

In January, 1905, as he writes on the 10th of that month to Sam, Jameson is deep in the 'hard, dreary work of preparing Bills, etc., for next Session, and keeping the family party together' with fair hopes of 'getting through all right.' Then, with Mr. Jagger, he is attending a Railway Conference at Johannesburg, an interim report of which, published on February 9, discloses that what is being debated is no less than the question of the division of traffic as between the Cape, the Natal ports, and Delagoa Bay. Dr. Jameson has procured a certain scheme of reduction in the railway rates from the Colonial ports which, or so the Conference hoped, might transfer a fair share of the trade to the Colony. But the scheme must be ratified by the States concerned before it comes into operation, and the Conference points the way to Federation by resolving that the only true remedy is to bring all the railways under a common management.

It was a triumph for Jameson's diplomacy, yet it was to be frustrated by the conflicts and jealousies of his party. Early in the Session of 1905, which opened on March 10, we see developing the rift between the Prime Minister and his followers of the towns. Cattle are increasing, but the farmers complain that owing to the importation of meat under a well-organised trust, they cannot find a market for their stock. Townsmen retort with complaints of the dearness of provisions. Inside the party there is a hot meeting of caucus on the question of the re-imposition of the meat duties. 'Having,' Jameson writes to Sam on March 27, 'a rather hard time, but in good health. Tried party at their highest yesterday on meat duties; but with threat of another government came out top and got them in line. It

was a lesson that the old Sprigg methods have gone, and having won, hope we shall swim along all right.' The result of this internal dispute was in fact a compromise. The Prime Minister promised 'moderate protection' when there was stock enough in the country, and in the meantime an inquiry as to whether there were enough cattle to feed the population, and immediate steps against the meat trust. On this basis in the debate of the following day the Government presented a united front to the Opposition.

So the Session proceeded tranquilly enough until May 8, when Merriman challenged the financial policy of the Government, and the Prime Minister, making it a vote of confidence, carried the day. 'Just a line,' Jameson writes to Sam on May 17, 'to say that we are getting on all right. Merriman made an ass of himself, and let me claim a vote on non-confidence, which results in keeping our full majority, eight—Fuller and Lea being away ill and not paired. That has given us a good strengthening lift, and I think, with incidental worries on education, diamonds, and railways we have got over all our fences. . . .'

Here the Prime Minister's optimism a little deceived him, for the railway fence was to give him a nasty fall. We have seen how Jameson had secured a readjustment of the rates in favour of his Colonial ports, which, however, modified an unfair disadvantage of Port Elizabeth as against East London, and East London feared that Port Elizabeth's gain might be her loss. Such was the ignominious cause of the first split in the Progressive party. On May 23 the member for King William's Town, a town attached to the East London interest, opposed the railway

settlement. The Prime Minister argued with wonderful skill and 'a complete mastery of the subject, which won the admiration of the House,' for a broad view. He had obtained for his Colony, he pointed out, a 33½ per cent. reduction on the preference to Delagoa Bay, which promised what they all desired, a fair division of the traffic on the basis of one third to Delagoa Bay, one third to Natal, and one third to the Cape. Let them then take a patriotic and not a parochial view of this question, and consider the good of the whole Colony.

He argued to deaf ears. The Opposition sedulously inflamed the jealousy of the ports. Merriman suggested that the agreement was made in the interest of Port Elizabeth. Sauer, more astute, did not take sides, but moved that consideration of the Conference proposals be postponed. East London and the Border members attached to her fortunes fell into the trap, and the Government was defeated by fourteen votes.

It was not only a heavy blow to Jameson, but it showed the fundamental weakness of the British party in the Colony and the conflict of interests which worked against the unity of sentiment. On July 1, Dr. Smartt tried to reconcile East London, but was howled down. The Session had ended in a defeat which foreshadowed the end of Jameson's administration.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### A DIGRESSION INTO BIG AFFAIRS

'And, with wise conduct, to his country show'd  
The ancient way of conquering abroad.'

WALLER.

WE must now turn for a little from these gathering clouds of Cape politics to other skies. Dr. Jameson and Dr. Smartt sailed for England by the *Kildonan Castle* on March 13 to take part in the Colonial Conference of 1907. Here also Jameson was to continue the interrupted plans of his friend, who had worked for a greater federation than the South African.

At the first of these conferences, held in 1887, Lord Salisbury had set forth their object of Imperial unity. He had pointed to two ways of reaching this goal, the union for defence and the union for trade, the *Kriegsverein* and the *Zollverein* of German Imperial policy.

As for the former, it had already begun in the contributions of the Colonies to the Egyptian war; but the latter was prevented, at the very outset, as Lord Salisbury pointed out, by the Free Trade policy of England. Unfortunately, the further they went into the business of an Imperial union the plainer it became that a *Kriegsverein* was impossible without a *Zollverein*. Our old friend, Jan Hofmeyr, as one of the delegates for the Cape, brought the thing to a head by a proposal for combining the two, to establish an Imperial customs tariff on all foreign goods enter-

ing the British Empire, and use the money so raised for its defence. Now Hofmeyr was interested in this policy in a practical way. His family and his kinsmen had grown up on the old preferential system, which had established the Cape wine trade by which they lived, and they had been ruined at a single blow by the Cobden Treaty with France of 1860. But it had the much wider implication of 'doing things together,' of union for livelihood, of combining through a common interest, which we have found to be the keynote of the Rhodesian policy. We may take it, indeed, as certain, from identical passages in the speeches of the two men, that Hofmeyr had talked the matter out with his friend Rhodes before he went to London in 1887.

But that was now twenty years ago, and in that time the great project of uniting the Empire had made very little progress. In such subsidiaries as postage, cables, and naval contributions something had been done; but these did not go to the root of the matter. The more they went into it, the more the politicians of the British Empire found that a Zollverein must be the foundation of any structure of permanence, and the Colonial statesmen set to work to build their side of the bridge unsupported from the other. Rhodes made a small yet practical beginning by a provision of Imperial preference in the constitution of Rhodesia; the other Colonies, as he predicted, followed his example; but England still refused to do anything in return, and these slender and incomplete arches hung perilously between sky and sea. Joseph Chamberlain, clearly seeing the danger of disruption, tried to convert his country to her old policy, but broke his party and his health in the attempt. The Liberals, who had long languished in opposition, gained a new source

of power by the defence of Free Trade. For all those interests which lived upon narrow margins, as well as the great interest of German imports, rallied to their support and gave them their great victory of the end of 1905. The Imperial Government, therefore, were committed to that cause to which they owed their existence. In this respect of Free Trade, which governed every other question, they were in conflict with the whole of the rest of the British Empire, except India alone, which desired, but was not allowed, to be Protectionist.

There was indeed one Colonial statesman from whom the Imperial Government might, if even out of gratitude, have expected support. General Louis Botha had recently been put in power by the Liberal Administration, and the Dutch soldier-farmer was now representing the Transvaal in the Imperial Conference. But although he gave his political benefactors silence, he gave them nothing else. By instinct and interest he was as much a Protectionist as any of his Colonial colleagues, and with Dr. Jameson, his old enemy in the field, he was now upon excellent terms. In this fight for preference, which was the main business of the Conference, Jameson's true partner was Alfred Deakin, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia. They were mutually attracted, Deakin by the gallant temper and quick wit of Jameson, and Jameson by the intellectual ability and the earnestness of purpose in Deakin. The policy of all the Empire States save England alone had already been stated in the Preferential resolution of 1902. All the Dominions had, indeed, put it into practice by the grant of a preference under their customs tariffs to British manufactures. And now Mr. Deakin carried the issue two steps further by proposing not only a mutual

preference between the Dominions, but 'that the United Kingdom grant preferential treatment to the products and manufactures of the Colonies.'

Mr. Deakin's opening speech in the debate, which occupied the whole of the eighth sitting of the session, will remain a classic on this subject; but our proper business is the speech in which Jameson supported his colleague. The idea of preference, Jameson pointed out, and as we have already seen, had been initiated by Hofmeyr in 1887, and had been taken up by Rhodes, who wrote about it in 1890 to the Canadian and Australian Prime Ministers. Then, when the Chartered Company was established shortly afterwards, Mr. Rhodes 'with great difficulty' secured a clause in the Constitution limiting the Rhodesian tariff on British goods. To Lord Milner he gave the credit of carrying the policy into the South African Customs Union itself. And he went on, 'When I mention these three names in connection with Preference, I think South Africa has perhaps given what I may call a useful object lesson . . . as far as the leaders of political opinion in South Africa are concerned, it was kept outside party politics, because I do not think any one could say that Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Hofmeyr, and Lord Milner were on all-fours in domestic politics in South Africa.' Then he made the point that the Imperial Government had already accepted the principle, for the Crown Colonies of Basutoland and Bechuanaland were members of the Customs Union which had granted Preference.

Mr. Asquith, who was conducting the Free Trade case, here interrupted the speaker with a question well calculated to entrap a South African statesman:—

‘Does wool come within the subject-matter as to which you think preference ought to be given?’

But Jameson was not to be caught. ‘Wool,’ he replied, ‘is a raw material, and we do not want to put anything on it.’

What then, Mr. Asquith asked, was their produce in South Africa on which preference could be given? ‘Wine and tobacco,’ Jameson replied, and he made good his point by giving a history of the Cape wine trade. Before the Cobden Treaty with France the Cape had exported 800,000 gallons of wine in a single year to England. By that treaty the preference on Cape wines was swept away, and the South African export trade immediately disappeared. Jameson had written to the Unionist Government on the subject when he took office. ‘They gave me,’ he said, ‘the usual sympathy, but they gave me nothing else.’

‘Do you know any British Government which gives a preference to any form of alcohol?’ Mr. Asquith asked. Yes, Jameson replied, the Australian Commonwealth gave South Africa a preference. And now, he proceeded, ‘I believe the proposition before the Conference is . . . that we give, irrespective of the United Kingdom giving anything at all, a certain preference, but when the United Kingdom reciprocates, then we are all prepared to come forward and give more.’

If the preference was to continue, England must reciprocate. This was not a threat; it was a warning. He had a majority at the Cape in favour of preference, but in his Parliament there was also a minority against it unless there was reciprocity. ‘Therefore,’ he said, ‘I am justified in saying that

the whole Colony, with any reciprocity whatever from the United Kingdom, would be unanimously in favour of preference.'

Now it happened that Canada was represented by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, whom Jameson certainly did not like.<sup>1</sup> It is fair to say of the Canadian Liberal that he had put the doctrine of Imperial Preference in practice; but as he had received no return from the United Kingdom he had turned to the United States, to whom he had given an 'intermediate tariff.' Jameson sharply criticised this development. 'The point is,' he said, 'when once you begin to make commercial treaties outside there is no saying how far they go.' Here he enunciated a political truth no doubt drawn from the philosophy of Rhodes. 'When you once get commercial treaties and commercial sympathy, we generally find political sympathy follows.' And he ended with a plea for a small practical concession, a remission of one shilling of the duty on Cape tobacco.

This suggestion that preference should be given without putting on new duties met at least some of the Liberal arguments, and Mr. Asquith had to fall back on the sanctity of abstract principle. It would, he said, be a 'flagrant and undeniable departure from the very basis of our principle of Free Trade.' 'Is not that,' Jameson interjected, 'coming back rather to the fetish of Free Trade?'

It was a fetish, but it was impossible to move Mr. Asquith and his colleagues. Mr. Lloyd George alone gave the Dominions any sympathy, but he gave them no help. Dr. Jameson had another passage of arms with Mr. Winston Churchill, who declared

<sup>1</sup> In private, in his incisive way, he described that respected statesman as 'a damned, long-haired dancing master.'

that preference meant nothing if it did not mean an increase of prices.

'Oh no,' said Jameson. 'It will make a much larger volume of trade, which is often better than better prices.'

'I assert,' said Mr. Churchill, 'without reserve, that preference can only operate through the agency of price. . . .'

'If you use,' Dr. Jameson retorted, 'the words "more profit" instead of "better prices," then that will explain the thing.'

And Deakin backed up Jameson. 'Wholesale production,' he said, 'is always cheaper than retail.'

The Colonies had the best of the argument; but the Imperial Government stuck to its position. 'It means,' Mr. Asquith said, 'that we are to consider the question whether we shall treat the foreigners and the Colonies as it were differently, and that we conceive we are not able to do.' And a few days later, on May 18, Mr. Churchill boasted at Edinburgh that they had 'banged, barred, and bolted the door on Imperial Reciprocity,' and 'would not concede one inch, they would not give one farthing preference on a single peppercorn.'<sup>1</sup>

We need not detain our readers with any account of the social functions with which the Mother Country sought to atone for its neglect of these vital necessities. Sufficient to say that Jameson was made a Privy Councillor, and was given the freedoms of London and of Edinburgh, thus becoming the fourth burgess of his line in the Scottish capital.

It was, no doubt, with a pang that he bade farewell

<sup>1</sup> The Reports of the Imperial Conference as published by the Imperial Government give all these speeches verbatim, and the best account of the subject is to be found in Mr. Richard Jebb's admirable *History of the Imperial Conference* (1911).

to Deakin, who writes to 'Dear Dr. Jim,' from Marseilles on May 24 that 'I look back upon our brief camaraderie as the best feature of the Conference, and I hope some day we shall meet again. If that is not to be you will not be forgotten—and if that is nothing to any one else it is a big something to me.' He would always, he said, remember 'the gallant, leal, and gay adventurer with whom I was fortunate enough to singe the King of Spain's beard in true buccaneering fashion, or, at all events, to make him double it up on his chin and put large quantities of it in his mouth while he wriggled and shuffled in his Colonial Office chair at the head of the horseshoe table.<sup>1</sup> . . . Good-bye, old fellow, don't worry about the Boers or the waterworks—for Africa needs you still and so does the Empire, whose hottest corner has fallen to your share.'

By the beginning of June Dr. Jameson is at the Cape, where he is entertained by the Mayor of Cape Town at the Mount Nelson Hotel, and gives an account of his pilgrimage. He also points the way to Federation, and quotes with approval a recent speech of Hofmeyr's on the subject. The Dutch, he says, had been first in their feeling for a South African nationality, probably because they were cut off from Holland and had no other country to look to. The British had been absorbed in a bigger nationality, but they too now felt this South African patriotism, just as in the case of Australia and Canada, where a local national feeling did not interfere with a loyalty to the Empire. Thus we see that Jameson had learnt even from defeat to extract good counsel and inspiration.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Elgin, Secretary of State for the Colonies, presided over the Conference.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### END OF THE JAMESON MINISTRY

'Tis not in mortals to command success ;  
But we 'll do more, Sempronius, we 'll deserve it.'

AND now Jameson was to return to what was to him the most truly loathed of all the uncomfortable places into which his darkening Destiny had led him. The Cape Parliament opened on June 21, 1907, and a few days later the fateful correspondence between Jameson and Lord Selborne on the question of Union was published. The Leader of the Opposition received it with hostility ; but Mr. Merriman reckoned without his party, for Mr. Theron, the Chairman of the Bond, hailed it with enthusiasm. ' We were,' he said, ' one people under one flag, not under our own flag, but under the great flag of England.' Such a speech from such a source was to Jameson an exceeding great reward. For it told him, as clearly as words could say, that with every appearance of failure in his great purpose, he was succeeding. Give him but a little time more and a little more strength and he would win against Destiny.

A few days after Dr. Jameson went to Bloemfontein to a Conference on Ocean Freights, where he and General Botha stood together in the fight with Sir Donald Currie.

On July 23 Mr. Malan, the exponent of Dutch nationalism in the Cape, moved a notable resolution, demanding preliminary steps to a Union of British

South Africa. 'The time has passed,' he said, 'when we should speak of Dutch and English on racial lines. When the day of Union comes, whether it is English or Dutch in the majority, it will make not the slightest difference, because we are all working for the one ideal. I do not want a Dutch South Africa. We have to accept the Union Jack, and we are not going back on that.' Here, indeed, was confirmation of Theron! Jameson seconded the resolution in terms no less friendly, while Merriman sneered in vain at Lord Selborne and 'the petty interference of the High Commissioner.' On this big question Jameson was leading the whole House.

But while he thus strove to bring about the end of his hopes, events were moving disastrously for his Government. 'I do not believe,' said the Treasurer, in his Budget statement on August 17, 1907, 'that the history of the whole world contains a record of a State such as this having to face so rapid and so enormous a fall in its revenue.' With an empty Exchequer, Jameson had to meet the two opposing claims for protection and for cheapness, standing, as he said on August 13, between 'the rabid Free Trader behind him (in the person of Mr. Jagger) and the rampant Protectionists opposite.' Mr. Merriman took full advantage of the situation. The Government were so hard pressed on the meat duties that they were fain to leave it to the decision of the House.

'We are having,' says Jameson to Sam on August 14, 'a beastly time of retrenchment and a consequent growling public, and a party at sixes and sevens—a continuous egg dance; but we shall pull through, as everybody is more frightened of the other lot. Yesterday we were defeated by 2 to 1 on an extra penny on meat which I refused to have,

though I don't really think it would raise the price as the farmers are doing so well and the stock in the country enormously increasing ; but the very defeat will do us good politically as emphasising our sticking to the towns when necessary. Having originally put on a penny I could not resign for another penny, though should much have liked to do so and get a rest from the show. Now the debate on Walton's budget begins to-morrow, and if Merriman tries any tricks I will push him to a vote of confidence and I believe defeat him. They are in a worse quandary than we are. Yesterday they significantly sat dumb, not venturing to answer, and simply voted against us. Charming weather, and I get golf every Sunday afternoon. Transvaal playing badly on the Federation question.'

Merriman did try his tricks. On August 15 he made what a contemporary journalist calls ' a determined effort to oust the Ministry ' on a motion for the taxation of diamonds. He called Jameson the Harold Skimpole of finance, and made full use of the Prime Minister's position as a Director of De Beers. ' We have had,' Jameson retorted, ' a great deal of abuse but very little argument. We are incapable, we are hopeless, we shall ruin the country. If that is your view the sooner we are got rid of the better. If we are defeated we shall know what to do. If not, we shall get on with the business of the country.' The Opposition had hopes of detaching Mr. Jagger, already disgruntled by what he called the surrender on Free Trade. But Mr. Jagger had theoretical doubts as to the wisdom of taxing the raw products of an industry, and Sauer thereupon changed the line of attack and moved as an amendment a tax on the profits of diamond and copper mines.

It was a formidable assault, but Jameson met it with courage. On August 16 he put the case clearly.

He reminded the House of Merriman's previous denunciation of any proposal to single out one industry and make it a sort of milch cow for the Colony. He preferred to draw his revenues from all wealth equally by grading up income-tax, and, as his Treasurer explained, under the new scale of taxation, the De Beers Company would pay £307,000 a year. He nevertheless agreed to a tax of 10 per cent. on mineral profits. But these concessions were not enough for the Opposition, and they succeeded in detaching Mr. Jagger from the Government. It was saved by a bare majority of two. Again, on September 11, the Government was severely pressed on the meat duties, and Jameson only extricated his Ministry by pointing out the danger of interfering with the Customs Union.

The Prime Minister was not dismayed by these narrow escapes. 'Things are going well enough,' he wrote to Sam on September 16, 'and the Bond up to now have been defeated in each of their attempts. The only crux will be at the end of the session. The Upper House may try to throw out the estimates, but I expect we will manage them somehow, and I shall be condemned to another year of this treadmill and no going home, I am afraid, for some time. . . . Have taken to golf on Sunday afternoons in defiance of the religious folk, as that is my only free time. Shall be able to beat both you and Midge by the time I get back.' The crux came sooner than he expected—but now from another quarter. In the Upper House Logan was intriguing ceaselessly with the supporters of the Bond,<sup>1</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> 'If Mr. Logan still held the Railway Refreshment Contract there would have been no crisis.'—From Colonel Crewe's speech at East London, December 1907.

this combination contrived to block the Appropriation Bill. The President did his best for the Government, but, by a clever use of the standing orders, the Opposition kept on voting the President out of the chair, thus obtaining a majority of one. At last a supporter of the Government, Mr. Wilmot, moved for the suspension of the standing rules. But Logan, or rather the clever politicians of whom he was the tool, countered this move by withdrawing most of the Opposition from the Council, and thereupon, with only twelve in the House, one of those who was left drew attention to a standing rule that without fifteen members such a motion could not be put.

This crisis occurred on September 17, 1907, and Jameson, who had the privilege of speaking though not of voting in the Upper House, faced it undauntedly. The proceedings had been made a farce; constitutional government had become impossible. 'I have got,' he said, 'a very small audience within the precincts of the Council,' pointing a finger across the bar where most of the Opposition were seated, 'but I have got a very large audience outside these precincts.' As the farce they had witnessed would be repeated again to-morrow, they must decide the issue now, and if they were defeated they would go to the final court of appeal, to the electorate. The Prime Minister's courage availed nothing; the Government was at an end, ignominiously slain by the treachery of one supporter.

'I had a really happy day yesterday,' Jameson's friend, Mr. Kipling, wrote on September 19. 'I saw in the papers that the licensed vitteler had done you in the eye at last. There is a deal of crapulous cock-eyed perseverance about a man who has been thoroughly pickled in whiskey for a quarter of a century. . . .'

'You will have seen political results,' Jameson writes to Sam on September 25. 'I am rather glad, as it ensures Carlsbad next year. But we are not done yet. For the Party I must see the show through, and the resources of civilisation are not yet exhausted to keep the Bond out. Too long and complicated to explain, but I shall get a certain amount of amusement out of it between now and March when the elections end. Going to Rhodesia to-morrow, having put the organisation at work. Then back in a month for further developments. Swan (the sculptor) and Hawke (Hawksley) arrived. Swan charming. Shall beat you at golf when I come back as now shall have some time to practise.'

When Jameson gaily hinted that the resources of civilisation were not yet exhausted, he was preparing for a last move, offering a gambler's chance in the game already lost. Rhodes's old Attorney-General, Mr. W. P. Schreiner, during part of the war Prime Minister, had fallen at the hands of the Bond because he had dared to punish rebels. He had not, however, gone over to the Progressives, owing to his horror of the Raid and the Raider. 'I don't think,' he said on November 1, 1903, 'we can expect reconciliation from Mr. Sauer or Mr. Merriman on the one side, or from Dr. Jameson and Dr. Smartt on the other.' But now, with Jameson's record behind him, Schreiner might be expected to think differently.

He was prince among the Mugwumps, so moderate that he could never come to a decision upon anything, and the idol of all Laodiceans. And Jameson's plan was no less than to make him the leader of a new and larger party which would combine both Moderates and Progressives. This idea was already in his mind when he issued his manifesto of September 26, 1907, announcing that the Progressive Party had become

the South African Unionist Party, with the development of South Africa, equal rights for all civilised men, the union of the European races, and the union of the British South African Colonies for its objects. We have a hint of it also in Mr. Schreiner's statement in the *Cape Times* of October 10, 1907: 'With regard to Dr. Jameson I would like to say this, that I recognise that full appreciation has not been given to the services he has rendered to the country in his earnest endeavours to remove racialism. In this he has gone far, and I think he has not been fairly met by certain members of the Opposition, not Bondsmen, who have repeatedly raised the old offence.' Again, in a speech on October 28, at Queenstown, we find Mr. Schreiner assuring his constituency that while there was nothing in the story of a pact between the Prime Minister and himself, he certainly had had a most interesting conversation with Dr. Jameson, who had been very kind about his re-entrance into political life, and his hope that he would become a great factor in the politics of this country. Was he then to say to the Prime Minister, 'No, No, No, remember the Raid, never forget it.' He said that they should let these things remain in the past, and he said again, at the risk of another 'blazing indiscretion,' that the personal conduct of public affairs by the Prime Minister, apart from the unhappy events of which he wished to say nothing, had assured him that not only was the Prime Minister an English gentleman, but that he was honestly desirous of obliterating the evil consequences of a step which he was sure the Prime Minister was one to deplore. And was there to be no place for repentance? Take a man on his word and judge a man on his acts. They had

come to the parting of the ways, and they must get away from the racial intolerance, which was itself the cause why there was to be no room for repentance.

Meantime Jameson, with Hawksley, the Company's solicitor, had gone up to Buluwayo, where concessions were to be made to the settlers in the matter of mineral royalties and easy land settlements. On October 22 he was at Johannesburg, on October 31 back in Cape Town, and on November 6 at Grahamstown explaining his position to his constituents, who gave him as enthusiastic a reception as ever. He did not conceal from himself the fact that the Government were unpopular; their unpopularity was the result of their retrenchment. The Government had no chance of returning, but he hoped they would still be a large party. That party would be looking for a leader. And here he referred to Schreiner; but in terms so vague as to show that 'the resources of civilisation' were not carrying him very far. The large lymphatic lawyer never kindled to an idea, least of all the idea of leading a lost cause. But the apparition had at least one effect: it infuriated the Opposition leaders beyond words, for Schreiner's moral prestige was great in the Colony, and when he condemned Merriam and Sauer for keeping the fires of racialism burning they were convicted of sin and could find no defence. 'My Schreiner scheme,' Jameson writes to his brother on November 20, 'going on well. The Bond shrieking with rage. I may not win but it is a good fighting chance, and whichever way it goes I shall have a couple of years' rest to devote to De Beers and Charter, both of which want looking into, especially the Charter. Then in a couple of

years I should have a very good chance of coming back for the Federation trick, if I want to. . . . Swan was perfectly delightful and made a great impression on everybody. He did an admirable oil portrait of Holland<sup>1</sup> and another of my bulldog, "Zut," and has put both the memorial here and the statue in Kimberley on right lines. Tell Midge this.' Again he writes on December 12: 'Going on as usual. Lots of worries. Shall make a good fight and probably not succeed. My aim is to put Schreiner in if he is not too impossible. I am not making any alliance with him, merely will support him, but won't take any office myself, so most probably shall be home in May.' A little later we find the *Cape Times* noting in Schreiner's speeches 'a tendency to retire further into the shell of an obdurate independence, rather than to develop lines of thought which might lead towards a re-arrangement of parties.' And Jameson writes gloomily on January 6, 1908: 'This American slump and consequent stoppage of the sale of diamonds<sup>2</sup> has filled up the cup of financial troubles—and, from the personal point of view, very tiresome. I seem to be constantly in the train, either going to or coming from Kimberley. Have to be there again tomorrow morning. Elections on the whole seem hopeful; but my Schreiner plan looks very shaky, he is such an impossible personage. Still, I am

<sup>1</sup> Now Sir Reginald Sothorn Holland, at that time Secretary to the Prime Minister.

<sup>2</sup> The export of diamonds had fallen by £288,000 a month, and the sale of diamonds fell to almost nothing, owing to the great financial crisis in America. Diamonds being the most important of the Colonial industries from a financial point of view, the effect on the Government was obviously disastrous. We find Jameson making an expedition to Johannesburg in the middle of January in order to try and arrange as to output with the directors of the new and formidable rival of De Beers, which was to produce the Cullinan diamond.

not going to give it up. In the intervals Holland and I are perfecting ourselves in golf, and will make a good show against you and Midge when we come home in May, as I hope we shall be able to do.'

The poll for the Upper House came first, and by January 29 it was known that the South African Party had won in the Council elections. On that date their strength stood at 15 against the Unionist 6 and the Independent 1. On that date, also, Jameson writes to his brother :—

'We are really having a debacle like the Balfour Government. I shall probably resign on the Council Elections without waiting for the Assembly, but must see the elections out for the Party's sake. Altogether, I am not dissatisfied—the bigger Merriman's majority, the more trouble he will have. No excuse not to do all the Bond ask, which will disgust the country. Also, they will certainly have a year of bad finance. I give them eighteen months to two years, then the reverse swing. In the meantime Federation will have to wait. Botha is having great trouble with his extremes. All things working towards the Moderate Party I was trying for. Schreiner of course has not played up; but he will be in the House and active, which is the main object gained. I see now the Bond must have its turn and be discredited. There was a fighting chance that that might be avoided; but it has not come off, and even if S. had played up I now see *could* not come off. . . .'

No, there is never a fighting chance with a man who can never be induced to fight.

Dr. Jameson tendered his resignation to the Governor at one o'clock on Friday, January 31, 1908. His Excellency thereupon called upon Mr. Merriman, who undertook to form a Ministry. In the Council elections the South African party

had polled 51,000 votes against 27,000 for the Unionists.

The Jameson Ministry had assumed office on February 22, 1904, and had thus been in power for almost exactly four years. The only changes in its personnel during that time were that Sir Lewis Michell had resigned on June 6, 1905; that in the last year Sir Pieter Faure, that respected old Dutch farmer, whom we have already seen unmoved and unbelieving in the crisis of the Raid, had taken the place of Mr. Fuller as Secretary for Agriculture, Mr. Fuller remaining in the Ministry without a portfolio. Upon its general record the *Bloemfontein Friend*, the organ of the Dutch party in the Orange Free State, may be allowed to be at least an impartial, if not a hostile, witness. 'It has to be admitted,' says the *Friend*, 'that he [Jameson] has laboured with amazing success to mitigate racial feeling. The Afrikaner people of the Cape Colony have to-day a feeling of personal liking and respect for the leader of the Raid. A better augury could not be for the final reconciliation of the two races.'

On March 2 Jameson justified himself to constituents still devoted. He had returned, he said, to the position of five years before, but he had pointed the way to a larger and a broader national life. He had followed the policy of his late great Chief, Cecil Rhodes, which must not be interrupted by their defeat, but must be followed in Opposition. It was to turn the minds of the people away from the barren racial issue to the natural development of the Colony—a policy of forgive and forget. It was no mere lip service to the cause it professed, for in the last Registration Act he had reinstated the rebels, and so brought about his own defeat at the polls.

He did not regret it: 'No party advantage is worth the estrangement of the two white races of this country.' An exulting reference to the defeat of the crapulous hotel-keeper was the only note of personal feeling in the speech. Jameson had learnt the lesson of adversity. 'As I get older,' he said, 'I find that a great thing is patience. All the troubles I have had in my earlier days—you perhaps remember some of them—they have all, I believe, been the result of impatience.' But he was not discouraged. His aim of Federation now stood directly in front of them, in the Conference on Customs, Railways, and Union, about to take place. 'We are all unificationists,' he said; 'we all ought to aim at that. If I could get it to-night I would take it. But here again my question of patience comes in, and I say, don't let us ask for too much at once.'

The Grahamstown result on March 12 was at least a personal tribute to Jameson, for he was returned with his colleague Mr. Fitchat, the Opposition candidate being heavily defeated. On March 13 his Party had another triumph in the return of all seven Unionists for Cape Town. On March 23 he writes Sam from Kimberley:—

' . . . What with Charter, De Beers, and Cape politics we are in a general mess; but I am so tired out with the political game I feel I shall be useless until I have had a few months away from it, and then probably return with renewed zest. . . . Simply utterly bored and slack politically. Charter and De Beers without politics, accompanied by frequent golf with you, should give me a good change and rest. Twelve months' worry and depression and then I feel sure things will look up again all round. . . .'

He was again on the political platform at Woodstock on March 30, rallying his opponents on the

fervency of their new found Nationalism. He had been thirty years working in the country when that great patriot de Waal was learning Dutch, either in Holland or America; when Mr. Greer and Mr. Vanderbyl were in their swaddling clothes. Had he not as much right to be a South African as they had ?

The results were decisive. It is true that Mr. Schreiner was returned for Queenstown, and another independent, Sir Gordon Sprigg, for East London, but the South African party gained 19 seats and stood at 69 votes in the Lower House. The Independents were 4, and the Unionists 34. The Bond had thus a majority of 31 against the rest of the House and 35 against the Unionists. It seems a great swing over, but 11 out of the 17 losses were due to the re-enfranchisement of the rebels.

The reader has already seen what was the main work of the Jameson Government; but one or two omissions of detail have to be made good, chief among them their Education Act, which developed means for the creation and maintenance of schools, and a certain degree of compulsion. It established, in fact, a School Board system in Cape Colony, a doubtful blessing it may be said, but at all events in line with the general policy of development. The Irrigation Act provided a machinery for the control of riparian waters and the building and maintenance of irrigation works. The Workmen's Compensation Act explains itself. There were other measures, but we do not look to Acts of Parliament for Jameson's chief contribution to the public good.

No, it was something in the personal gift of a man who was by training a healer as he was by genius a leader of men. As in the old days he had not only

commanded but doctored his Pioneers, not only ruled but physicked his settlers ; as in the Transvaal he looked on the case with the eye of a surgeon, so now in these years of office he treated his country as if it were a case of nerves disordered by war and racial passion, exhausted by loss of blood, enfeebled by loss of trade. To give his patient time and gentle treatment, and set a hope before him ; to show him the way to a complete re-establishment : such was the work of a good physician.

Everybody now called him 'the Doctor,' as in the early days of Kimberley, and not for nothing. More patient than of old, his body dwindled to a perilous frailty, the face marked by constant pain and self-repression, the features more aquiline, the eye if not more penetrating more tolerant, the smile less gay but more winning, the whole comprehension of the man enlarged by suffering and humiliation. Such now was Jameson. The presence, the gesture, the brusque and fearless yet kindly speech, the purity from any taint of self or self-importance—such were the winning and healing qualities of the Doctor in these latter years.

Friends and enemies reconciled, even Schreiner, even Merriman, testified to the miracles he wrought : one after another the stalwarts of the Bond, wary old Theron, the darkly brooding Malan, and many an old Boer, steeped and engrained in the belief that Jameson was the arch-fiend himself, all came under the spell, all fell into the habit of dropping into the Prime Minister's office, or rather into the Doctor's consulting room, and submitting with bland smiles to his unfailing frankness of treatment.

It was a notable thing in the Doctor that remarks which from others would have ended in blows or

deadly estrangement, not only gave no offence when they came from him but seemed to produce even a pleasurable tickling, a sense almost of flattery, in the minds of those to whom they were addressed.

He was able to speak thus, no doubt, because of the infinite tolerance, the complete understanding which transfigured even his terms of abuse. And so it came about that at his dinner table, where he ate no more than a sparrow, or at his bridge table, where his eye sparkled with all the old fire and malice of battle, the leaders of both parties and all sections, met and learned to know one another across the dense cigarette smoke, so that they left with a larger and more humane view of their interests and their opposites.

There were friends who came more often—Smartt, eloquent on all subjects, brought down from every flight by his friend's raillery; Walton, whose un-failing gloom on the failing revenues had to be cheered and chaffed away; Maitland Park, whose Scottish metaphysics and granitic convictions were put to the proof by deft and light-handed experiment; Abe Bailey, to be rallied upon his depredations on the widow and the fatherless; old friends from the North and the Witwatersrand to be closely and minutely cross-examined upon everything and everybody, from the cost of railway haulage to the latest morsel of feminine gossip. Such were Jameson's hours of relaxation: in general he said very little, only a shrug or a word that went to the centre of the target; but he was the life and soul nevertheless of the little company.

And now at the end of his term of office, his health broken, his party defeated, he must yet have felt in his heart that at last he was 'square.' In the

personal account none could now say that credit and debit were not balanced. And upon the larger issue he had atoned for his mistake: that Union which the Raid had failed to achieve was now upon the point of accomplishment. And it was he who had put it in train.

## CHAPTER XXXIX

### THE UNION

'If a man have a true friend, he will rest almost secure that the care of those things will continue after him; so that a man hath, as it were, two lives in his desires.'—BACON.

DR. JAMESON left Cape Town for England on April 15, 1908, with as usual a double end in view—a cure, and the affairs of the Chartered Company. What these affairs were we shall see later. As to the cure, he went to Carlsbad for the summer, and there, recovering some of his health, took a long flight to Dornoch in the far north of Scotland, where he spent a very happy six weeks or so with his old friend of Kimberley days who had once introduced him to the Willoughby-affronted President. On September 28, he writes to Sam from Glenmuick: 'Just arrived here after a really cheery holiday at Jim Taylor's, when we all played golf at Dornoch and Brora and left the grouse alone. Also a couple of days at Dunrobin and motored here. Now I have to go to Balmoral to-morrow till Saturday. Balfour surpassed Rosebery.' On October 1 there is a short note from Balmoral Castle: 'Charming weather here and a very cheery crowd, but I will tell you all about it when we meet.'

The subject of discussion at Balmoral, we may safely suppose, was nothing less than the federation or unification of South Africa, for by October

Jameson was in Durban, a member of the Conference called for that purpose.

It was, in fact, his Conference, although it was only called after his fall. Long before, on November 28, 1906, Jameson had written to Sir Walter Hely Hutchinson the letter from which these present events were to proceed. It was a formal letter, a State document, written for him in language so dull that we dare not inflict it upon the long-suffering reader, but handling living issues in the true spirit of the Rhodesian policy. The settlement then made on the railway question, he pointed out, had brought South Africa to the border line of the larger question, for their experience of his three years of office had shown both him and his colleagues how many things could be settled only with the help of the other South African Governments. As no common authority existed, friction, delay, and failure attended all attempts to solve general difficulties. It was doubtful, for example, if there could be any settlement of the railway question between Governments which had no power to do more than state their views. The sum of it all was that the Governor was requested to submit these ideas to Lord Selborne, then High Commissioner for South Africa.

His Excellency, upon his side, wrote the able minute of January 7, 1907, first reviewing the railway dispute, and from that quarrel drawing the moral that as long as five Governments existed, with their own financial systems, their own courts of law, their own organisation of defence, their own policies on the natives, on cattle diseases, and, in short, on every public question, so long would friction of purposes and conflict of interests endanger the peace and the prosperity of the whole country. Even the

Customs Convention was no true settlement, but a mere compromise between five Colonial Customs policies, 'almost universally disliked, tolerated only because men shrank aghast from the consequences of the disruption of the Convention.'

This correspondence led directly to the Inter-Colonial Conference of the spring of 1908, which took the broad view that the questions before it involved closer union, and drew up a series of resolutions to that end. Of these, it is only necessary to say that they defined the constitution of the National Convention which Jameson returned to South Africa to attend. He had been elected as delegate for the Cape of Good Hope, along with eleven others, the Chief Justice, Mr. Merriman, Mr. Sauer, Mr. Malan, Dr. Smartt, Mr. Walton, Mr. Jagger, three Dutch Members of Parliament, and Colonel Stanford, an authority on native affairs. The chief of the five delegates for Natal was Mr. Moor, the Prime Minister. The Transvaal was represented by eight, including General Botha, General Smuts, Mr. Hull, Sir George Farrar, Sir Percy FitzPatrick, and General de la Rey. Mr. Fischer, Mr. Steyn, General Hertzog, General De Wet, and Mr. Browne were the five delegates for the Orange River Colony; and Sir William Milton, Mr. Coghlan, and Sir Lewis Michell represented Rhodesia, with the right to speak but not to vote.

We gather something of the doings of Jameson in this notable company in the letter he writes to Sam on October 25:—

'Secrecy is the order of the day, so there is nothing to tell. Still generally we are going better than I expected. All crooning like doves. Botha is the great factor and plays a capital game of Bridge. He dined with me the other night

and went away minus 70s. He, Steyn, and I are great pals—so the world wags. I expect to be here about another six weeks, and think we are pretty sure to get something through which the people will take.

‘ Charter matters and De Beers going better, so everything but the weather looking brighter. Beastly, muggy, wet weather all the time we have been here, but have managed to get a couple of days of golf in the rain on a miserable swampy nine-holes course. So Union is costing us some discomfort. After this I see a good deal of Kimberley and Rhodesia for me, besides, I suppose, preaching Union in the Cape. So probably won’t get home till next year.’

We have another letter from Durban, dated November 6, reporting a month of useful progress:—

‘ We adjourn to-day,’ he continues, ‘ to Cape Town, where another month should finish. I am going Free State and Kimberley in the interval. Things all round looking very hopeful, though, of course, there are still some minor fences to get over. Botha continues the most satisfactory and far the biggest of the lot. Of course there is the slimness to look out for, but he has less of it than any of his confrères, and far less than our pseudo-English —— and —— . Still we are all cooing doves. Steyn, too, is quite a surprise and he and Botha are the two factors for a decent British settlement. Strange but true. Funny that my main pals to get things through are Botha, Steyn, and perhaps Christian De Wet. Latter only the rough Boer stamp, but amenable and behaves very decently.’

Then from Cape Town on December 8, 1908, he writes:—

‘ We are steadily plodding on, and bar one subject shall get through fairly successfully—that is the damned capital question: just getting to the stage now when it can’t be staved off any longer. This is where the selfishness of the natural animal comes in, and the intriguing powers of some

of our own crowd are beginning to show. . . . However even that may be got over, though it looks nasty. Beautiful weather and occasional golf make the time pass fairly pleasantly, and of course the discussions are really interesting—a great improvement on the dreary humdrum of the ordinary Parliamentary session. I have the House full at Grootte Schuur of delegates and others—Lady George [Farrar] among the number. . . .’

Again he writes on January 7, 1909, from Cape Town:—

‘Back again in Cape Town for the reassembling of the Convention after a round of Kimberley and the Rand—rather depressing in these times—especially the former. Though the market is better we are by no means out of the wood yet—with new discoveries and the obstinate Premier.<sup>1</sup> I see at the very best diminished profits for some time to come. Have Curzon and his sister staying with me at present. He very interesting. . . . The Farrars also staying with me and to-night coming to dinner, the Chief Justice, Fischer, Prime Minister of the Orange River Colony, Fitz, etc., etc., a fine hotch-potch; but that is all on the Convention lines. Still fences to get over, especially that damned capital question, but I am quite optimistic. Shall be glad when it is finished. . . .’

On January 21, 1909, Jameson writes to Sam that they are just plodding along and hope to be finished in a fortnight.

‘The damnable question becoming crucial, and they are all so damnable about it—our own financial friends far worse than the Dutchmen; but I am looking for some solution

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<sup>1</sup> The Premier Diamond Mine. Rhodes would probably have had this mine but for the carelessness of one of his secretaries, Gordon le Sueur, who forgot to post a letter from Rhodesia instructing his engineer on the Rand to examine the property. The mine afterwards yielded the Cullinan diamond, and became a dangerous rival to De Beers until they amalgamated.

which will satisfy none of them. Apart from their getting their deserts that in the end will be the line of least resistance. . . .’

The Capital question about which they were all so ‘damnable’ was settled, as Jameson said, by a compromise which had the virtue of pleasing none. It was, in fact, very much the decision of Solomon in the case of the baby. The functions of government were divided between the three rivals; Cape Town to be the seat of the Legislature, the Supreme Court to go to Bloemfontein, and Pretoria to be the centre of administration. Moreover, the native question was left undecided, every Colony continuing its own system; and the electoral question was compromised on the lines of one vote one value; but upon the great question of Union there was neither postponement nor compromise: the four Colonies were given one Government and one Parliament, with full powers over the subordinate Councils which were left to the individual States, thus avoiding the pitfalls of federalism into which Australia so disastrously fell. Although Jameson had hardly dared to hope for more than federation, he accepted the principle of a Union with delight, and did all in his power to support the broad views of the united Transvaal delegation against the parochialism of the Cape and the fears of Natal.

On February 3 the Convention adjourned in order that the draft Bill might be laid before the Parliaments of the several Colonies. The Transvaal was known to be in favour of the Convention as it stood; but the British of Natal were jealous of their rights; in the Cape Colony Schreiner confused press and public with side issues, and Hofmeyr, hostile in

general but in secret to the broad lines of the scheme, opposed particularly and openly the provisions of three-member constituencies and proportional representation, which would have helped the British minorities in the territories of the Afrikaner Bond.

Thus there was a fight still to be fought, and Jameson threw himself into it, as one who forces his flagging strength to a last spurt in a long race. On February 13, 1909, we find him writing to Sam from Kimberley:—

‘I am off this morning to orate on Constitution at Grahams-town—hate it, must do my share.<sup>1</sup> Things going well in spite of Schreiner and Hofmeyr, and we shall get it thro’. The Dutch bogey is much exaggerated, and they are getting well split up amongst themselves. Of course they will be in charge at first; but that they are now, in virtue of the Liberal Government. The race business really has a chance now of disappearing, and even at first it will be a coalition, I expect. You will have seen that the railway is through. That and the tobacco success, etc., mean everything to Rhodesia which really is on its last legs, though finance for the next couple of years will want watching, and will amuse me much more than these politics, and give me much more time at home.’ Then on February 22 Jameson writes that things are still going well, ‘Hofmeyr “the mole,” burrowing as usual; but he will be defeated, and funk really opposing in the end. I met him the other day—the first time since 1894, and had a long talk on the Constitution, and the above is what I gather. . . .’

On March 15, Jameson, then at Kimberley, believes that the Convention will be passed by the Cape, the Orange River Colony, and the Transvaal Parliaments without amendment, ‘and as for Natal

<sup>1</sup> Jameson made a great speech on the draft Bill to a crowded meeting of his constituents at Grahamstown on February 15.

I am trying to persuade them to make her trust to her referendum,' and he goes on :—

'Have just been up to Pretoria to get Botha to squeeze Moor, which he will try to do. Bond really split on the question, but Hofmeyr section will have to give way, and that means a finish to his influence, which he knows and so is fighting in his usual secret way to the last ditch. It is rather amusing. Merriman, Sauer, Botha, Steyn, and I against Hofmeyr, with Malan openly on our side, but secretly not knowing whether he is standing on his head or his heels. Schreiner hating Hofmeyr but having to run with him against the rest of us. On your side I am afraid you are not going to get rid of Asquith, Winston and Coy. yet ; but perhaps another year of preparation for the other side will do no harm. Golf improving, and I shall beat you easily when I come home.'

On April 21 he writes :—

'I am not to get away as soon as I expected. Hofmeyr and Schreiner combination have been too much for Merriman, and we have been in the strange position of helping Merriman to keep his position so as not to delay Union, the object of Hofmeyr and Schreiner, because they know they can't break it. However, things are clearing up a bit. . . .'

On May 24, from Kimberley this time,—and it is the last of this long chapter of letters from the Cape—Jameson writes to Sam :—

'As far as we are concerned, the resources of negotiation were not yet exhausted, and I believe it is now quite safe to go through, and after all we have given up nothing that mattered. Proportional representation was an experiment—one might almost say a fad, and for the present certainly not suited to this scattered community. . . . The result is that Hofmeyr for one has been out-manceuvred, and is furious as a result. . . . Have had very little golf lately,

so you will have a good chance of beating me when I get home. . . . Will buy Midge's picture as you say it is good. . . .'

These letters suggest sufficiently what Jameson was doing, explaining the Bill to the Colony, and helping Merriman, his old enemy, to pilot it through the House. The chief opponent now was Schreiner—and his side issues. He had been a delegate to the Convention, but had resigned the work in order to defend Dinizulu,<sup>1</sup> and now he found an objection to every clause. The reply of Jameson in defence of the draft Convention was probably the ablest thing he had ever done in the way of debate. Moderate in tone, light in touch, now witty and now serious, it carried the House.

The session which began on March 30 ended on April 17 with the passing of the Bill, although with certain amendments inspired by Hofmeyr. The Parliaments of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony accepted the measure; in Natal, Parliament opposing, it was referred to a referendum, and in the end accepted by a great majority.

On May 3 the Convention reassembled at Bloemfontein. And here it might be the place to mention an incident characteristic of Jameson's instinct in politics. Nationalism was strong in the Orange River Colony, and resentment still smouldered over the loss of independence. Jameson placated this opposition by proposing that the old name of Orange Free State should be restored, a change which did not greatly matter now that the State was to be absorbed in a British South African Union. An excellent poker player, he always knew what card

<sup>1</sup> A sequel to the Dinizulu Rebellion in Natal in 1906.

to throw away, on the chance of drawing something better—which is one part also of diplomacy.

For the rest, certain of the Cape amendments were accepted; proportional representation—that brittle safeguard of minorities—was abandoned; the rule of one-member constituencies was adopted, and with these and a few other changes all the delegates expressed themselves content. The Convention came to an end at a quarter past twelve o'clock P.M. on Tuesday, May 11, 1909, its last act being a motion of thanks to the local Government for hospitality, proposed by Jameson.

A grace after meat! What were the Doctor's thoughts at that moment? Did they leap long years of ardour and agony and unimaginable labours to the little tin bungalow in the mining camp of Kimberley—to the burning face and the Saxon blue eyes of Rhodes, as he leaned towards him over the table, while the mouth uttered, with an apostolic fervour, the dedication of these two lives to 'a United States of South Africa under the British flag'?

## CHAPTER XL

### IN OPPOSITION

'Hope is the main thing in life, and my hope is to get out of the whole thing decently.'

THE amended Convention being now accepted by the Parliaments of the three larger States and upon referendum by Natal also, there remained only ratification by the Imperial authority. To that end the delegates went to England, where Jameson arrived on June 26, 1909. There was a good deal of negotiation to be done between the South African delegates and the Colonial Office, but as these on the South African side were mainly in the capable hands of the President, Lord de Villiers, they need not detain us. In August Jameson is at Carlsbad and has a long talk with M. Clemenceau, whom he finds 'very interesting and a great personality,' and in the latter part of that month he returns by way of Paris for a De Beers and a Charter meeting, before leaving for Scotland. On September 30 he is at Balmoral, there to hold momentous talk with General Botha, and broach his great idea of the 'Best Men Government.'

General Botha was by nature a moderate; by upbringing and natural taste a farmer, with progressive ideas on the breeding and care of stock; in mind deliberate and shrewd. He had fought bravely and honourably in the South African War; had no love

of Kruger or Krugerism ; liked Englishmen and the English country life, and his idea of politics was material progress, a flourishing Johannesburg as a good market for the Dutch farmer, with the reservation that should there be a difference the Dutch farmer was to have the last word. Like Jameson he had seen the dangers of racialism, but had dismissed the idea of a Coalition as impossible, knowing too well the prejudice of his own people, yet Jameson's arguments almost over-persuaded him.

For Botha was reasonable and Jameson had reason on his side. In the Convention the statesmen of both races put away racial feeling, but in the country it still ran high. The Dutch were certain of a majority in the new Parliament ; so much was inevitable from the distribution of seats. But if they seized that advantage what followed ? An administration on racial lines to stereotype the quarrel which General Botha, like Jameson and Rhodes, sought to end.

But, unfortunately for these hopes, the instinct of race, and the animosities it breeds, are strong and deep in the breast of man. Botha must have pointed out to Jameson the great difficulties in the way of his settlement, and letters from the Cape confirmed Botha's fears. A storm of racialism threatened to wreck the craft of Union even before it was launched, and so the indomitable spirit must once more drag the worn-out body back to South Africa, or risk the loss of all those freighted hopes. On October 19 Jameson writes to Sam a short note from 2 Down Street, Piccadilly : ' This batch of letters,' he says, ' makes me sail on November 6 instead of December. I must put in an appearance before the Parliament rises or chuck the whole thing. Merriman is in a

hell of a mess, and some of my people are getting restless, then Hofmeyr's death emphasises things, so I must go ; but damn them all.' <sup>1</sup>

Jameson arrived in Cape Town on November 23, 1909, and that very afternoon was in Parliament. On December 7 he writes to Sam from Groote Schuur :—

' I am off to-night by boat to Port Elizabeth, Grahams-town, Kimberley, Transvaal, and Natal, about a month's trip, to see how the land lies. It is a mixed problem, but I suppose will end in the old two parties. If so we should have a very respectable opposition. In the meantime Botha writes me that he is anxious to go on the lines we talked over in Scotland. I shall see him shortly and then will know how much to believe. All the same I wish I was at your end. The Lords have certainly begun well, and Asquith, etc., or rather Lloyd George, seem to be putting their feet into it more and more. The threat of financial chaos, general Billingsgate, etc., must be bad party tactics.'

By the latter part of December he was in Johannesburg, and on the 29th of that month visited Pretoria. The Johannesburg newspapers, evidently on a hint of what is going forward, are 'doubtful if Botha could bring the back Veld to agree.' Botha, in fact, liked Jameson's ideas but was afraid they would not work. If, however, he could persuade the others that he was right Botha would go in with him : otherwise not.

Jameson did what he could. He interviewed President Steyn in the Orange Free State ; Mr. Moor and his colleagues in Natal. On January 14, 1910, he was back in Cape Town doing his best with Merriman and Sauer. He even set in motion the

<sup>1</sup> 'Onze Jan' had come to England as one of the delegation, and died suddenly in London on October 16, 1909.

lethargic Schreiner, whom we find flabbily advocating a non-party Government at Queenstown on January 15.

But Merriman looked at these matters from a severely practical point of view, resting himself on his title as the senior Prime Minister of the senior Colony to succeed to the Premiership of the Union. As for Best Men Government, were there not enough best men on his own side, and was he not chief of them? Jameson ardently expected General Botha in Cape Town to help in the process of persuasion. But Merriman was mulish; he committed himself publicly before Botha arrived. 'All this talk,' he said, on January 22, 'about Coalition seems not only foolish but positively mischievous. Existing parties form the only basis for the parties of the future.'

'We are still hung up,' Jameson writes to Sam on January 24, 'and I am sick of negotiations, travelling, etc. However, this week should finish matters one way or another. Botha comes here to-night as he promised—in fact he has behaved perfectly straightly with me all through; but in the end, if I was betting, I should say he will go with his own people—the line of least resistance, and being a Dutchman—and we shall have to do our best in opposition. In Cape and Transvaal we shall do well, but from my visit to Natal I find they are still of the pure grocer variety—ostensibly British but really in Botha's pocket as the dispenser of good things. A miserable crowd who are not fit to run a Town Council, not to speak of responsible Government. Golf is the only really straightforward thing and I am getting better and making quite an income out of golf balls with Walton and beat Walton every time. George (doubtless Sir George Farrar) is staying with me this week like a bear on hot bricks about Coalition from funk of his people, but I expect will do what he is told if there is any chance of bringing it off, etc.'

On January 27 General Botha, Mr. Merriman, and Abraham Fischer, the Prime Minister of the Orange Free State, met together at the Treasury Office in Cape Town. Both Fischer and Merriman were opposed to any idea of a Coalition or a Best Men Government. On February 5 Merriman made another speech denouncing any one who dared to question the perfection of the party system. On February 9 Jameson writes to Sam: 'I have not given up all hopes of getting Botha ultimately to work with our party even if we can't do it with the first Unionist Government. Merriman is evidently asking to be made Prime Minister, and I open the ball on the other side on Friday and shall have to hammer Merriman freely then, etc.' The meeting at the City Hall at Cape Town on February 11 to which Jameson here refers was, by local report, 'one of the largest and most representative meetings' ever held in South Africa. Every seat had been taken fully three-quarters of an hour before, and upwards of 2000 people were left outside. Jameson, we are told, held the audience as with a spell, through a closely-woven piece of reasoning, relieved only by a characteristic shrug and habitual use of emphatic forefinger. It was an admirable speech, easy, good-humoured, ironical, bantering Merriman on his many inconsistencies and on his ominous agreement with Hertzog, and pleading for a non-party Government drawn from both races, to follow the illustrious precedent of the first administration of the Dominion of Canada. He had to admit, however, that Merriman had put an end to all hope of a non-party Government. It was the more lamentable as he was confident that Botha, Merriman, and himself could sign the same set of principles for the govern-

ment of the country. But now there was nothing for it but to organise for the fight which they had not invited. Yet they, on their side, would not shut the door; there was, in fact, no door to close, their object would be to support General Botha against the racialists on his own side.

Thus the early promise of the Convention was disappointed, and the two races in South Africa returned to their tents, and yet with a certain shamefacedness, for we find Mr. Merriman at Malmesbury on February 17 complaining that 'I have been attacked for what I have said by a gentleman for whom I have the very greatest personal friendship.' A change indeed from the language of old days! Jameson had at least uprooted the flag of bitterness from the land of the Cape; but it was growing and spreading farther north. In the Orange Free State General Hertzog, the Minister of Education, was attempting to force 'compulsory bi-lingualism' on a country hitherto well content to go on 'uni-lingual lines.' The Nationalist aimed to change the growth of years at a single stroke. He not only made the teaching of both tongues compulsory, but knowledge of both the principal test for teachers; dismissed the heads of the Education Department and forced several hundred teachers to resign. Although none were left to fill the places of those who had gone, Hertzog threatened to extend this system to the whole of South Africa.

Now elementary education under the Union Convention was a provincial subject, and the Convention had intended equality between the languages, but no compulsion. Botha was all for the spirit of the bargain, but to restrain the vehement nationalism of Hertzog and his fanatics was beyond his power. All hope of

agreement being at an end, Jameson was as keen as any to uphold his own side. A great Conference of his party met in the Town Hall at Bloemfontein on May 23, and next day Jameson announced that they had formed the Unionist Party of South Africa.<sup>1</sup> And here he defined the policy which, as Leader of the Opposition, he was to follow. It was to oppose racialism, to work for the progress of South Africa, and to support General Botha against the extremists. On May 30 he writes from Kimberley: 'Bloemfontein Congress a success, but that very success keeps me here longer. Botha doing what I expected, but that does not militate against the fact that the Dutch are defeated and he will have to look to us for help against his own people.' At the beginning of June Jameson is again at Pretoria, this time as the guest of Lord Gladstone.<sup>2</sup> And on June 8 he is at Johannesburg expounding the principles of his party to a Progressive Conference, and incidentally expressing extreme disappointment at the Constitution of the first Union Cabinet.

The new Government was, as Jameson said, on party lines, yet it contained such extremes within that party as suggested the breach which in the end

<sup>1</sup> The Congress originally arranged for May 9 had to be postponed owing to the death of King Edward VII. Jameson had written to Sam shortly before that he was having 'plenty of travelling and twaddling, which bores me excessively' (March 8), and on May 8 he wrote: 'The King's death very sad and more than sad from the public point of view . . . and . . . I have had to put off the Progressive Congress which was to take place at Bloemfontein to-morrow. The people are already there, and it may be difficult to work up another enthusiasm a fortnight hence, but I must try and have a "tomash" as a last effort before Gladstone sends for his Prime Minister on June 1. I am still travelling round and likely to be so for some time. Go to Cape to-morrow, and after twaddling to Selborne and Gladstone must start this Congress and then the weary electioneering.'

<sup>2</sup> Lord Selborne having returned to England, Lord Gladstone had been appointed the first Governor-General of the Union of South Africa.

took place. Botha was Prime Minister. Merriman had declined to serve under him, but Sauer had no such objections and became Minister for Railways. Malan was Minister for Education and Smuts Minister for Defence. Burton had Native Affairs; Hull was Treasurer; Abraham Fischer, Minister for Lands; D. P. de Villiers Graaff, Minister for Public Work; F. R. Moor, who had been Prime Minister of Natal, was in charge of Trade and Commerce. His Natal colleague, Dr. Gubbins, was Minister without a portfolio, and Hertzog was Minister for Justice.<sup>1</sup>

Jameson chose an unusual rôle as Leader of the Opposition, to support the Prime Minister against the extremists of his party. As, however, it was improbable that a purely British party could ever hope to govern South Africa, his policy was wisely conceived in the interests of his people.

It had this implication, that General Botha and Dr. Jameson remained very good friends, in essence rather colleagues than opponents. We find Botha at Pretoria on June 14 giving his supporters a full account of the negotiations between himself and the Leader of the Opposition, and this liking between the two shines through the statement. 'Dr. Jameson,' says Botha, 'made out a very strong case for the Coalition,' but also, he continues, 'made a very strong impression upon me personally, and most decidedly brought me nearer to him at these discussions. It appeared to me very clearly what a fair, reasonable, and friendly attitude Dr. Jameson

<sup>1</sup> On the point of seniority and also of experience Lord Gladstone might have been expected to call for Mr. Merriman, who complained that he had been treated by the Governor-General as Nelson had been treated by Hood after the siege of Bastia, but the plain truth was that Merriman, although he had been used as a figurehead by the Dutch, was in no sense their leader and had never won their confidence.

took up in all matters.' And he ended with a tribute to the good faith of the Doctor.

We get the other's view of this curious partnership in a letter to Sam of June 22 :—

' Yes, Botha is stepping back more and more and we are gradually consolidating into a real party fight. I lunched with Botha at Pretoria last week and talked the whole thing out with him. It is the old story—he funked splitting up his own people at the start—hates most of his colleagues ; but talks of getting rid of the old gang in a couple of years. I think he will probably come to grief in the process and told him so. Still he has been quite honest with me all through—only a much weaker vessel than I expected. Now I am off again on Saturday for what will probably be a three months' trip, through the Colony, Transvaal, and Natal, latter gradually coming right ; so I shall leave it to the last to mature without outside interference. A beastly grind and shall do as little speaking as I can—more organising, which is the real factor in winning elections. I am now in Westbrook<sup>1</sup>—very comfortable, but, as you say, going to be pretty expensive. But that kind of thing is part of the campaign, and if, as I hope, it will only last for a year or so I don't mind spending a few thousands on it. Hope is the main thing in life, and my hope is to get out of the whole thing decently and carry out my original plan of Rhodesia and London.'

In July we find Jameson and Smartt touring the Eastern Province by motor car. On August 3 there is a great political meeting in the Wanderers' Hall in Johannesburg, at which Jameson reminds the Johannesburgers of the ideals of Rhodes which they were still to follow. Rhodes, he said, had told them long ago that it was his surroundings which had inspired his ideals—' an early manhood spent in the

<sup>1</sup> Westbrook was a pleasant enough house close to Groote Schuur, which had now gone to Botha as Prime Minister of the Union.

desert-like expanses outside Kimberley and under the majestic shadow of Table Mountain.' They had inherited a great cause to work for, 'one united, homogeneous people'—a cause which he opposed to the provincialism and racialism of the Hertzog party. And in particular he spoke of the education controversy and the three cardinal principles laid down by the Convention on which they took their stand: 'no compulsion, mother-tongue medium, and equality of opportunity.'

On August 9 Jameson spoke in Durban to a great meeting of nearly 4000 people, the largest ever held in Natal. And in this speech, which is on the same general lines, we find an interesting reference to the Raid. Paradoxical as it might appear, he said, the Raid was a blow struck for federation. It was badly conducted, badly organised, badly carried out, and every one who was punished in connection with it thoroughly deserved that punishment. But the motive was good, notwithstanding all the stupidity. The Raid was not to replace Dutchmen by Englishmen, for had it succeeded the new President on the list (which he had in his pocket when he rode in) was Lucas Meyer, President of the Volksraad, and the most progressive of Dutchmen. Such was the policy of Rhodes, and it was now the policy of the Unionists. If he could replace the present Government he would make not an English Government but a Government of the best men of both races.

Dr. Jameson left Durban on August 11 and went by Port Elizabeth to Grahamstown, where he held another crowded meeting as the candidate for the new constituency of Albany, in which Grahamstown was included. Here he developed the same line of policy. The Prime Minister, he said, was in a hope-

less position, in a minority in his own Cabinet. 'I know that he is perfectly at one with me in spirit. You ask, why not give the Prime Minister a chance? Certainly I will, and the only chance he can get is through the large Unionist minority, if not a majority.'

On August 24 he writes to Sam of 'speechifying and election troubles naturally increasing as we near the end. Of course the Government will get a big majority; but they won't be homogeneous, and I don't give them more than two years—then chaos, and Botha may be absorbed, and we may get our way or keep them from the last ditch, until he has to come with us in self-defence. He is naturally getting a little bitter in public, but I am on good terms with him privately. Saw him both before and after my Rand speech and discussed things amicably. . . . And my golf has suffered sadly through my election travels, but I am going to try a game with Syfret<sup>1</sup> next week and see what is left. Had a game with Harry Fuller at East London and he beat me.'

Then on August 30 Jameson made a great speech in the City Hall at Cape Town, and again in the same place on September 14, always making the same points: the need to support General Botha against the racialism of his colleagues. On September 7 he writes to Sam:—

'I am in the last week, thank God, and never another election for me, and the day after election I am off to Rhodesia for a month to do it thoroughly, so that immediately I can get away from Parliament I can put the sea between me and all the abominations. Hope I shall be able to go with you; but it all depends on how much jabbering they do in Parlia-

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<sup>1</sup> Chairman of the *Cape Times* Company.

ment. . . . It seems as if I shall probably get in for the Harbour seat, which will land me in another row with my Grahamstown people, as I shall probably have to sit for the Cape seat to save it to the party. Nice prospect with all your dock voters on your doorstep—another argument for cutting the whole thing at the earliest possible moment.'

On the eve of the polls he writes :—

'Results of elections will be as good as we can expect. Apparently a very large majority against us, but we will have enough to keep them straight and break them up within a couple of years. . . .'

And on September 16 he writes again :—

'Thank goodness elections all finished and I start for Rhodesia to-morrow. We have done well—and the effect of the elections is to make the whole country enthusiastic about our line of policy. Of course they will be in a good majority, but that does not matter. Three Cabinet Ministers out and probably a fourth.<sup>1</sup> Cape Peninsula solid for us, etc. They will break up soon. After he was out Botha wired me thanking me for what I had said about him in my last speech, so you see we are still on friendly terms and will yet work together.'

The result of the elections proved the success both of Jameson's policy and his organisation. It was inevitable, of course, that the Government should have a majority, but General Botha himself was defeated at Pretoria East by Sir Percy FitzPatrick, and his colleague Mr. Hull by Sir George Farrar. Jameson was elected both for Albany and the Harbour Division of Cape Town.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Moor was rejected by the Natal constituency of Weenen.

<sup>2</sup> Jameson in the end chose to represent the constituency of Albany, and the Harbour Division went to Sir Henry Juta, a member of his party.

Then away to the North. On September 30 he writes from Buluwayo :—

‘ I am just off to the Congo to see if Bob Williams has been lying more than usual—going straight through there and back, as politics are so lively in the Cape that I must get back a fortnight before Parliament meets. . . . This country is going ahead splendidly, notwithstanding this beastly tick fever which we have now got among our cattle at Inyanga. Everybody cheery and hard at work—a real pleasure after the last three months of vapid nonsense of Cape politics—still my most sanguine expectations in these have been more than realised.’<sup>1</sup>

The first Parliament of the Union of South Africa met on October 31 amid what Dr. Jameson—who had returned from the North—describes to Sam as ‘ beastly festivities,’ and there was a most unfortunate bout of what he calls ‘ jabbering ’ over education. There is evidence, however, that Jameson and Botha are working very happily together behind the scenes. Botha moves an amendment to refer the whole thing to a Committee and Jameson praises the Prime Minister for ‘ his usual function of pouring oil on troubled waters.’ At the same time he makes a very good-natured but none the less damaging attack on Hertzog, reminding him of the words of President Steyn at the Convention, that Dutch was not to be forced down the throats of the children.

Among the New Year honours of 1911 were a Baronetcy for Dr. Jameson and a Knighthood for Dr. Smartt. It is said that both General Botha and

<sup>1</sup> It should be unnecessary to say that the unseemly reference to his old friend, then developing the great copper deposits at Katanga in the Belgian Congo, had a purely humorous intention.