round the table and within the South Africa Party, even at the risk of seeing the people once more stranded "in the desert"?

An Open Letter.—Shortly after he had declared war against his former colleagues, Hertzog in an open letter (March 1913) enlightened the public as to his personal relations with the Prime Minister. It appears these began by being strained as a result of the Free State language difficulty. In August 1911, shortly before the great South Africa Party pyrotechnic congress at Bloemfontein, he for the second time wanted to surrender his portfolios. His Free State colleague Abraham Fischer then succeeded in getting Botha to amend certain instructions to the Administrator at Bloemfontein regarding education. Hertzog went to the Premier's office, complaining of lack of confidence; the same evening he visited Botha at his house. Aggrievedly the leader remonstrated with his unruly Minister on the latter's fondness for too close political relations with the younger set at Pretoria. The Minister of Justice knew better how to please the rising generation; he called Botha's grievance insignificant. The open letter continued:

> From that day until the Tuesday after my speech at De Wildt—the day when the crisis began—I enjoyed a period of unaccustomed peace, compared with the preceding fifteen months. Not that I possessed Botha's confidence, but the lack of it was no longer deliberately made quite so tangible and offensive. There was at least a semblance of trust.

This is Hertzog's own picture: while he himself avoids trouble, the Premier leaves him in peace, and treats him considerately. Now, what more could he have expected? He was holding himself in readiness to become the leader of a "national" anti-Botha crusade. His platform speeches were calculated more and more to suggest to the country that the Minister of Justice absolutely condemned his colleagues' *modus operandi*! Very likely those colleagues under-estimated his potentialities as an agitator; they might have tried to draw him into their intimate political

family. In Government circles, it would appear, there was excessive optimism as to the conversion of both Dutch- and English-speaking electors to the Botha gospel of political co-operation. Were we not all South Africa Party in 1910! It may well be asked whether the voters, who had seemingly adopted the doctrine of conciliation, had permanently shaken off their instinctive inclination to revert to barbaric isolation.

Nylstroom.—A very protracted drought was a feature of the year 1912. No wonder that the countryside was fidgety and petulant. In addition to all this, a real flood of oratory came in October. Hertzog started it at Nylstroom in a speech, meant as a reply to an utterance by Sir Thomas Smartt, who had succeeded Sir Starr Jameson as Unionist leader. In those days the Unionists preached the subjection of Dominion interests to those of the Empire in general, and of England in particular. Hertzog must have realized that such a doctrine, antiquated as it was, could scarcely stand another five years. Instead of simply ignoring its adherents, he fiercely trounced them at Nylstroom. He classified them, notably Sir Thomas Smartt, as foreign adventurers (*vreemde fortuinzoekers*) who did not deserve a say in Union politics. He added that, until such time as the Opposition might show signs of grace, he would continue to expatiate on questions of language and race.

This kind of talk thoroughly woke up the old "jingo" section, which had been fast asleep! The political sky became overcast, and before long pitch-dark. Sir Percy Fitzpatrick was on his legs at once as one of the most ardent mouthpieces of the section referred to. The Nylstroom dust, he said, had been kicked up; there had not been the slightest real breeze to raise it, for no one had said or done anything against the Dutch language. Botha, he added, went in fear of his Minister of Justice.

A couple of days later Hertzog addressed his Smithfield constituents, reiterating his aversion to adventurers, but apologizing to Sir Thomas Smartt. Botha, in a speech at Durban (five days after this), for the *n*th time praised

co-operation, and deprecated uncalled-for platform antics. Meanwhile Sir Thomas had at Fort Beaufort taken exception to the "adventurer" accusation; at the same time he appealed to the Premier to put an end to the improper attitude of his colleague. Toward the end of October, Merriman mounted the platform at Victoria West. Though still friendly with President Steyn and General Hertzog, he did not hesitate to condemn the Nylstroom speech.

Early in November, three Ministers visited Johannesburg in order to be present at the establishment of an S.A.P. Club. Hertzog, who was one of them, made a moderate speech. The same evening, at Vrededorp, he told his hearers that no one more than himself esteemed Botha; as long as the Prime Minister was there he, Hertzog, would not have the job if he were offered ten thousand pounds *per annum*! Those who were concerned with other than purely South African interests he likened to cakes of dung, which might be made to stick to a kraal wall for some little while, but would be washed off by the first freshet. At this meeting, too, Hertzog launched his "two-stream" slogan, as an antithesis to Botha's "conciliation."

The next day General Smuts was hard put to it to pacify his constituents at a meeting addressed by him; they intensely disliked Hertzog's Nylstroom and Vrededorp speeches. Part of the Afrikander section, however, was delighted; a great many English-speaking South Africans, as well as other Government supporters, took umbrage. On November 20 the second annual congress of the S.A.P. was held at Pretoria; the lessened zeal on behalf of the conciliation movement was apparent from the fact that barely half a dozen English-speaking Natalians attended, as against three dozen the previous year, at Bloemfontein. Hertzog's tactics were beginning to bear fruit.

De Wildt.—After a Cabinet council, at which the whole situation had been reviewed, Botha spoke at a by-election in Grahamstown, in order to clear the oppressive atmosphere. Once again he explained his policy of co-operation.

On the following day Hertzog went to De Wildt, in the Pretoria district; this time, a fresh speech of a sensational character became the immediate cause of the 'crisis.' The object of true nationalism, so the Minister held forth, was to get the country governed by none but those who were inspired by true affection for South Africa. He "made bold to state that within five years no one, not even Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, would dare maintain that South Africa's interests were subordinate to those of the Empire. Imperialism was good only inasmuch as it might be of use to South Africa." He wound up:

> I am not one of those who always have their mouths full of conciliation and loyalty, for these are vain words that deceive no one. Many people have turned their backs on them, saying: "All this signifies so little that I would sooner not hear it any longer." I myself have always said that I do not know what conciliation means.

Botha, who was at Rusthof, had to return to the capital. Ministers were called together. Colonel Leuchars—who had joined the Cabinet after the defeat of Sir F. Moor at the polls—was tired of the speechifying of his colleague; he wanted to get out. In his report to Steyn, Abraham Fischer, the aged and mellowed friend and colleague of Hertzog's, stated: "We are staging a farce"; he was the only Minister, he added, who did not hold the view that

> Hertzog's untimely action was neutralizing all the good wrought by Botha's policy. Yet I cannot deny that in this case, as elsewhere, Hertzog's manner—although perfectly innocent in intention—was, as regards tact and tactics, unfortunate and uncalled-for.

Was not Fischer labouring under a delusion as to the Minister of Justice's repeated "unfortunate" appearances not being intended to pile up difficulties for the Government? Was there not considerable method in Hertzog's "tactlessness," which, in Steyn's eyes, made him a martyr, *i.e.*, a deliberate agitator? Shortly after his expulsion from the

Cabinet, Hertzog, in a weekly that was devoted to his cause, set out the course of events, as follows:

> At a Cabinet meeting on December 10, 1912, specially convened, Botha announced that Colonel Leuchars—who was a moderate, accommodating representative of Natal—intended resigning. Leuchars was not present, as Hertzog's latest speech had annoyed him. Hertzog was extremely surprised: this was the first time he had been told there was anything very much wrong! On the same day, Hertzog and Leuchars met; the latter agreed that South African interests should take precedence over Imperial considerations. The next morning Botha interviewed Hertzog. Leuchars insisted on resigning; Botha, who also embraced the principle of "South Africa before the Empire," asked Hertzog what he advised; the latter demanded complete freedom to proclaim the principle from the housetops, without which he would send in his resignation. Another Cabinet council the same day! Everybody joined in the chorus of "South Africa first." Nevertheless, Hertzog felt that they were all thirsting for his resignation. He determined not to go, unless asked to do so, due cause being shown. Voluntarily he left the meeting, so as not to impede free discussion. Two days afterward, Fischer approached him with a letter he was to sign, promising not to make speeches on very high politics without previously consulting the Premier. His self-respect prevented him from accepting this proposal. In the afternoon a final Cabinet meeting took place. Botha informed his colleagues that he would tender his resignation to his Excellency. On Saturday, December 14, the resignation was accepted; the first Union Cabinet had ceased to exist.

Burton and Sauer take a Hand.—This presentation of the case by General Hertzog is, of course, quite correct, as far as it goes; it is, however, by no means the whole of the case. It fails to record, for instance, that Leuchars—who was the reverse of pugnacious—as well as Botha proved extremely patient and desirous of meeting Hertzog, until the very last. Likewise that the whole incident might have ended innocuously had not Messrs Burton and Sauer been seized with the fear that, after the Premier's conciliatory attitude, any drawn battle, resulting from the wordy warfare, would leave the Government without the slightest guarantee against Hertzog's knack—whether deliberate or other-

wise—of harming the S.A.P. by his orations. Probably Hertzog did not come to hear of this until later. The two Ministers, urged by the warnings of Merriman—who was in England at the time—told Botha of their wish that Hertzog should expressly undertake not to ventilate any opinions on the Union's status within the Empire unless he had consulted, if not the Cabinet, at any rate the Prime Minister.

Short of his giving such an undertaking, they said, they would have to consider resignation. It was therefore no longer "the hysterical, Imperial policy of Smartt, Leuchars & Co."—President Steyn's elegant phrase—for the sake of which Hertzog was being thrown to the wolves—it was the view of Merriman, Burton, and Sauer—*i.e.*, the Cape friends of General Hertzog and President Steyn—that succeeded in producing a really acute crisis at the eleventh hour. Fischer was quite ready to convey a request, as advocated by Burton and Sauer, to the Minister of Justice, General Smuts, in order to serve the aged Fischer's convenience, drafted a statement, but without in the least intending that the latter should rub the very draft under Hertzog's nose—as actually happened. The definite refusal to provide a guarantee, as demanded by Burton and Sauer, was followed immediately by Botha's resignation, which meant Cabinet dissolution.

The "Farce."—For five whole, anxious days the "farce" dragged on, confined strictly within the Cabinet circle. The Premier's desire to avoid a breach within the youthful South Africa Party was so ardent that he was hoping against hope until the very last to retain a chastened General Hertzog in his Cabinet. Repeatedly the two compared notes; time after time the Cabinet met, intervals of profound silence alternating with protracted, but always placid, discussion. There was no question of either explosions or threats. Just as if ordinary, everyday matters had been on the *tapis* these men acted and talked, until the moment came when the fated surprise had to be sprung on the people; like a sudden, volcanic outburst it reverberated

through the length and breadth of the land. "On Saturday, at about noon," Hertzog tells us, "General Botha's private secretary informed me that the Prime Minister had resigned, whereupon I left my office."

Whose head was fit for the martyr's crown of thorns on that memorable Saturday afternoon: Hertzog's or Botha's?

Hertzog's "expulsion" was the logical sequel to his refusal—unjustifiable by any appeal to constitutional usage—to keep in sympathetic touch with his Premier and other colleagues. The crisis itself automatically flowed from his unwillingness—likewise in conflict with constitutional practice—to leave a Cabinet in which he was a misfit, as his own self-respect ought to have warned him. No one can deny him the merit of having manœuvred so cleverly that his followers felt he had suffered indignity when at last he was expelled from, thrown out of, the Government. For months on end he carried on a guerilla war against his late chief, stirring up unrest. According to plan—as he had informed Steyn—he had given Botha rope for more than a twelvemonth, so that the Premier might comfortably hang himself. When his colleagues, according to the proverbial worm's example, finally began to turn, Hertzog assumed the thankful *rôle* of the innocent victim, with Botha cast for the wicked sinner.

It is instructive to note that the ultimate protests against Hertzog's platform manner did not originate in "jingoistic" Natal, and even less in Botha's office, but in the camp commanded by Merriman, which had continued to bask in General Hertzog's favour, and where any idea of taking Botha's part as such was absent, so to say. Merriman had taken fright at what he called "Hertzog's slack jaw." Possibly the latter had expected to be able to checkmate his colleagues in the character of determined opponents of the principle of "South Africa first." Baulked in this, he must have seen himself reduced to the necessity of saving his face by an ultimatum insisting on his perfect right to continue his "tactlessness and bad tactics," as Fischer called it. That Botha, instead of resorting to force, was extremely

accommodating, is certain. It surely did not suit either his party or his policy to eject General Hertzog! The Premier never imposed his authority sufficiently to claim from his rather awkward colleague an account of his doings. The latter, on his part, consistently remained passive in the Cabinet, despite the Government's inclination—so pernicious, in his view—"to neglect the interests of the people," to use his own words. Immediately after the De Wildt speech, Botha wrote to President Steyn:

"In Cabinet General Hertzog has so far supported me throughout; in public he has failed to show what precise point of Government policy, of any practical importance, he felt bound to disapprove."

And further, on the speech in question:

"The effect was that of an electrical shock, as far as our English-speaking fellow-citizens are concerned; it soon became plain to me that the remnant of moderate English Afrikanders, still clinging to us, had been estranged as well."

Hertzog could count on the secession from the ranks of the South Africa Party, established no more than a year previously, of the "national" element. In addition, he helped to weaken that party, and therefore the Government, by driving from it the "moderate British," at whom Botha's conciliation policy was consistently aimed.

Cabinet Solidarity.—It is legitimate to inquire whether, as contended by General Hertzog, self-respect prohibits a Minister from promising his chief not to discuss matters of high policy in public, except after common counsel. Constitutions based on the English model, including our own, make no mention of the existence of a Prime Minister. Nevertheless, our political world generally recognizes, as Lord Oxford's recent book puts it,

> the convention of Cabinet solidarity, that is of such an appearance of unity as compels a dissentient to resign his office before he openly speaks and votes against the policy of the Administration.

Lord Melbourne, who was Premier in name only, nevertheless opined that "it did not matter very greatly

what Ministers said, as long as they were all saying the same thing." Lord Rosebery compared the Prime Minister to the chairman of a board of directors—his was the initiative and the lead in vital issues. In view of all this, the conclusion that Hertzog, with his rather long—and deliberate, or, as Fischer called it, "innocent"—score would have been neither humiliated nor insulted if he had accepted the Burton-Sauer scheme with a good grace, does not appear extravagant at all. President Steyn's insinuation—in reply to Fischer's request for advice, during the crisis—to the effect that Botha made use of his lieutenants just as long as he had need of them, and then jettisoned them, and that anyone with convictions of his own nettled him, appears unfair, particularly where the case of Hertzog has to serve as an illustration. For Botha never called him in as a welcome lieutenant; as regards the jettisoning process, the truth is that the would-be Jonah during the whole of the past year had been pining for the glorious moment when he could advantageously evacuate his position on the Botha vessel. He himself records: "There could be no doubt as to the Prime Minister having reluctantly accepted me as a colleague."

Was the breach between the Botha adherents and the Hertzog support unavoidable? The answer must needs be in the affirmative to those who recognize that in 1912 a fundamental and irreconcilable divergence of political ideals had arisen as between the two groups. One postulated partnership in a commonwealth of free British States as an essential condition for the Union's future, in our own time. The other looked for salvation to a sovereign State, with a republican *régime*, outside that commonwealth. Since 1912, however, the internal structure of the British Empire has undergone changes so radical that, in the result, the clash between those two ideals has become less acute—so much so that, in the opinion of many sensible people, it has ceased to exist.

Be it understood that South Africa's white inhabitants, shortly after unification, fell into three categories: ultra-

Afrikanders on the one side, and the extreme English on the other, with a preponderant section of moderate Afrikanders and British in between. The latter section could not conceive of any political salvation except by co-operation in public life. Of this middle group, which constantly fluctuated in its numbers, Botha was the soul, and the South Africa Party the outward manifestation. English extremists, since 1910, had their own party organization known as the Unionists. No wonder the ultra-Dutch had simultaneously begun to emulate them, hankering after separate existence as a preliminary to the extension of their influence and to ultimate power. In Hertzog they found their champion, who toward the end of 1912 deemed the moment suitable for leaving his party, not by running away, but by having himself "chucked out."

After a long and hardly elevating mix-up, the Hertzog party was founded. Botha remained Union Premier until the day of his death, almost seven years later.

Twelve years after the crisis, General Hertzog captured the premiership.

XXXI

BOTHA AND GENERAL DE WET

THE sensation caused by the Pretoria events of December 14, 1912, was not lessened by the fact that the "two voices" with which Ministers had been speaking had greatly surprised the public, so that decisive action by the Premier might have been anticipated at any moment. Lord Gladstone, Governor-General, accepted Botha's resignation in the forenoon; the same statesman was invited, in the afternoon of that day, to form a new Government. It was not long before the shepherd had his flock together once more, excepting of course the ex-Minister of Justice and of Native Affairs, who was not asked to rejoin. Colonel Leuchars stood out, and retired from politics.

Many people, especially in the ex-Republics—where, prior to 1899, members of the Executive were elected for definite periods, and therefore could not be deposed—were hopelessly bewildered by General Hertzog's fate no less than by the exact nature of the crisis that had taken its name from him. The general impression was that Botha would never even attempt to get on without his Free State colleague. When, however, all doubt had vanished, the hope was expressed that a little confabulation would lead to the 'restoration' of the ex-Minister. Originally few people recognized the inevitability of a rift within the South Africa Party; whilst very few realized that what was tantamount to the raising of the Republican banner was bound to produce such a result sooner or later.

Shortly after his expulsion Hertzog, in a Press interview, described his relations with his late colleagues. On December 17 his Smithfield constituents gave him a vote of confidence. Botha, on the 20th, manifested in the

newspapers that the new Government would continue his policy of building up a united nation on non-racial lines; he was of opinion that the question of precedence of South African, as opposed to Imperial, interests should not have been discussed, there being no occasion; he himself put South African interests first, and so did the bulk of the people; this, however, did not prevent either himself or the South Africa Party from fully appreciating the Imperial tie; under its free Constitution, South Africa was enabled to develop fully both its local patriotism and its national characteristics, always within the limits of the Empire; the De Wildt speech had been taken to imply opposition to the policy of racial reconciliation; it therefore led to the general conviction that the Government was speaking with two voices; in those circumstances he, Botha, could not possibly consent to remain Premier, and, since Hertzog refused to resign, Cabinet dissolution had remained his only course.

Reinstatement Ruled Out.—On January 4, 1913, Hertzog made a speech at Smithfield from which Botha finally concluded that restored co-operation was out of the question; so reinstatement was not to be thought of. A few days later President Steyn suggested that Hertzog should be asked to return; but Botha stuck to his guns. On January 24 Parliament reassembled; a few caucus meetings of S.A.P. Senators and M.L.A.'s took place. During the first few days of the Session the respective friends of Botha and Hertzog, authorized by these two, met and privately discussed the situation. The result was *nil.* The ex-Minister would not abandon his claim, which was that Botha should resign, seeing that he, Hertzog, could no longer serve under him! Those who asked for information concerning the crisis were invariably told by Botha that there was no personal quarrel; he abstained from offensive expressions toward his antagonist.

"I never queried General Hertzog's good faith or patriotism, whatever may have been said about me by the other side. Tell the public to remain calm and moderate.

I have every confidence in the common sense of our people," Botha wrote to one who wanted him to "heal the breach." A great many interested spectators completely failed to understand the inwardness of the situation, which was that the Hertzog ultimatum had for its object 'chucking' Botha out of the Government.

Recently Mr Fischer, who remained a member of the Cabinet, had been transitorily honoured with a vote of confidence by his constituents at Bethlehem; it therefore became difficult—especially for Free State politicians—to select the positions one intended to occupy on the brand-new fighting front. Scarcely half a dozen South Africa Party members of Parliament proved willing to side against Botha.

Enter President Steyn. His solution was that the Assembly should be dissolved, Botha and Hertzog both standing back for the time being, in order that the party might fix on fresh leadership. The Premier replied that it would be cowardice on his part to run away. The dispute, he pointed out, was not one for the electorate to settle; the annual congress of the South Africa Party would have to decide, as an internal difference of opinion was involved. The Cabinet crisis was not a national affair, resorting as it did under the party organization, which sent its best men to Congress as its delegates.

At a largely attended meeting in Rustenburg General de la Rey, who presided, advised his hearers to "let the grass grow over the quarrel." At a big demonstration, held in favour of Botha at Standerton in December, the Premier returned to the charge:

"The man who stands for the Empire rather than for South Africa is a traitor to his country; but to take up a hostile position would be folly, because there is simply no occasion for it."

On May 24, 1913, the Kruger statue at Pretoria was unveiled. From Capetown, where Parliament was in Session, Botha wrote a letter for publication. Addressing his Dutch-speaking countrymen particularly, he sounded the praises of the late President. Of his English-speaking

THE MEMORIAL TO PAUL KRUGER AT PRETORIA

compatriots he asked: "Has your late enemy really been crushed? Is not his spirit still alive?" And then his thoughts went back to "that other great man," Rhodes. He reminded South Africa that the contradictory ideals of those two had led to a violent clash. "Which of them prevailed?" Botha asked in conclusion. "Humbly, we bow our heads."

In those days it was risky to speak respectfully of Rhodes to the Dutch, and his reference, at the foot of the Kruger statue, to "that other great man" was grist, warmly welcomed by the 'Nationalist' mill.

The Fateful Capetown Congress.—Over 240 delegates, including but a few from Natal, flocked to Capetown on November 20, 1913, for the great South Africa Party Congress. The Free Staters had had almost twelve months to sum up the situation, and to look for allies in other provinces. They kept together at the back of the hall, and frequently were very noisy. Botha spoke for more than an hour; Hertzog followed.

General de Wet then got up to move that President Steyn be asked to lead the party. Someone else preferred Merriman as Premier. Finally, on the motion of Mr C. J. Krige—afterward Speaker of the Assembly—it was resolved by 131 votes to 90 to "request the Government to carry on." Congress then gave its attention to miscellaneous matters; but most of the Free Staters left after General de Wet, approaching the table where members of the Committee were sitting, had called out "Adieu!"

The schism in the strongest and most influential political organization of South Africa, and at the same time in the Dutch-speaking section of the population, had become an accomplished fact. As long as this section was oppressed, its members had stood shoulder to shoulder, hand in hand. They had no sooner obtained freedom of action than the leaders began to criticize and intrigue among themselves, thus engendering division among their followers. Once more it had become a national sport to despise and blackguard one another!

The moment Hertzog was no longer a Minister, General de Wet girded up his loins for the anti-Botha campaign. Eleven years before, they had had the first open bout, at Vereeniging, where the Free Staters opposed the conclusion of a peace treaty, proposed by the Transvaalers. When some of the officers continued to insist that the war should be prosecuted, since there remained always Cape Colony in which to fight, Botha had retorted:

"I may be permitted to have my own opinion on that subject. Chief Commandant de Wet was unable to invade the Colony even in the best days, when he had fresh horses and a large force. How, then, are we to manage now? Winter is coming, and our horses are spent."

This speech wounded the passionate Free State commander to the quick, although anything of the sort was far from Botha's intention. De Wet had always been consumed by the ambition to overrun the Colony with his commandos. Twice he made ineffectual attempts. General Smuts, on the other hand, had managed to penetrate into Cape Colony with a select band of Transvaalers, shortly after de Wet's failure; with his constantly increasing forces the former had proved quite a handful to the British. Mention, at Vereeniging, of his reverses south of the Orange had hit de Wet like a stinging reproach. Moreover, it turned out to be Botha who took a leading part during the peace negotiations, and who subsequently built up a progressive reputation in politics; his conciliation policy had gradually won the day, as de Wet was anything but pleased to observe. All this combined to alienate the latter from the Premier; de Wet esteeming his own particular brand of patriotism a finer article than Botha's, although he lagged far behind the Transvaal leader as a skilful statesman.

The "Dungheap" Demonstration.—Immediately following the sensational Cabinet crisis, an anti-Botha movement was started at Pretoria in December 1912, under the name of the Hertzog Demonstration Committee. It proved no difficult matter to persuade de Wet to emerge from his

General Christian De Wet
Photo E.N.A.

relative obscurity as a farmer in the Vrede district, in order to add his strength to the agitation. With dramatic suddenness he appeared at Pretoria. At an impromptu open-air meeting, known to fame as "the Dungheap Demonstration" (December 28, 1912), he loudly clamoured —moved by an indignation that was hard to justify— against Hertzog's expulsion. He must have felt that he was not quite the man one would have selected as adviser to the public on delicate matters of constitutional practice. He reminded his audience—as angry as it was ill-informed —that "a few years after the Boer war he had been dragged by the hairs into the Free State Cabinet—as Minister of Agriculture—but soon left it, recognizing as he did that there were younger, and more highly educated, men who could profitably replace him."

This admitted unfitness for the arts of government, however, nowise restrained the turbulent patriot from feeding the flame of discontent, heart and soul. In order to mark his contempt for the de-Hertzogged Botha *régime*, he resigned from the Defence Council, which was presided over by General Smuts as the responsible Minister. De Wet now became one of the most active propagandists for the embryo-republican party. With sly enjoyment of other people's quandaries, or else in pained astonishment—as the case might be—outsiders were able to watch the famous Boer warlords belabouring and doing their best to out-manœuvre each other.

A year after his Capetown "adieu" to the South Africa Party, de Wet saw his public career end pathetically when, west of Vryburg (Bechuanaland), the redoubtable warrior was captured, only in the nick of time, on his way to German territory. Among military men this ignominious Rebellion incident created great interest, especially on account of the rapidity with which events had moved. To Botha, who had never ceased to appreciate his brave comrade's great qualities, de Wet's rash acts were a source of profound pain. When, as Commander-in-chief of the Union forces, he marched against the rebels under de Wet near Winburg,

grief affected him so deeply that he was obliged to drug himself.

De Wet was sentenced to six years' imprisonment, but released after serving eleven months. For this reprieve the Premier cheerfully assumed the greater part of the responsibility. It redounds to the credit of the South African people that no voice was raised against the mercy extended to the sixty-two-year-old hothead. De Wet survived Botha for two and a half years.

At the foot of the Monument.—The last meeting between the two took place on December 16, 1913, four weeks after the famous "adieu" at Capetown. It was at the unveiling of the Bloemfontein Monument erected to the memory of 26,251 women and children who had perished in the Boer war concentration camps. The solemn ceremony was attended by about twenty thousand people, a remarkable congregation in our thinly populated country. After President Steyn's inaugural oration, the Netherlands Consul-General, Botha, de Wet, and, finally, de la Rey spoke. All felt the shadow overhanging the monument. The imposing obelisk, resting on its bronze pedestal, represented the efforts of the whole of the compatriots of the victims; yet here those same compatriots were facing each other in bitter party warfare. Our people traditionally take their differences of opinion very seriously!

A Pretoria newspaper, commenting on the ceremony, remarked: "The Prime Minister was the guest of the Free Staters; as true hosts they behaved." To describe Botha as a guest was incorrect, inasmuch as the monument embodies the devotion, not merely of Free Staters but of their fellow-South Africans through the length and breadth of the Union.

XXXII

BOTHA AT THE CARLTON HOTEL

THE first of a series of years replete with constant effort and sorrow for Botha opened with 1913. Just as if politics were not causing him enough anxiety and disillusion, the middle of the year saw an ebullition of feeling that proved to every thinking South African that the Empire and the native question were not the only pebbles on his problem-strewn beach. Early in July a serious riot broke out on the Witwatersrand, reaching its culmination on the 4th. Thanks to the personal intervention of the Prime Minister and General Smuts, the Golden City was saved an even greater catastrophe.

The first organized conflict between miners and their employers had occurred in May 1907, *i.e.*, shortly after the Botha ministry took over from Lord Selborne, under the Bannerman Constitution. Until then the miners, nearly all of British birth, had shown themselves to be anti-Boer, in emulation of the magnates. Chinese importation, however, had created suspicion; the solidarity between workers and owners, dating back to pre-Boer war days, and rooted in racial feeling, vanished. On May 2, 1907, trouble arose at the Knights Deep Mine; soon the Village Deep, Crown Deep, and other properties were affected. The issue was whether one white man was to supervise three drills—instead of two, as hitherto—thus reducing the proportion between white overseers and native miners. On the outbreak of the strike, the mine owners employed new men, and evicted strikers from their quarters. The Government, which in those days was often supported by the few Labour members in the House, appointed a

committee to inquire into the cause of the strike, especially the mistakes made by both sides.

The quarrel did not disorganize general labour conditions on the Rand, but had nevertheless a far-reaching sequel. The oversea-born miners had always been very jealous of their practical monopoly on the goldfields. They refused to tolerate the introduction of South African born men in the mines. Annually they used to send 'home' a couple of million pounds, representing their savings. As soon as the strike began, a number incontinently left the Rand, and were as promptly replaced by South Africans. Thus it was that the country Boer began to penetrate the industry, resulting in a complete change, within a few years, in economic and political conditions on the Rand.

The 1913 Revolt.—The unrest of June 1913 was of a particularly violent character. Perhaps it should be regarded as a symptom of the tension all over the world shortly before the Great War. On May 26 the strike had begun, after a dispute as to the working conditions of five underground men at the Kleinfontein, which was controlled by Sir George Farrar, leading Rand financier and politician. On May 28 the management offered to take back all the strikers. On June 6 this offer was repeated to all those who might choose to return before June 11; thirty-one did return. On June 12 the management met a committee of strikers, offering to take back as many as practicable, and to find work for the remainder elsewhere. The fifty strike-breakers would, however, not be sacked. This offer was turned down the same day. A movement to express sympathy with those who had not been restored to their jobs invaded the whole of the industrial area; on June 29 there was an outburst at Benoni, the strikers gaining the upper hand. British troops—placed at the disposal of the Government by Lord Gladstone—were posted at another part of the goldfields, the East Rand Proprietary Mines, also controlled by Sir George Farrar. The retention of British regiments had, so far, been treated by an autonomous Union—which should, of course, look

after its own defence by land and sea—as a not altogether unwelcome anomaly.

As soon as the trouble spread to Johannesburg proper, matters became alarming. The day and night of July 4, when arson, looting of stores where firearms were sold, and street fighting succeeded one another, will always stand out as a disgraceful page in the annals of the Golden City's brief but fascinating history. The casualties amounted to at least twenty-one dead, seven badly and forty slightly wounded. The chiefs of the mining industry left the city when their offices were threatened by the maddened crowd.

Truculent multitudes occupied the central wards of the town, and no one knew what July 5 might bring forth. At this stage, Botha and Smuts decided to intervene personally; they unhesitatingly motored from Pretoria to Johannesburg —thirty-five miles. Approaching the Rand, they had to proceed warily, for wherever they were recognized, their welcome was by no means a cordial one. After having consulted the police, they left for the Carlton Hotel, where they met four delegates from the Federation of Trade Unions, whose Committee numbered forty-six. The President, A. Watson, was one of the four, with J. T. Bain as the principal spokesman.

The meeting was held in extraordinary surroundings; the streets on all four sides of the hotel were crowded with excited people. Angry cries gave indications as to the danger of the situation. The main entrance was guarded by a *posse* of constables with loaded rifles. The negotiators had revolvers, with the exception of Botha and his private secretary, Dr Bok. The city, and in fact the whole of the Rand, stood pretty well at the mercy of the mob.

The Bain 'Treaty.'—It did not take long to patch up a settlement, which will go down to history as the Bain Treaty. It was agreed that the Kleinfontein strikers were to be reinstated; the 'scabs' to be dismissed would be compensated by the Government. Strikers on other mines would not be interfered with; the workers' grievances were to be submitted to the authorities for inquiry. Care would be

taken of victims' families, and the Department of Justice was to close one eye after the restoration of order. Meanwhile "an armistice" of twenty-four hours was proclaimed.

The four returned to the Federation offices, in order to get their Committee to ratify the agreement. Botha and Smuts went to the Orange Grove Hotel, just outside the town, for a discussion with the mine owners concerned. In the street their car was stopped. "You can shoot," Botha said, "we are unarmed. But know this, that we are here to make peace for you people, and that if we are shot, all that is finished!"

They recommended the 'treaty' to the consideration of the mining companies. It has been said that they found the magnates in a state of panic. That is not so. Sir G. Farrar, for one, wanted to return with the Ministers to the Carlton Hotel, but Botha would not hear of it, having good reason to fear that Sir George would not survive the trip.

It did not take Botha and General Smuts long to get back to the hotel. They were unescorted. The agreement was signed, sealed, and delivered. When Parliament met, General Smuts confessed to having felt deeply humiliated by having to put his name to such a document on July 5.

Almost a Tragedy.—When the negotiations were all but over, a tragedy was narrowly averted. One of the four Federation men went on to the balcony, where he tried to convey by gestures that matters were shaping well. The crowd pushed forward in order to make out what he had to say. The constables below, who could not see the balcony, suspected an attack on the hotel, and prepared for resistance. The crowd began to shout wildly, and was ready to take flight. A terrible cry went up from the horrified spectators. Fortunately, Colonel Truter, Chief Commissioner of Police, rushed to the balcony, and told the constables to lower their rifles. The revolt had been quelled. The whole country breathed more freely as the result of the ministerial visit became known.

It had gradually become apparent that those who, in politics, represented the Labour Party had little or no influence with the miners and their trades union sympathizers, by whom they were ignored as negotiators between Government and the infuriated crowd. The spirit of unrest, however, continued to agitate the country; it was strengthened to a great extent by overseas events, which were being closely watched by the Labour leaders of that day. In January 1914 another strike broke out, this time among railwaymen who objected to alleged retrenchment schemes. It looked as if the whole country—especially Capetown, Durban, and the Rand—was about to be visited by a general industrial upheaval. Quickly the burghers in the rural districts were mobilized for the guarding of railway communications and the protection of the gold-fields population from any threat by the natives. General de la Rey had his guns trained on the Johannesburg Trades Hall. Nine strike leaders were secretly deported, before the Courts got time to decide on the legality of their arrest.

His actions in those days earned for Botha the reputation among his opponents of being the inventor of the *platskiet politiek*, which means a policy of shooting people down ruthlessly. By nature he was one who knew how to enforce authority: in the family circle, on his farm, amid shot and shell, and at his office. To obey the law, to respect a compact, was his instinct. As a farmer he had come into contact but little with organized industrial conditions, but he had witnessed the useful work of trade unions. He knew Labour politicians, too, thoroughly realizing what they stood for in the fabric of South African society, both as regards their strong points and their drawbacks. It may not be forgotten that during the period of the two strikes mentioned the railway service and the mining industry formed a closed circle, the chiefs of which were not accustomed to consult their Government at times when circumstances called for it.

XXXIII

BOTHA AND THE NATIVES

ACCUSTOMED from childhood to exercise authority over natives, Botha became familiar with the warlike methods as well as peace customs of the Zulus—in those days the best type of South African aborigine. He spoke a couple of Bantu languages fluently, and chiefly studied the pragmatic aspect of the relationship between white and black. It has already been related in earlier chapters how he owed his life to a well-aimed bullet when, during the Dinizulu-Usibepu war, one of the latter's warriors wanted to kill him with an assegai, and how, but for Botha's presence of mind and courage, Mapelo (Usibepu's officer) would probably not have spared the young man when the *impi* came to take away his sheep.

Under the "New Republic" he had done the work of a native commissioner. When the South African Republic needed a few officials in order to put things straight in Swaziland, Botha was one of the men sent, leaving behind him, as he had done in Zululand, pleasant recollections. Ordinarily, white men are given descriptive nicknames by the natives; Botha, however, was invariably addressed or spoken of as "Lewies"—pronounced *Leveess*, which is the Zulu pronunciation of his Christian name, Louis. During the Boer war, when everything was topsy-turvy, the Swazis observed the neutrality he enjoined on them. Kaffir chiefs in other parts, where he was sometimes compelled to fight or retreat, invariably respected and feared him. When he had to pass a native village at night, at the head of his men, he did not interfere with the inhabitants, knowing that this passivity on his part would make them refrain from reporting him to the enemy the next morning.

On being called to the helm of State he continued to direct native affairs, to the satisfaction of his colleagues, who gladly recognized his superior knowledge and experience. The corner-stone of his policy was the retention of political power—if possible for ever—by the whites, both as a matter of self-preservation and for the sake of the natives themselves. His second principle was that it does not pay to treat natives badly, any more than it will to enable them to interfere in the white man's concerns. All this was on the old, approved Boer lines, which did not systematically exclude natives from industrial employment.

The Colour Bar.—One day, in 1906, I dropped in on Botha at his tiny office in one of Pretoria's office-buildings and found him in converse with a rather corpulent native in formal black attire. "Colleague of yours!" Botha said. It appeared the visitor was the editor of the leading native paper in Cape Colony. Although Botha at that time had not yet attained to any position of official authority, the native politician considered it well to get into touch with the budding statesman. I listened to the discussion. When the journalist had gone, Botha gave me the benefit of his views on the industrial aspect of the native problem. He was by no means a thorough-going advocate of the colour bar, so often arrogantly demanded by Labour circles.

Botha's sound insight was proved by his opposition to Chinese importation on the ground that South Africa was able to supply an adequate native labour supply for the mines as well as other employers. When the experts, who danced to the tune called by Lord Milner, had rejected Botha's statements after inquiry, it was not found possible to keep more than 70,000 natives together in the gold mines. Only a couple of years later, when Botha was in power, there were no less than 185,500! During the early stages of the National Convention in 1908, some of its members were inclined to stand up for an extension of the Cape system, which included native franchise. Botha, however, stressed the fact that they had not met in order to settle the native question. Successfully he urged that unification of

the four Colonies would incidentally benefit the Bantu race, and that lack of confidence in the white man's rule would lead to disaster. He opposed any native franchise in the northern Provinces.

Dinizulu Sheltered.—His first act as Union Premier was to release Dinizulu, who had been imprisoned by the Natal authorities in 1909. The Boer war had, *i.a.*, banefully affected the native *moral.* The Zulus were restive. In consequence of the dismemberment of the Transvaal in 1902, and the annexation of Vryheid to Natal, Dinizulu—who had always had the support of the Boers—lost prestige. His opponents challenged him, and in 1906 disorder began. Maritzburg mobilized a force, which included British troops from the Transvaal and Natal volunteers. A punitive expedition against the Zulus, with everything it involved, was undertaken. Native unrest spread, and in the course of 1907 Botha wrote to Sir F. Moor, the Natal Premier, suggesting a way of putting an end to the trouble.

Public opinion in Cape Colony and at Pretoria became articulate. In Transvaal Government circles the question arose: What was to be the attitude in case Dinizulu fled for protection to Botha, who, twenty years since, had assisted at his coronation? Fears as to the conflagration spreading from Natal to Basutoland were not without foundation. Those who—without being pro- or anti-Dinizulu—felt that Maritzburg had tackled the whole affair in the wrong way could not fail to see that the recklessness of the weakest of the four Colonies—which depended for its safety on either England or the other three—was imperilling the whole of the sub-continent.

At last Natal listened to reason. Meanwhile—in 1907—Dinizulu had been captured; two years later he was condemned to a term of imprisonment. In June 1910 Botha conditionally released him, allocating for his use a farm in the district of Middelburg (Transvaal), where he could reside in safety. This act of clemency greatly impressed the whole of South Africa, the natives in particular.

Plainly they saw that Botha was master in the sub-continent, putting matters right, now that he had the power. Plainly, too, they observed that Botha protected his ally of a quarter of a century ago.

Territorial Segregation.—South Africa as a whole postponed dealing with the native problem until 1910. Some of Botha's opponents went about assuring the people that they carried a cut-and-dried solution in their pockets. He himself openly deprecated the tendency to dwell on matters of detail, while the intention existed to settle a vital political issue by a Napoleonic measure. He shied at an attempt to remove existing anomalies by steps that seemed likely to undermine permanently the whole of our institutions. He was prepared, however, at the instance of Mr Piet Grobler —at present Minister of Lands—and other members of Parliament, to introduce a Bill prohibiting both whites and natives from purchasing ground promiscuously. The measure was to determine what parts of the Union were to be demarcated as white and black areas respectively, for the purposes of land tenure.

That established the legislative principle of territorial segregation; it now remained to effect the demarcation. In 1917 a Bill, due to Sir William Beaumont, was introduced. This energetic, talented Natal ex-judge drafted—with the aid of General L. A. S. Lemmer and other experts—a scheme for the division of South Africa as contemplated. It looked acceptable enough, but was turned down by the native spokesmen. The 1920 Act, establishing local native councils, as well as the 1921 provision for periodical native conferences, tallied perfectly with Botha's formulated views. He continued to oppose native representation in Parliament, just as much as he shook his head when the absolute exclusion of natives, anywhere and for all time, from any skilled labour whatever was urged.

A good many well-meaning people have become persuaded that natives dislike control by Boer statesmen. This conviction has no facts to support it. Apprehension as to 1910 being destined to mark a new, and ill-starred,

departure in the status of the natives was equally unjustified. Botha never posed as a negrophilist, or a benefactor of the tribes. Neither did he put his faith in magic formulæ in settling native affairs. The natives, however, know how to appraise a man's value; and without exception they placed full confidence in Botha.

XXXIV

BOTHA AND THE GREAT WAR

WHEN German troops violated Belgian neutrality, thus endangering Britain's safety, the United Kingdom entered the War, but the Dominions had already been warned as soon as the situation became really critical—on August 1, 1914. General and Mrs Botha intended visiting the Congo State and were travelling in Rhodesia; the Premier wanted to have a look at the country that had sent delegates to the National Convention of 1908. Hurriedly, the anxious tourists returned to Pretoria. While there was nothing surprising in the prospect of the Union joining the large number of participants in Armageddon, Botha was not at all sure of South Africa's temper in such a contingency.

Internal conditions were disturbed and complicated, in contrast with those of the other Dominions. Our one and a half million whites were anything but unanimous or harmonious as to the policy that best suited the circumstances. There was an openly pro-German element; in addition, many, without being in any way Germanophile, were anything but keen to support England, France, or Russia. During the Boer war, not more than fifteen years since, public opinion in Germany had sided against Britain. Notwithstanding the Kaiser's refusal to invite President Kruger to Berlin in 1900, and despite the fact that his Majesty had offered Queen Victoria a plan of campaign against the Boers—as had become publicly known in 1908—anti-British circles in the Union did not care to realize that new conditions no longer permitted of oversea powers attempting to draw South Africa within their sphere of influence. The strengthening of neighbouring German territories was essentially a consummation unwelcome to

the South African interest, although many people did not understand that a South African might in 1914 approve the expedition to Windhoek without being a rabid Germanophobe!

Before long, the British section in the Union naturally felt its military enthusiasm boiling over; there was no hesitation in demanding material assistance to the 'Mother Country' even in the shape of compulsory service overseas. Generally speaking, the Dutch realized the Union's obligations as part of the Empire; but they did not at once feel any overwhelming desire to leap into the fray. In some parts of the country, again, they were only too ready to fight—but on the wrong side! In view of these differences, a wise statesman's duty was to avoid internal conflicts in order to avert the danger of civil war. The Government therefore was careful not to rush matters. It was well advised in adopting a moderate attitude, combined with the most unambiguous position on the side of the Allies.

A Passive Onlooker.—In Parliament Government was fairly assured of the support of both Opposition groups (forty-one Unionists, four Labour men) who represented the British section exclusively. The handful of Nationalists, however, was sure to refuse co-operation, and to advocate a policy of passive onlooking. Who—so the quidnuncs among them argued—could prophesy on what side success was going to be? The Germans did well for the first five weeks; not until September 9, 1914, when Parliament was opened at Capetown, did the battle of the Marne put an end to the enemy's triumphant invasion of France: the character of operations in Western Europe was radically changed. Although Botha felt strong enough in the Assembly for complete control of the situation—the Government party had a little more than fifty seats—no one could tell how the feelings that were agitating the whole of the country might react on members of Parliament. The Prime Minister, not unnaturally, was in hopes of being left to his own devices for the time being. There was so much highly inflammable material within that any

action from without was unwanted. This explains the absence of any glowing cables from Pretoria, offering help to London.

On August 4, when the British Ambassador was recalled from Berlin, the Botha Government sent a cablegram, recognizing the Union's obligations in case of hostilities and undertaking the defence of its territory. If, it said, the British garrisons remaining in South Africa were required elsewhere, the Union would be pleased to let its own Defence Force replace those garrisons, for the duties entrusted to Imperial troops in South Africa. What did this last phrase imply? That the Union stood ready for its own defence? Or was an offensive contemplated as a possibility? Botha had the former interpretation in mind; London took hold of the latter. On August 7 it answered, thankfully accepting the offer to free the garrisons.

Later in the same day, however, a further cable arrived, requesting the occupation of so much of South-west Africa as would control the two ports (Swakopmund and Luederitzbucht) together with any wireless stations. This was regarded by the British Government as a "great and urgent Imperial service," on the understanding that the territory thus to be occupied was to remain at the Imperial Government's disposal, until definite arrangements should have been made at the conclusion of peace.

This request was unexpected—almost unwelcome even, in view of the military aspect of the enterprise. South-west Africa, with a surface as large as France, is extremely arid. And, in addition, there was the increasing tension among inhabitants of the Union. Botha was not at all in a hurry to convene the Cabinet in order to convey the message; he wanted to ponder the situation first. Ministers were not bent on assuming the *rôle* of conquerors; not theirs the ambition to shift another's beacons! Yet it was virtually impossible to refuse, even to those who wanted to study South African interests merely. The Premier, with his usual perspicacity, foresaw the opposition among part of the people to a South-west expedition. Late in the

evening of the day on which the request had reached him, he asked a tried friend of his whether the latter would promise to take part in the affair. The Premier mentioned his presentiment as to the Commandant-General, Beyers, being unwilling to help. Botha, in fact, predicted the latter's resignation; he foresaw unrest, possibly violence, on the part of some of his people; and without delay he resolved to assume chief command in the march to Windhoek.

Two days later another cablegram from London arrived, emphasizing the urgent nature of the matter, and the strategic importance of the Windhoek wireless, which was in constant touch with Germany as well as German warships. What, however, did the average Union citizen know of either the South-west as a whole or the wireless question? Nobody worried about the possible appearance of German cruisers in Union waters. Yet the Government could not refuse. On August 10 Ministers reported that they would cordially co-operate with the Imperial Government on the lines mentioned, provided England supplied all necessary marine transport.

This weighty decision had to be taken without Parliament being consulted, for a Session could not be held until after the lapse of at least three or four weeks. This has been held up to Botha as a reproach, but unjustly. A decision had to be come to on the spot; the second cable from London did not brook any further delay. The Government had to risk an adverse vote in Parliament; and Ministers agreed with the Premier that, if it came, they would resign.

At one time it was alleged that the release of the British garrisons was intended to convey the impression to part of the people that the Government at Pretoria contemplated a declaration of neutrality. Botha, some stated, wanted to mislead the public in that way, by appearing to adhere to a position of neutrality, whilst all the time intending to throw off the mask by pointing to German aggression, which would justify hostilities, even though the Germans had not harmed

the Boers! Such insinuations are merely absurd. Botha's consistent standpoint had been that in the pre-1914 Empire no portion could remain neutral while another portion was at war. He never made a secret of his views regarding Imperial relationships, which were continually modified by developments after 1914. Toward the middle of 1911, when the Pretoria *Volkstem* made a sensational plea for the right of the Dominions to neutrality, Botha—who was then taking the waters at Kissingen—roundly stated in an interview with a British journalist that, according to constitutional law as affecting the Empire, Dominion neutrality in a war involving England was simply unthinkable; moreover, he said, no enemy would respect it. Holding such opinions as these, Botha had no alternative but to treat South-west Africa as enemy territory. Keeping the Union's best interests in view, he decided to comply with the London request.

Volunteers or Pressed Men.—The question arose at once: How is the South-west campaign to be carried on? With volunteers or with Defence Force troops? The 1912 Defence Act provides for personal service, in defence of the Union, in any part of South Africa, either within or without the Union; this principle pervades the Act. At first the Government felt inclined to employ the most efficient fighting force, *i.e.* the Union army, which was of recent birth. It soon became apparent, however, that there would be a plethora of volunteers in case an appeal were made. Apart from the composition of an expeditionary force, the Government had without delay to establish a military organization for the safeguarding of internal safety, once the English garrisons had left. As a matter of course, it wanted to utilize for this purpose members of the Defence Force—who were obliged to serve—and not volunteers.

Upon the inclusion of a military district bordering on South-west Africa among the districts whose Active Citizen Force was mobilized for field duties, the cavillers could not help imagining that those who were liable to serve would be used, *i.a.*, for the occupation of enemy territory. Soon

after the ratification by Parliament of the Government's decision regarding the campaign, Botha clearly announced that volunteers only would constitute the expeditionary force. By that time, however, the evil had already been done; the objection to compulsory participation in the march to Windhoek had had its pernicious effect. Immediately, commandants were convened; Botha and Smuts (as Defence Minister) met them in order to explain that the Active Citizen Force was being called out because of the impending departure of garrisons. The only person who was at once informed of the Cabinet's South-west decision was Beyers, Commandant-General.

De la Rey Becomes Uneasy.—Within very little time, things were at sixes and sevens. General de la Rey sent round messengers with the customary order for the burghers (of Lichtenburg district) to meet at Treurfontein on August 15, mounted. De la Rey was a senator; although he had all the while filled public offices, he had never been able to reconcile himself to the loss of Boer independence. The outbreak of the Great War had affected his mind to such an extent that he could no longer think logically. It is well known that his own son-in-law had ceased to regard him as accountable for his actions in those disturbed days, and considered it necessary to have him looked after. Botha called his old comrade-at-arms to Pretoria; assisted by General Smuts, Schalk Burger, and Mr N. J. de Wet, K.C., he succeeded in calming the distraught old man. The discussion was a painful one to all present, but especially to De la Rey himself. It was a sad disappointment to him to find that neither Botha nor yet any of those others had for a moment contemplated leading a movement that—in view of England's difficulties—could end only in an attempt to restore the two Republics. Throughout the night Botha wrestled with De la Rey, arguing as follows: "It may be God's will to give South Africa back its liberty; but it can never be His intention to bring this about along the road of dishonour and treason." Now and then they knelt together in a long prayer.

Many people shared De la Rey's feelings and were intensely indignant, not only at Botha's sincerity during years of a broad South African propaganda, but also because he had not succeeded in carrying conviction of that sincerity to the nation at large. Botha has been held up widely as the man who is chiefly responsible for the outbreak of the Rebellion, because he is supposed to have been remiss in proving conclusively that he was not quite the hypocrite the irreconcilables had believed him to be!

On the day after De la Rey's pathetic visit to Botha, the first meeting of commandants was held. The Premier refused to allow the desirability of a Windhoek campaign to be discussed, because Parliament still had to decide that question. Half a dozen officers agreed with General Beyers, who was against any expedition, however organized —not for military but for political reasons. The following day De la Rey appeared at the Treurfontein meeting, where a great crowd, with potentialities for any kind of mischief, had gathered. People, however, allowed themselves to be persuaded, and calmly returned to their homes. Botha then called a second meeting of commandants, including those from the Free State.

On August 26 the first Congress of the National (Hertzog) Party met at Pretoria; unanimously the contemplated expedition to South-west Africa was condemned. One of the members of the Nationalist Head Committee openly stated that he expected Botha and Smuts to rebel as soon as they judged the moment to be propitious! Throughout the four years of extraordinary tension that characterized the War, the Union authorities never interfered with the constitutional liberty of the subject; everyone was allowed frankly to air his opinion on men and things, in the newspapers as well as on the platform. While the Nationalists were loudly protesting against participation in the War, the occupation of German territory—secrecy concerning which could not be long maintained—was as energetically urged in other quarters of the Union as indispensable.

Botha and his German Fellow-Citizens.—Until the end of the War, Botha staunchly supported the Allies; within the limits of the Union's delicate internal situation he helped to ensure victory. After putting down a rebellion in his own country, he conquered, during the first half of 1915, German South-west Africa. In 1916 General Smuts took command in East Africa; Botha assisted him in every possible way to carry through the campaign there, incidentally taking over the Defence portfolio from General Smuts for the time being. His Government, however, refused to confiscate the private property of enemy subjects, as effected by other powers. While Botha was campaigning in South-west Africa, semi-organized riots in connexion with the *Lusitania* disaster broke out at Johannesburg, Durban, Capetown, and elsewhere in May 1915. If a building was supposed to belong to a German, it was simply burned and looted. In some quarters these iniquities were applauded; the bulk of the people condemned them. Botha sent a strongly worded telegram from Karibib, demanding that non-combatants should refrain from gratuitous rioting while he and his forces were facing the German Empire in onerous circumstances.

The *Lusitania* outburst of war fever had its echoes in the Session of 1916, when recriminations were flung across the floor of the House, and a Select Committee of Inquiry was appointed. In April that year Botha wrote to a friend:

"The anti-German agitation continues, especially on the part of the 'British Citizen Movement.' Those johnnies are too funky to fight armed Germans, so they are bent upon ruining the unarmed ones, and wreaking their vengeance on poor women and children. I shall insist on protecting our German citizens. What I regret exceedingly is that our Germans did not follow my advice to lie low, and keep out of our political quarrels. Let them use their votes if they like, but not run the risk of joining a political party that includes a strong rebel section."

As military pressure increased, part of our population strongly advocated conscription for service overseas, or

alternatively the payment of volunteers; this was as strongly opposed by the other faction. Botha never allowed himself to be used for the enforcement of either conscription or pay, but encouraged recruiting. His eldest son served in Flanders. When a shortage of dock labourers made itself felt in French ports, Botha arranged for the supply of ten thousand natives, stipulating that these would on no account be used for direct military operations. He knew well enough that the step would be taken strong exception to, but the result showed that the fuss made about it was not justified. Whatever measures had to be either taken or opposed, the Prime Minister always felt the burden of scorn and aspersion that a considerable proportion of his people never ceased to heap on him. Of all belligerent States, the Union possessed the least unity of soul and purpose. We differed from the rest of the warring nations in that party politics continued to play a most prominent part.

The Imperial Wool Scheme.—An instance is afforded by the British Government's offer of May 1917 to buy the whole of the wool clip 1917–18 at fifty-five per cent. above average rates ruling just before the War. Australia and New Zealand were glad to accept; in South Africa there was violent opposition. Just about this time Botha made a short stay at Rusthof for a little rest and avoidance of routine work. The department concerned had not tackled the matter in the most tactful way, creating the impression that the Imperial Government, aided by the Union authorities, intended commandeering the wool. In that way the proposed deal of course invaded the realm of politics. Nationalist sheep farmers were advised to have nothing to do with the scheme.

A few months later, London was notified that Pretoria did not see its way to get the whole of the clip available; part was already sold, and it was not held advisable to interfere with the export arrangements made by dealers. Thanks to strong representations by the Government, however, producers of one-third of the clip had been induced to accept the offer. And now the unexpected happened once more:

suddenly, a greater number of vessels than had been anticipated were able to take cargo; America and Japan made extensive purchases, and South African wool fetched higher prices than the British Government had offered. The Opposition was jubilant! Pretoria, early in 1918, got London to let off the South African sheep farmers who had sold their wool to the Imperial Government. Those who preferred to come under the official scheme made nearly sixteenpence for their product.

During the whole of the Great War, Union politics offered the spectacle of raucous pandemonium, Government being cast for the part of buffer, to take blows from all sides. When General Smuts, after his military success in East Africa, became a member of the Imperial War Cabinet in London, his first speech in the Metropolis (April 2, 1917) contained these words:

> I feel on this occasion that South Africa is not putting her best foot forward. I could wish that General Botha was here to-day to be bracketed with Sir Robert Borden in reply to the toast of the Dominions, but unfortunately he could not be here. He is bearing a burden in South Africa which no other man can bear; and it is unfortunate in a certain sense that I have to take the place of my right hon. friend.

Botha's Sorrows.—As already stated, the Prime Minister had to hand over—to Mr F. S. Malan—during the winter of 1917, so that he himself might take a much-needed rest. Although he used to put a cheerful face on matters in public, his constitution was sapped and his vitality greatly reduced by the overwhelming responsibility of his official duties, and—last, not least—the fact that he was misunderstood and misrepresented by so many of his compatriots. Toward the end of the same year his condition was so serious that he shortly afterward wrote to a friend: "I was absolutely finished. I had given up hope entirely, thinking I should never see you people again; I felt that to go on living was an impossibility."

Even as he penned these lines, however, he already felt a wonderful improvement. Convinced that he was doing

his duty by his country, he emancipated himself from doubt, thus escaping the psychological effect of the hatred and aversion that were concentrated on his person. He further wrote:

> I am very thankful to say that there has been a real and great improvement. For a month now I have had no pain whatever; my liver continues normal; the heart is strong; blood-pressure rather high, but better than it was; I walk up to nine miles a day, and ride three hours. This I am managing comfortably, and my weight regularly goes down by 3 lbs. per week. My mind is clear; I am full of ambition and schemes for a long life.

Eternal rest was his within two years of the date of this letter—just after he had done useful work at Paris, and represented at Versailles the South African dominion, which had become independent.

To Botha's guidance, military as well as political, South Africa owes the fact that the Great War brought it increased prosperity, instead of civil war bleeding it to death. His vigorous action was of incalculable service to the British Commonwealth, and contributed to the Union identifying itself with world events to a remarkably great extent, considering the smallness of its population. Botha's strength of will and enlightened policy conferred on our country its honourable, independent status by the side of Great Britain and her mighty Dominions.

Who can deny that without Botha the fortunes of our country would have been differently shaped! His was the genius that enabled South Africa to reach the proud position she now occupies. Was not he the medium as well for the creation of a united sub-continent as for its subsequent salvation from early disaster?

XXXV

BOTHA IN SPECIAL SESSION

On September 9, 1914, Parliament met in Special Session at Capetown. Within five days both Assembly and Senate had agreed, by an overwhelming majority, to render active assistance to Great Britain by undertaking the expedition against South-west Africa. Had it not been for the powerful wireless station at Windhoek German territory north of the Orange might have been excluded from the direct sphere of British operations; in that case the Union might have contented itself with police patrols on the border. The Allied front was wide enough as it was. Once the occupation of the South-west had become strategically indispensable, the Union Government could not allow any other country's troops to undertake the task, for it was not in the interests of South Africa to give any overseas force an opportunity of replacing the German soldiery north of the Orange.

In Caucus.—It is customary at Capetown for Government supporters to meet in caucus in order to express their opinions of legislative measures, the introduction of which is contemplated. Caucus resolutions are binding on members of the Party. This method results in the closest argumentation sometimes taking place in camera, so that public debates degenerate into a formality, relieved only by objections, raised in all seriousness, by the Opposition. The majority, of course, has already discussed, and decided on, the fate of important measures. Perhaps this explains why Botha's Assembly speech dealing with the Union's attitude in the Great War fell short as regards inspiration and suggestive effect. It was superfluous to try and convince Parliament; that had already been done. In order

to convince the nation, a concise appeal would have answered the purpose better than the elaborate oration the Prime Minister was tempted to deliver, and the weak points of which led to ironical criticism.

No one could reasonably expect of the Transvaal Commandant-General of twelve years before that, as Union Premier, he should be consumed by heart-stirring enthusiasm on behalf of altruistic Albion which, on Belgian neutrality being violated, had drawn the rest of the Empire into war without consultation. Even the most refractory faction would have been appealed to by cold logic, but especially by a clearly outlined programme of what South Africa was able, and willing, to accomplish. There is good reason to believe that the real debate took place in caucus, and that there was no lack of objections on the part of Government supporters; these objections disappeared only after cool discussion.

The resolution submitted by Botha in the Assembly places on record the Union's obligation, as part of the Empire, faithfully to support Britain during the war in which she had become involved; further to take all such measures as might be found necessary to safeguard Union interests, and to ensure its safety, in co-operation with the Imperial authorities. South Africa, Botha argued, formed part of the Empire; it was an ally within the Empire; *ergo*, as soon as the Empire went to war, South Africa *ipso facto* was embroiled. No other way was open, he declared —they had to choose between duty and honour on the one hand, desertion and disgrace on the other.

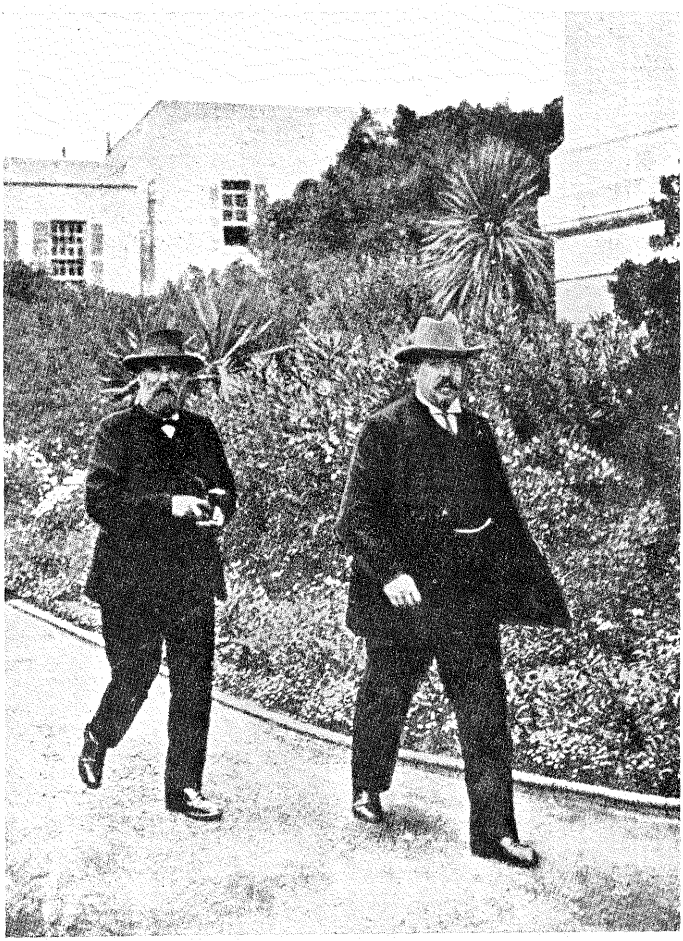
If—as no constitutional expert can deny—this correctly reflected the position of that day, where was the necessity of asking Parliament to place on record its loyalty? The Government could as well have confined itself to a debate on the financial and military aspects of the new situation. The Premier greatly stressed the national sense of honour, which should induce everyone, "in the hour of peril to stand by the Imperial Government." Many, however, were unable to rise to Botha's high level in this respect.

Official information as to what would be expected of the Defence Force was as yet inadequate. The ministerial speech defined the object of mobilization as "taking over the duty of the British garrisons that had been recalled." Was not this rather vague? He further pointed out that a refusal of the British request to occupy South-west Africa would amount to ingratitude, whilst an abundance of arguments that suggested themselves remained unused. What the Government did say was that "the Defence Force would have to be mobilized." One was entitled to deduce from this that, in the campaign, others than volunteers would be used.

The speech was padded, perhaps somewhat gratuitously, with a minute description of a German patrol that had "violated" the Union border, somewhere in the sand desert; then there were theories as to the enemy's godless motives in starting the War, coupled with the undertaking to treat German-descended subjects of the Union with due consideration. To round off, it was stated that, as a proof of Imperial goodwill, the British Government would lend the Union seven millions, and that contributions to overseas charitable funds would be welcomed.

The flaw in Botha's argument was that South Africa was described as "free," but at the same time *ipso facto* a party to the War, and allied to the United Kingdom. In the second place, Botha omitted to accentuate the threat to the Union's own ocean routes, arising from the existence of the Windhoek wireless—Von Spee was not annihilated near the Falklands until December 8, 1914. In the third place, there was the neglect to point out that the Union could not permit any but our own troops to occupy the South-west. In the fourth place, the public was left in ignorance as to whether volunteers only would be used in the campaign, and whether the Defence Force would be sent out. Mention of the British loan, and of the Nakob *casus belli* (Nakob was the name of the famous police post in question), might just as well have been left out.

Two Opposition parties, through their leaders, supported



GENERALS BOTHA AND DE LA REY IN THE GROUNDS OF PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, CAPETOWN, SEPTEMBER 1914

the Premier's motion. General Hertzog described it as unexpected; he moved to resolve that the Union would be ready to repel any attack, but that any aggression toward South-west Africa would clash with the Union's best interests. This was negatived by ninety-two to twelve. Thus "national honour" defeated "national interests." The Senate, too, adopted Botha's resolution. Many people were under the impression that Parliament intended to conduct the campaign with commandeered men; Botha very soon gained the conviction that an army of volunteers would not only be politic, but could be organized without much difficulty.

Was the Government's action really of an unexpected nature? War rumours had been in the air for a long time. Our Prime Minister had consistently proclaimed that Imperial relationships being what they then were, the Dominions could not expect an enemy of Britain to respect any declaration of neutrality, even if constitutionally feasible.

An Undesirable Neighbour.—In addition, Botha was one of those who did not regard the German Empire as a desirable neighbour. This was even apart from the fact that Berlin had as it were surrounded the South-west by a Chinese Wall, obstinately shutting it off from the rest of the sub-continent; commercial as well as other contact with the Union was absolutely discouraged. Dernburg, German Colonial Secretary in 1908, in vain approached Merriman—during a visit to South Africa in that year—about a railway from Walvis Bay—which was Cape territory—not to mention an attempt to obtain a lease over the port. Botha, on that occasion, wrote to the Cape Premier: "It is our opinion, over here, that Germany's influence in South Africa should not be allowed to increase. As for me, I shall never encourage any scheme tending to do so."

At about the same time General Smuts wrote to Capetown: "From the point of view of South Africa's future, the German Empire is no desirable neighbour."

And now that the South-west had become, from a merely indifferent and not exactly desirable neighbour, a hostile one—without the Union Government being in any way to blame—Botha considered himself entirely justified —keeping Union interests in view—in complying with the British request for occupation.

Hertzog's opinion that it was directly to the advantage of South Africa not to go beyond defensive measures is an interpretation of "national interest" that certainly is entitled to consideration. It was by no means extravagantly conceived, but neither did it fit into positive Imperial constitutional law, A.D. 1914; above all, it entirely failed to take into account the war-time psychology of his English-speaking fellow-citizens. Parliament's decision properly to support the Government was afterward proved to have served the national interest.

In those days of panic the Botha Cabinet certainly was not guilty of undue hurry, as will appear from a comparison with the actions of other Dominions. Whereas it waited until August 4 before undertaking to defend South Africa in the absence of British garrisons, Canada as early as August 1 offered "every possible assistance." Whilst the request in connexion with the South-west campaign was not assented to until August 10, the British Government on the 6th had accepted the Canadian offer immediately to mobilize an army for oversea service. On September 9 the Union Parliament began to sit; on August 18 the Canadian Parliament assembled, and four months later it had 212,700 volunteers under arms.

XXXVI

BOTHA AND THE REBELLION

MATTERS had gone fairly well, so far. Part of the forces had been mobilized and were training in camps. General Lukin was at Ramansdrift, Orange River, with Maritz farther east, at Kakamas. Trouble did not really begin until after the Session. The five years that Botha still had to live were to be brimful of bitter experiences and profound sorrow, hardly outweighed by the eventual realization of his heart's desire: a completely independent South Africa, defensively allied with other powerful States. His official worries, which continued without intermission, were bound in the long run to affect his constitution and undermine his health.

September 15, 1914.—On the day of the occupation of Luderitzbucht by Mackenzie (September 15) General Beyers suddenly resigned as Commandant-General, by way of protest against the attitude of Government and Parliament. Quite likely he acted according to the tradition current in Transvaal Republican days, when the Commandant-General was not merely a military functionary confining himself to passive obedience to the orders of his Government but one undoubtedly obliged to exercise his influence in the political field. Late in the evening of the same day, the news of De la Rey's death shocked the whole of South Africa. The ill-starred bullet of a constable had caused the accident. In connexion with the chase of some fugitive criminals orders had been given to fire on any motor that was not stopped when challenged. This happened in General De la Rey's case. On September 20 Botha arrived at Lichtenburg after a lightning journey from Capetown, so as to attend the funeral of his old comrade. Under dramatic

circumstances he addressed the multitude; he quite understood that part of the public easily led themselves to believe that the Government—or else he, personally—was to blame for the sensational fatality, and had perhaps even incited criminal schemes.

His stay at Lichtenburg was not unattended by some risk. People were wrought up to such a pitch that the suspicion of stealthy assassination commended itself to many; even prominent politicians openly discussed it. The same Louis Botha who, but ten years ago, had been acclaimed as a Father to his people was now detested as an evil-doer by a number of them. Before leaving Lichtenburg he interviewed commandants and other mourners, assuring them that the South-west campaign would be conducted with volunteers only, and that he himself had decided to take command. He had hoped that this resolution would be taken as a well-meant attempt to remove disappointment at Beyers' resignation. On the following day a notice was published everywhere in the Union confirming the voluntary character of the expedition against the Germans.

This intelligence came not a day too soon. On the same date, September 21, Generals Beyers, De Wet, and Kemp met at Lichtenburg, where they published a well-thought-out document demanding the cessation of hostilities and the recall of all Union troops. There is reason to assume that Beyers was primarily moved by the desire to prevent South Africa committing itself in an anti-German direction, and to stop active warfare. The other two most likely desired to restore the independence of the Boer Republics. It should not be forgotten that, in the beginning, the fortunes of war, in Europe, had appeared to favour the Central Powers; the assumption was justified that it would soon be all over, to the detriment of the group of States whose part had been taken by the Union Government.

A few days after the Lichtenburg manifesto, De Wet commenced to get busy in the Free State, both privately and at public meetings. Botha, on his part, uninterruptedly mobilized. A fresh meeting of commandants at

Pretoria was enlightened by Botha on the new situation, *i.e.* the enrolment of volunteers to fight under himself as Commander-in-Chief. Thirty-five prominent officers were present; only fifteen were required for active service. Botha asked those who were prepared to follow him to say so. On the spot all, without exception, offered themselves. They even promised that all those who were not among the fifteen to whom a command could be given would take part in the campaign as privates! It will be plain that Botha had not been abandoned by all his compatriots.

Defective Arguments.—After the commandants, it was the public's turn to obtain a *viva voce* explanation by the Premier of the national situation. On September 28 thousands gathered near Bank (in Botha's constituency) south-west of Krugersdorp. This time his speech was to the point, and he took the nation into his confidence. He told them that, failing occupation of South-west Africa by the Union, England would be compelled to effect it, with either Indian or Australian troops. It was surely better to send volunteers from South Africa itself! In practice we could not maintain neutrality, even though legally such a thing was permissible. Britain had counted on the good faith of the Dutch, and it was an obligation of honour to render aid, Afrikanders once having grasped the outstretched hand of the British section.

About the middle of October Maritz's treason, committed near the German border, made it necessary to proclaim martial law. People were getting more and more excited; not a few lost all self-control and judgment. The Dutch Reformed Church of Cape Colony deemed it advisable to publish a message, warning against treason. Everywhere, however, turbulence increased. A prey to war-time psychology, General De Wet found it impossible to remain passive. With a varying measure of success he addressed the Transvaal and Free State public, forming a small committee to act as the mouthpiece of those disaffected with the Government.

In the Free State they had been clever enough to discover

a way out of the *impasse*! If only Botha resigned the premiership, all would be well. Others pinned their faith to an immediate general election! On October 14 the committee mentioned had an interview lasting four and a half hours with Botha, the upshot being that he refused either to stop the campaign or to resign. That, at any rate, showed people how matters stood. A few days later Commandant-General Botha was presented with a flag by a number of ladies; in his speech he pessimistically alluded to the prospect of civil war; he asserted the inviolable authority of Parliament as completely justifying his action.

The incipient rebellion could, alas, no longer be ignored. General Smuts tackled his duty as Minister of Defence thoroughly. At the capital and in other cities a sufficient number of troops was left for protection. The army in the field, which had to operate in three regions, far from each other, consisted of seven thousand men who had always been liable to serve, in addition to twenty-five thousand burghers, few of whom had been commandeered. Botha insisted on excluding, as far as practicable, English-speaking citizens; he wanted to prevent people from identifying the repression of the rebellion with any idea of racialism; he finally resolved to command the Union troops himself, trusting that this would keep many of the half-hearted out of the revolt. London offered to send thirty thousand Australian troops, on the way to Europe, for service in South Africa; but the Government at Pretoria did not accept the offer, stating in its reply that its own people would put down the rebels.

From Damhoek to Hoenderkop.—Maritz, in his distant frontier district, was defeated on October 24; he had to take refuge in enemy territory. Botha meanwhile took his forces to the Rustenburg and Pretoria districts, not far from the seat of government. At Damhoek, in the Magaliesberg, Beyers had gathered many malcontents around him. On taking leave of his wife, Botha complained that, whilst they two had known many a solemn leave-taking, this one oppressed him more than had ever been the

case. In vain he sent out negotiators to the insurgents. Without any incident of historical importance this particular group was dispersed or captured. But the leaders, Beyers and Kemp, escaped.

The Commandant-General was able to return to Pretoria, leaving the pacification of Transvaal districts to his subordinate officers. His care and attention were required farther south, for De Wet was busy in the Free State, preaching restoration of the Republics by force. His followers became more numerous and obtained arms. In the north-eastern districts he was pretty well in control. At Vrede he arrested the magistrate.

Botha left Pretoria on November 9. Five days later there was fighting at Hoenderkop (Mushroom Valley), sixty miles north-east of Bloemfontein, where De Wet had concentrated his men. He had not the slightest misgivings. The homestead on the farm was connected by telephone, and the occupant was all the time talking to Botha's staff, with De Wet chatting just two hundred yards away, leaning against a telephone pole! Three hundred of his men were captured; the others were energetically pursued, and all their transport was taken. De Wet himself made good his escape. For how long? The back of the rebellion was broken, and the Commandant-General was able to go elsewhere.

Kemp's Mounted Men.—There was a bone to pick at the German border. Botha, without resting, took train to Upington (*via* Kimberley), from whence the pursuit of Kemp was being conducted. The latter had fled from the district of Rustenburg with about seven hundred horse. Managing to reach the Kalahari desert, he entered a waterless country, with Union troops at his heels, hoping to get to the Germans. On November 28 he succeeded. By this brilliant exploit General Kemp and his companions introduced an epic element into a period full of afflicting events.

On the following day Botha returned to the Free State where, on November 30, he met General Smuts in order to

confer on the coming South-west campaign. That over, he once more took the field against the rebel commandos still in the Free State. Most of the rebels had surrendered, thanks to a promise of amnesty by Botha, to all those who came in by November 21. On December 8 two of the most prominent leaders had given themselves up.

Then it was that Botha, physically exhausted and sick at heart, hastened to his Standerton farm; in solitude, and respited, for the moment, from his ministerial duties, he sought relaxation and the requisite strength for further military service. And on December 8 also Beyers found his death in the rising waters of Vaal River. Botha felt deeply this tragic event.

Right until the end of December stray rebels were made prisoners, whereas others surrendered. On the 2nd General De Wet himself was captured at Waterbury, in Bechuanaland. He considered it a privilege that it was one of his own people (Colonel Jordaan) who disarmed him and his escort of fifty. Thus ended the Rebellion, a military episode occupying barely six weeks; in Botha's life these counted as years. The whole country was grateful to the Commandant-General for the rapid, determined and yet humane manner in which he caused law and order to be vindicated. When the time came for tempering justice with mercy, the country once more unanimously applauded the Government's decisions.

Among the Boers women as well as men know how to approach extremes of national inflexibility; their intensely passionate patriotism is quite sufficient explanation of the fact that, barely twelve years and three months after Vereeniging, part of them succumbed to the temptation of trying to regain their lost independence by force of arms. Was not the treaty of 1902 wrung from them with pointed revolver! And was Campbell-Bannerman's blessed balm calculated to heal all wounds, to right every wrong? To what extent had the rural population comprehended, in 1914, the salutary concomitants of recent unification, based on mutual confidence as to political integrity between

Briton and Boer! The country districts adhered to ancestral tradition as regards instant response to the call for military service. How, then, could the young bloods turn a deaf ear to the seductive call of the veld ("Freedom at hand!"), egged on as they were by the blandishments of their womenfolk's language? Many of those who were youths in 1914 had been children in the concentration camps.

Instead of giving way to pained surprise and righteous indignation at the Rebellion, we should yield astonished admiration to the numerous ex-republicans who subordinated their natural feelings to their intelligence, by not merely repressing any desire of active revolt, but by seconding the Government in quickly subduing unrest and insurrection. The Rebellion was a revelation of mass psychology on the part of a susceptible national group. Such reactions are proof against any logic, any appeal to national honour and normal ratiocination. A section of the people had its reasoning powers numbed by a sequence of fatal events: the Hertzog crisis, the world conflagration, the tragic end of De la Rey.

Another contributory cause was the entire newness of our military system; minor officials, whose duty it was to assist in mobilizing the countryside, were not always judicious in selecting burghers for service, tactlessly indulging their predilections either in favour of or against any particular individual. It was a boon to the Union that a forceful figure, such as Botha was, could be depended upon in 1914, first to start saving the situation with vigour and despatch, and afterward to cure, so that the aftermath of the distemper might leave no more than faint scars.

Botha always took up the position that the incorporation by force of the Republics into the Empire was indefensible, but that subsequent events bound the people equally to respect and maintain the 1910 Constitution. Regarded in the perspective of history, the Rebellion itself is a minor incident. It is the vicissitudes from which our country was saved in those days, thanks to Botha, that will remain