

**THE TRANSVAAL AND
BECHUANALAND;
PP. 3-77**

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G. B. CLARK

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SECOND EDITION.

THE TRANSVAAL
AND
BECHUANALAND.

BY

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PREFACE.

SINCE the first edition was printed, the question has again been discussed in the House of Commons, when the Government proposed an amendment to the effect that compensation, in money or land, in British territory should be offered to Mankoroane and Montsioa.

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If we grant the petition of the Chiefs, and allow the Transvaal Government to restore order in the disturbed districts, the course proposed by Mr. Gladstone would be quite unnecessary, as sufficient land would be beaoned off and reserved for the Chiefs and their followers as native locations. Sir William Owen Lanyon, when predicting this anarchy, pointed out that there was land in abundance for a fair population of whites without disturbing the natives. If the jurisdiction of the Transvaal Government were again extended over the district, they would guarantee the Chiefs the possession of their lands, and prevent any more of these intertribal wars. All we require to do to settle the disturbances and restore peace and tranquillity in the district, is to carry out the advice of Sir William Owen Lanyon, Sir Theophilus Shepstone, and Sir Charles Warren. These three gentlemen were all personally acquainted with the Chiefs and the territory, and they have all declared that it is necessary to place the territory under the rule of a civilised government. Unfor-

Unfortunately Sir Michael Hicks Beach refused permission to take over the district when both the native chiefs and the Griqualand Government were desirous of doing so. Now, since Griqualand has been annexed to the Cape, and the Cape Government refuses to have anything to do with the territory, our wisest course would be to modify the first Article of the Pretoria Convention, and restore the old boundary of the Transvaal, by this means the policy proposed by the three gentlemen best acquainted with the facts of the case can be carried out, and the territory and the tribes be again brought under the control of a civilized state. Unfortunately in 1881 we took the advice of a Commission, the members of which knew nothing about either the district or its inhabitants. Now that the anarchy has occurred, which our Colonial Governors had previously predicted, the question for Lord Derby and the Government to settle is whether they intend to maintain the anarchy, or allow the Transvaal Government to interfere and establish peace and order. In the Appendix will be found the Sand River Convention, the Pretoria Convention, and the resolution of the Volksraad provisionally ratifying the Pretoria Convention.

FENWICK, WEST DULWICH, S.E.

May 31st, 1883.

THE TRANSVAAL AND BECHUANALAND.

THE anarchy at present existing in that part of the cismolopo territory of South Africa, now called Bechuanaland, and the warm and rather irritating tone of some of the despatches that have lately passed between the Colonial Office or its officials and the Government of the South African Republic, regarding the causes that have brought about the anarchy and its proper treatment, deserve more attention than they are receiving; as upon the wise and equitable settlement of the present difficulties, and the fixing of the policy to be pursued should conditions of a similar character again ensue, the friendly relations between the English and Dutch populations, and the peace and prosperity of the states and colonies of South Africa, will to a large extent depend.

The present condition of the territory has been brought about by an inter-tribal war, between Korannas, Batlapins, and Baralongs; and the war has been caused by the attempts of the different chiefs to attain the paramount chieftainship of the tribes, and the intrigues of white speculators and adventurers.

The Government is urged to interfere to practically annex the territory by a curious combination of Evangelicals and jingoes, and the old policy of slandering and misrepresenting the Transvaal Go-

vernment is being again pursued. If we interfere it means another South African war, and it also means the adoption of a policy that will probably result in a war between the English and Dutch populations, or rather between the Afrianders of all nationalities and the supporters of the too often meddling and muddling policy that has so long dominated the Colonial Office in regard to South African affairs. I need not point out that such a war will be more costly in blood and treasure than any we have already waged in that country, and that a terrible responsibility rests on those who may, from either disinterested or party motives, tend to bring about such a calamity.

Mr. Gorst has asked the House of Commons to censure the Transvaal Government for causing the present state of the territory; this motion has been discussed at two sittings, and a more than usual ignorance of the facts of the case has been exhibited by most of the speakers, there were exceptions, notably Mr. John Morley on the first occasion and Mr. Gladstone on the last.

In defence of the Transvaal Government from the attacks of Mr. Forster and those who are at present abusing it, I will now attempt to show, principally from our own official documents, that the present condition of Bechuanaland is the inevitable result of the unwise policy deliberately adopted by the Royal Commission; that the Boer leaders warned the Commissioners that the policy they proposed to adopt would not settle matters, but rather intensify the anarchy that then existed; that the Boer leaders

were not alone in giving this warning. The Governor of the Transvaal and the Governor of Griqualand, and those of our own officials who were best acquainted with the facts, had previously warned us, and facts had demonstrated the impolicy and injustice of the system then deliberately re-adopted, notwithstanding the protests of both Boers and natives. Hence we are blaming the victims for the result of our own folly.

The Transvaal Government have always claimed this so-called Bechuanaland as a part of their state, and their subjects have always resided in it. When they went there, more than half a century ago, they found the place almost entirely depopulated. It had been overrun by Moselikatsie, the great Matabele or Zulu chief, and its native inhabitants driven away. Moselikatsie also attacked the emigrant farmers, but they ultimately conquered him and drove him out of the country. In 1871, in direct contravention of the Sand River Convention, made in 1852 with the Transvaal Republic, and the Bloemfontein Convention, made in 1854 with the Orange Free State, we appropriated the Diamond Fields, and made Bechuanaland a field for the rivalry of the Dutch and English officials and adventurers of South Africa. Well did Mr. Froude characterise it as "perhaps the most discreditable incident in British colonial history." We have dearly paid for our selfish and discreditable course of conduct. It has brought about most of our South African troubles, and the many wars which have cost us and the Cape Colony so much, and been so barren of any useful results.