression of capricious hostility towards the Boers. In 1843, the policy began of forestalling them by means of treaty-states. Treaties were then made with the Basuto chief, Mosesh, and the Griqua, Adam Kok; the same dubious procedure was followed in the annexation of the diamond fields (Griqualand West) in 1871. In 1847 Kaffraria, annexed in part by Durban (Governor 1834-38) and retroceded by Glenelg, was made a crown colony. Sir Harry Smith then carried British dominion to the Orange River Sovereignty, Andries Pretorius and his followers withdrawing after a slight skirmish at Boomplatz, August, 1848. But Earl Grey considered such territorial acquisitions useless and pernicious. The retention of the Sovereignty was submitted to the Privy Council. It was reluctantly acquiesced in, in 1850. The following year, during a Kaffir war, the third Earl Grey declared for evacuation. The first step was taken with the Sand River Convention of January 16, 1852, whereby the British Government promised self-government "without any interference" to the emigrant farmers beyond the Vaal, and disclaimed "all alliances whatsoever with whomsoever of the colored races" there. This marks, perhaps, the culmination of the policy of renunciation. There is, we are told, strong reason to conjecture that the abandonment of the Orange River Sovereignty, against the wishes of its inhabitants, would not have secured the sanction of Parliament. But the Letters Patent annexing it had never been promulgated;⁵ and independence was granted by the Bloemfontein Convention of February, 1854. The decision, made under Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Newcastle, was not opposed in England. There was but one

⁵ C. W. de Kiewiet, *British Colonial Policy and the South African Republics, 1848-1872*. London, 1928, p. 71.