

ENGLAND
AND
SOUTH AFRICA



EDWARD J. GIBBS, M.A.

SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
LONDON

ENGLAND
AND
SOUTH AFRICA

ENGLAND
AND
SOUTH AFRICA

BY

EDW. J. GIBBS, M.A.

LONDON
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
AND NEW YORK: 15 EAST 16th STREET
1889

All rights reserved

DEDICATED

BY PERMISSION
TO

ALEX. JAS. MACDONALD, ESQ.

LONDON: *August* 16, 1889.

DEAR MR. MACDONALD,

I have to thank you for your permission to dedicate this book to you. Your knowledge of South Africa, and your long residence in and travels through the Cape Colony and Natal, have enabled you to provide me with many hints and criticisms. I do not pretend to have written from materials collected by my own travel and observation. All that I have attempted is to give a general history of the main features of our policy and conduct, especially since the abolition of slavery and the 'trekking' of the Boers. But I believe that this résumé will be found useful. Events pass so rapidly that even those of ten years ago are forgotten by the ordinary reader, or only recollected in a hazy sort of way. For this reason, and because of the importance of the subject, you thought that a new compendium, which should take a general review, would be desirable. There can be no doubt but that the general interest in South Africa is due to the gold discoveries, as was the case in Australia and California. But I do not regard the gold-mining industry as the greatest or the most useful.

I remain, dear Mr. Macdonald,

Yours faithfully,

EDWARD J. GIBBS.

ALEX. JAS. MACDONALD, ESQ.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. SOUTH AFRICA	1
II. THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE	12
III. THE TRANSVAAL	24
IV. NATAL	47
V. THE NATIVE STATES	55
VI. ZULULAND AND BECHUANA	63
VII. MADAGASCAR	77
VIII. ZANZIBAR	84
IX. THE LAKE DISTRICT	94
X. THE LATEST NEWS	106
CONCLUSION	129
APPENDICES	133

parcere subjectis et debellare superbos. Our mission, under the guidance of the parochial economists called Ministers for the Colonies, has been to submit meekly to defeat, to throw all responsibility on the colonists themselves, to refuse protectorates, and abandon conquests. It was not the British Government that conquered India, or annexed the vast territories in the North-West of America. And in the same way it will appear that our treatment of the Cape Colony and South Africa has been so mean, so niggardly, and so unwise as to have created a strong party which seems to be watching for some more congenial alliance. In a hundred years Gaul was conquered by the Romans, and completely Latinised. In a hundred years at the Cape we have not advanced one step beyond two opposing languages, nationalities and policies. What is worse, many of our own people openly side with the Dutch, and pursue an anti-English policy. The Cape Government of to-day is dominated by the Boer faction. But though we rule almost in spite of ourselves, though we carry the principle of *laissez faire* to the most absurd extremes, though our connection with the colonies is personal and commercial rather than national, yet perhaps even a British Government may recognise the fact of pecuniary loss as well as the loss of power and influence. In the following pages I have described too briefly and with too little indignation the surrender made to the Boers of the Transvaal. But I have not shown sufficiently the baneful effects of this cowardly policy. In 1881, after the battle of Majuba Hill, Mr. Gladstone shielded his surrender under the plea of an aversion to blood-shed. It is more probable that his chief thought was for his budget, and his fixed resolve to sacrifice any part of the Empire rather than ask money for its defence. In 1884 there was even less excuse, and the treaty with the rebel Boers appears to have been merely the result of a wish to get rid of as much of our Colonial Empire as could possibly be alienated at once. Even Lord Derby, who was by no means a successful Minister for the Colonies, declared

When we interfered for their help, they were not only utterly bankrupt, but they were defeated beyond hope of recovery by the Basutos. We restored to them security, we brought in riches, we built their towns, we paid enormous prices for their land, we developed mines which, in their hands, might have remained untouched for centuries. In July 1886, the town Johannesburg did not exist; its public office was a small canvas tent, and its officials three government servants. In 1887, the Transvaal Government received from the local revenue alone 131,969*l.*, as the income from the digging community round the town. In December 1886, the customs dues at Johannesburg were 265*l.* In November 1887, they were 8,752*l.* They are immensely larger now. And although the attention of the British public is just now concentrated on the Witwatersrand, there is every reason to believe that the De Kaap district will also improve. Mr. Charles Cowen, in a short pamphlet, published at Johannesburg, says: ‘The circumstances which have depressed Barberton—
‘and in using that name we indicate the industrial area of which
‘Barberton may be considered the centre—we need not consider,
‘for they arose less from any want of intrinsic worth in the mines
‘than from events which were made to operate against their
‘success for the time being.’

But I have intended that this book should refer less to financial prospects than to political considerations. It will, I think, be clear that the surrender of the Transvaal was a blunder of the worst kind, but for us the question is: ‘How can that blunder be repaired?’

It is tolerably clear that, at the end of 1883, the Transvaal Government had arrived at the conclusion that Mr. Gladstone would complete his work by a grant of absolute independence. It was then proposed to place the country under a German or Dutch protectorate, to unite with the Dutch party in the Cape, to obtain possession of Bechuanaland and all the territory from Namaqualand on the West to Natal, and practically to drive the

PREFACE

IN the following pages I have endeavoured to give an impartial account of the progress of Great Britain in South Africa. Unhappily it is impossible to be impartial without being severe. Men of English descent have indeed raised the Cape Colony and Natal from very small beginnings to prosperity and yearly increasing success. This has been done in the face of many and severe trials. On the one hand, we had to contend with the Boers, a population of European origin and language, who were then many times more numerous than our own colonists, sullen in temper, sore with defeat, and above all fanatically attached to the heaven-appointed institution of slavery. On the other hand was a vast native population, for the most part brave, vigorous and determined, eager to preserve their lands from spoliation and themselves from enforced labour, but withal treacherous and bloodthirsty. It speaks well for the vigour of the English race that we should, so far, not only have held our own but have advanced with rapid strides in material and moral prosperity. But the praise that is due to the British settler must be withheld from the British Government. We boast of our Colonial Empire. It is the out-come and the growth of individual effort and private association. For many years the British Government seems to have been doing all it could to hamper, to harass, and to alienate our colonies, and to have used one stereotyped reply to all complaints: 'You may go whenever you please.' The Romans of old boasted that it was their mission

that he had been compelled to concede to the Transvaal deputies much more than he approved of. Who compelled him? He was master of the Colonial Office, but he was not the autocrat of Great Britain. It can only have been Mr. Gladstone's wishes and resolves that coerced Lord Derby into the second, the absolutely needless, the absolutely purposeless, surrender of 1884. But perhaps I should scarcely say purposeless, for very probably there was a distinct purpose to get rid of the Transvaal altogether.

And what is it that we have endeavoured to throw away? Probably the richest tract of land in the whole world. The British public, including the residents in Cape Colony and Natal, as well as the shareholders in London, have invested about twenty millions in the Transvaal, and the present market value of the gold shares is perhaps more nearly forty millions. The population is now, as always, divided into European and native. Ten years ago there were four Europeans of Dutch origin for one of English. Now there are more than three English for two Boers. Yet the English have no votes, no control over the finances, no share in the rapidly growing surplus of revenue. As the law stands at present all residents for more than five years have a right to vote, and if that law remains we shall as certainly see an English party in the Transvaal as we now see a Dutch party in the Cape. But the President suggests that a residence of fifteen years shall be necessary, and so hopes to secure his power for an indefinite term. In the Cape we give the disloyal Boers the same rights of voting as we give to men of British race. In the Transvaal we allow the rebel Boers to make laws for Englishmen who are the most numerous of the European residents, the owners of three-fourths of the property, the builders of the chief towns, the bankers and merchants, the capitalists who are willing to build railways and develop the resources of the country. And what do the Boers owe to us? Everything; their very existence, and all their prosperity.

British out of South Africa. Indeed, this was an open and frequent boast of the malcontents. But the deputation sent to Europe to secure these results was not entirely successful. The wealth of the Transvaal had become apparent. Mr. Gladstone was willing to grant a great measure of 'home rule' but not to withdraw altogether. Prince Bismarck was not inclined to embroil himself with England, and the United States and Holland, to which States, as well as to Russia, the Transvaal delegates were accredited, would have none of their schemes. Much as we surrendered it was less than had been expected.

The pressing question now is the return of the Transvaal and of the Orange Free State to the condition of British provinces, and the further development of South Africa by railways and settlements. The German schemes of rivalry are probably less cherished than they were. Prince Bismarck has discovered that his consuls and representatives abroad have behaved with great indiscretion. An attempt on Damaraland was brought to signal grief by the determined preference of the chief for the protection of England rather than of Germany. It needs now only a firm and determined policy on our side to secure the predominance in South Africa. May we hope that at length such a policy will be adopted? The first step is to insist that British inhabitants of the Transvaal shall have equal rights of voting and representation with the Boers. The next is to insist upon such concessions as will bring railways direct from Cape Town and Natal to Pretoria and Barberton. The third is to inaugurate a more vigorous and continuous policy in the countries not yet settled completely, in Swazieland, Bechuanaland, Damaraland. There is work enough here for Lord Knutsford, work of which the reward is likely to be greater than we have yet reaped from any of our colonies. With a settled government, all these countries would afford splendid fields for emigration, and seems probable that nearly all are as rich in minerals as they fertile for agriculture.

Errata

Page 21, line 29, *for* Charles *read* George.
" 48, " 29, " of " through.
" 58, " 27, " Bishoff " Boshof.
" 60, " 8, " Twine " Irvine.
" 62, " 3, " Thuron " Theron.
" 88, " 34, " Pasha " Khedive.