

## **THE NEW BOER WAR**

*By the same Author*

**CALIBAN IN AFRICA**

# THE NEW BOER WAR

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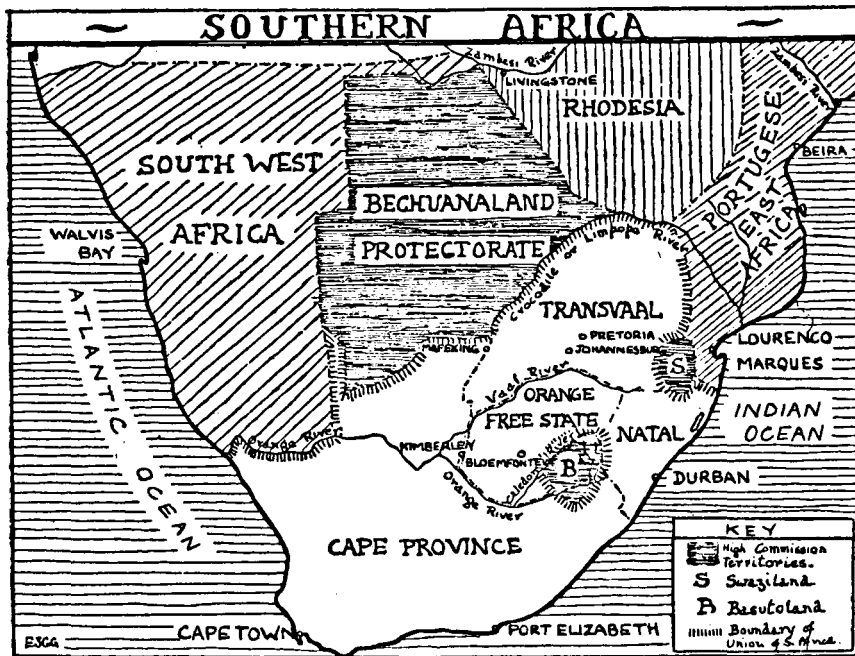
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## PREFACE

WHENEVER the wretched condition of vassalage to which White South Africa has reduced the native people of the South African Union is described to English audiences, the usual reply is, Yes, it is all very dreadful; but what can *we* do about it? This book is primarily a rejoinder to that question, and an attempt to show that the *non possumus* attitude is, within the strictest limits of constitutional propriety, unjustified.

As to the title, it is perhaps desirable to explain that the term "Boer," which strictly means "farmer" and no more, is not used with any special connotation of race; nor is the term "Afrikaner" so used in the text. The enemy of British native policy in Africa, as I emphasise in many places, is not merely the Dutch-speaking South African, but the Dutch-speaking South African reinforced by the bulk of the European settler class, of whatever race, throughout British Africa. The "war" of which I speak is thus in no sense a racial one. Indeed, many men of British stock are among the most determined votaries of the spirit I have called Afrikanerism. Nevertheless, as it is a matter of historical fact that the South



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African Dutch, by reason of their solidarity as a group and the inflexibility of their prejudices in native affairs, have succeeded in setting the standard of thought and feeling now generally accepted wherever European settlement exists, the title seems to me to have its suitability.

Doubtless Afrikanerism does not arise from any special endowment of original sin conferred upon the Boers; with the possible exception of New Zealand, something very like it has cropped up wherever Europeans have been brought into close economic and social contact with people of different colour and less complicated material civilisation, e.g. in the Southern States of America, and possibly, as has been suggested by one critic, in Spain after the fall of Granada and before the expulsion of the Moors. I have even been told that Afrikanerism would be just as rank a growth in South Africa as it is to-day, if the white population were purely British. The hypothesis is perfectly plausible. But we are dealing with facts, not guesses. And, chronologically speaking, it is the case that Afrikanerism first manifested itself in the South African Dutch. Later European immigrants to the sub-continent have on the whole absorbed its spirit. Whether they would have evolved it themselves if it had not been there to absorb I cannot think it very fruitful to speculate. On the other hand, it is certain that General Hertzog, his colleagues, and the body of opinion they represent

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are, as it were, the peculiarly sacred geese who, by their cackling, hope to save the capitol of Afrikanerism from negrophilist attack. For their attitude, however, they draw support from every party and every (European) race in the King's African dominions—not least from the British settler.

The central theme of the book is, in a word, that the present exuberant aggressiveness of Afrikanerism is due partly to Britain's neglect of her special responsibilities and opportunities in Southern Africa, and that Britain's native policy has little prospect of success in any part of the continent closely affected by white settlement, unless it is championed with something of the warmth, the heart, and the conviction which the champions of Afrikanerism display. The Afrikaner may have the worse position, but, unfortunately for British policy, he mans it with better soldiers.

In dealing with the High Commission I have felt it preferable to describe the situation in each territory separately. The method has its drawbacks, and in particular it makes some measure of repetition inevitable. But on the whole it seems less clumsy, and I hope its results are more readable, than an attempt to group the facts of all three territories together under generic headings. I should add that the account here given owes much to many invaluable discussions with Miss Margaret Hodgson, of the Witwatersrand Uni-

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versity, and Mr. W. G. Ballinger, with both of whom I toured the territories.

Acknowledgments are due to the *Johannesburg Star*, for the section on the High Commission closely follows some articles which I wrote for that paper during the last year.

The sketch-maps have been prepared by my friend Mr. Eric Gibb, for whose patient co-operation I tender grateful thanks.

L. B.