

BOTHA, CONQUEROR IN AFRICA, FIGHTS NOW FOR THE KING

Once a Boer General, Then Premier of South African Union, He Has Become a Leading Figure in the British Empire

If there is one man in the whole British Empire who has "made good" in the war it is the Right Honourable Louis Botha, Privy Councillor, honorary general in the British army, Premier of the Union of South Africa, and personally in command of the Union troops which put down the rebellion of the disaffected burghers seeking to take advantage of the Empire's preoccupation with greater affairs to reestablish again the Boer republics as dependencies of Germany's African colonial empire. Not content with crushing this revolt in a remarkably short time, considering the extent of country over which he was obliged to operate, and the fact that the rebel leaders numbered several of the "slimmest" of the commandants who led the British a merry chase in the South African War, Botha then turned, and invaded and conquered German Southwest Africa, which has been used as the base of the incipient rebellion.

And Botha himself, thirteen years ago, was commander-in-chief of the burgher forces in the field against Lord Kitchener. He was one of the shrewdest foes with whom Lord Roberts, Buller, Kitchener, Sir John French, and the other British Generals had to reckon. He fought his country's enemies into the last ditch. He played perhaps the chief part in the Commission which ended in the treaty of peace with the British Commissioners, Lord Milner and Kitchener, striving just as earnestly at the council table as he had on the field for the best terms the vanquished might hope to wring from their conquerors. But after the treaty had been signed, after the independence of the Boer republics had been decided away and they assumed the status of Crown colonies, no one on either side was more tireless in the work of reestablishing the harmony and mutual understanding essential to South African unity than Botha.

The Early Revolt
Other Boer leaders, under the stress of the terrible warfare which had desolated their country, bowed the knee as he did and adjured their followers to accept the British rule in the spirit with which it was carried out. Gen. Christian de Wet, Botha's comrade-in-arms, in concluding his military memoirs, "Three Years' War," made this appeal:

"To my nation I address one last word.
"Be loyal to the new Government! Loyalty pays best in the end. Loyalty alone is worthy of a nation which has shed its blood for Freedom!"

But De Wet was one of the first of the deluded burghers to forget their oaths of allegiance and the allegiance and the self-government and free franchise Britain had bestowed upon them. Gens. Christian Beyers and De la Ray followed his example. In London the British statesmen who bore the responsibilities of the Empire on their backs grasped at the outlook. It seemed as if a continuance of the defection would sweep the scales against them. That would have meant the loss of South Africa; and the loss of South Africa might have meant the loan of burgher armies to Germany for service against other British African colonies. That, in turn, probably would have meant German control of the African continent south of the Sahara.

But there was one man in South Africa who could keep the major portion of the Dutch population true. That man was Botha, and it is to his everlasting credit that he disdained to take the opportunity to betray the Government which had first conquered his people and then made them independent. If he had elected to take the sinister course, there are Afrikaners who believe that Botha might have made himself dictator of Africa. Certainly, he could have made his own terms with Germany. As it happened,

AT THE NICKEL

however, that was not Botha's way. Once he had sworn his oath of allegiance, he became in spirit, if not exactly in blood, a British citizen, at least, a citizen of that Empire which knows no distinction between Englishman, Irishman, Scotchman, Canadian, New Zealander or Afrikaner.

No Drop of British Blood
Before this, Englishmen believed that just one big man had been identified with South Africa—Cecil Rhodes. Now, they are willing to admit that Louis Botha is Rhodes's peer, although he has not a drop of British blood in his veins, this son of a Dutch father and a French Huguenot mother. In less than a year, he has cleared South Africa of two distinct menaces, and now he is preparing to send important contingents of South African troops, both British and Dutch to assist in the fighting in Northern France. When the award of honors to Britain's statesmen and generals is made, it is certain that one of the most prominent names in the list will be that of Louis Botha. He is already considered eligible to a peerage, he, who fifteen years ago beat back the British armies at Spion Kopf and the Tugela.

Strangely enough, Botha was born on British soil. He first saw the light in the little hamlet of Greytown in Natal on September 29, 1856, so that he is now fifty-two years old. When he was five years old, his family migrated to the Orange Free State, where the father became a sheep farmer, and young Botha went to school, when he wasn't learning to handle a rifle. In 1874 Louis Botha struck out for himself, taking up by occupation and purchase a farm in the nameless little republic which had just been started by white settlers within the borders of Zululand. He got on well in local

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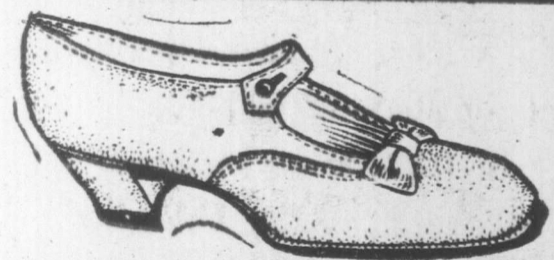
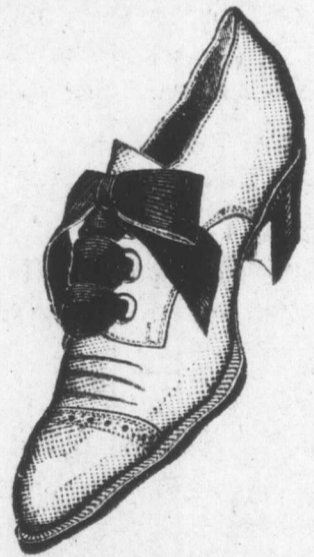
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STEER BROTHERS.

affairs, and became native commissioner and field cornet, a rank in the Boer service. In 1888, when the "New Republic," as it was now called, was assimilated to the Transvaal, he was continued in these offices, until 1896, when he was elected to the upper chamber of the Volksraad.

It is interesting to note that even in those days, Botha, young, clear-headed, and broad-minded, identified himself with the minority of burgher progressives, who were opposed to the retrograde policies of "Oom Paul" Kruger. Botha always opposed the idea of war with England, and he lived up to his convictions by being one of the seven men in the Volksraad who voted against the dispatch of Kruger's ultimatum to Lord Salisbury. But there, again, when Botha saw that his countrymen had committed themselves for better or worse, he did not hesitate in his decision. He knew, as did a few of the other younger men, the hopeless task that confronted the Boers. Throughout that splendid first year of the war, during which Ladysmith, Kimberley, and Mafeking were besieged on the one hand, while, on the other, the Boers held off the British troops and beat them soundly, Botha was never deceived of the outcome, although he fought as stoutly as De Wet, Cronje, De la Ray, and the other extremists, men, some of them, old enough to be his father. He fought so well, in fact, that early in 1900, after the death of Gen Piet Joubert, the knightliest of the older generation of Boers, of whom Kipling wrote:

With those that bred, with those that loosed the strife,

He had no part whose hands were clear of gain;

But subtle, strong, and stubborn, gave his life

To a lost cause, and knew the gift was vain.

He was appointed commandant-general of all the Boer forces.

Directed Long-Drawn-Out War

It was Botha who directed the long-drawn-out guerrilla war, which lasted two years after the formal fighting was ended. It was to him that Kitchener made the first proposals for peace in the course of a meeting between the two leaders, which took place on February 28, 1901, at Middleburg, in the Transvaals. It was Botha who reopened negotiations for peace with Kitchener in April, 1902, when even the gray-bearded Boer die-hards—who had crushed Ceteweyo and Dingaan, and their Zulu hordes in their youth and in middle-age had watched the butchery of the Highlanders at Majuba Hill—when even these men realized the end was in sight. It was Botha who caused the holding of the burgher conference at Vereeniging, which appointed peace commissioners, and as has been said, it was Botha, who faced Kitchener, the man with whom nowadays he works hand-in-hand, as it were, in gigantic schemes of world-empire, across the council table in Pretoria, and fought, stern-faced, for the last scrap of concession the British would make to the beaten burghers.

Botha was always a Boer in whom the British colonists of Cape Colony and Natal put their trust. His own countrymen knew him for a man of his word. When self-government was given to the Boer colonies in 1907, he became first Premier of the Transvaal, and in this capacity he attended the British Colonial Conference in that year. He was one of the most distinguished guests of the British nation on this occasion, and was feted on every hand by the men who had fought him a few years previously. In 1910, when the Union of South Africa was organized to take its place beside the great self-governing commonwealths of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, Botha became its first Premier, and has held this office with every success since. He has been noted for his political boldness, his swift, rigorousness of decision, and his unswerving loyalty to British principles of administration. The only time he came in for severe criticism as Premier was over his handling of the labor difficulties in 1913, when he arbitrarily deported the trouble-makers—and then won a vote of confidence from the Union Parliament.

Gen. Botha is as remarkable physically as he is mentally. He weighs 230 pounds in strict training, stands six feet high, is a crack rifle shot, a skilful boxer, and is handsome into

the bargain. But despite his immense physique, he is extremely unostentatious, and his suave courtesy is in striking contrast to the brusque manners of them ajority of Boers. His wife, to whom he was married on December 13, 1888, was Miss Annie Clere Emmet, a granddaughter of the Irish patriot, and he has three sons, all of whom were out with him in his recent campaign. The oldest, as a mere lad of twelve or thereabouts, went on command with his father in the old war.

Destitution at Harbor Deep

(Editor Mail and Advocate.)

Dear Sir,—Kindly grant me space in your paper to contradict a lying statement wired from Coachman's Cove by Abraham Kean and which appeared in the Evening Telegram under date of June 26th. Kean wired on that date There is no Destitution. Nothing worse than a tobacco famine.

I cannot understand why Kean wired such a lying message as this. He must have known it was incorrect, or he must have caught the contagious disease of Forgetfulness, so prevalent among the members and supporters of Sir Tax Morris' government. Does Kean forget the 21st of June when he reached Hr. Deep? Does he forget the condition of the people at this place on that occasion? Does he forget about Edward Pittman going on board the Prospero and asking him (Kean) for God's sake to be sure and come in on his way for the herring that the people had ready for shipment in order to get something to eat. Kean deliberately ignored this request and put the Prospero across White Bay from Englee. I wonder would Kean make such a statement as the one quoted above to either Mr. Robert Munn or Dr. Grenfell. When Mr. Munn was forced to make Harbor Deep on account of ice he helped the hungry ones by giving them a supply of bread and meat until such time as Dr Grenfell sent them relief.

I wonder if Kean would like to be living on dry bread and drinking the unsweetened liquid of boiled spruce for two or three months, and I also wonder if he was living on herring only for two or three weeks, would he have sent such a message to Bowring Bros. as the one I take objection too.

Tobacco was scarce, all right, but the people of Harbor Deep could easily dispense with tobacco, especially the women and children. But I can tell Kean that there is many a child at Harbor Deep who could tell him that the pangs of hunger are far more sharp than those of a tobacco famine.

With thanks for space, and wishing you paper the success it so justly deserves.

Gt. Harbor Deep,
July 19th, 1915.

GERMANS NOW SAVE NEUTRALS

New York, July 17.—Although the Germans are still insisting on their right to run their campaign as they see fit, there is plenty of evidence that the Kaiser has decided it is policy to cease making trouble with neutral nations.

A change in the German submarine policy in the direction of greater care for the lives of the passengers and crews of merchant ships captured is indicated by a statement regarding the number of British, French, Russian and Belgian ships sunk by submarines during June, given out by the semi-official Overseas News Agency.

"The loss of human life was remarkably small," the statement says, "the submarines using every precaution and giving ample warning and time for crews to leave the ships if no resistance were attempted."

The figures appended to this statement show that in June twenty-nine British, three French, one Belgian and nine Russian merchantmen were sunk by German submarines. "The total loss of the Entente allies by submarines, including fishing steamers, which mostly were armed patrol boats," says the statement, "aggregated 125,000 tons."

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