

WITH DE WET AND BOTHA.

TRAITS OF CHARACTER OF THE TWO BOER LEADERS.

Pen Pictures by a London Correspondent With the Boer Army—Both Boer Leaders Great Men.

Students of the art militant who go to the trouble to delve into the petty intricacies, the ins and outs of the war, will, I think, say a special correspondent of the London Daily Mail, discover a mounted infantry leader of rare ability in General Christian De Wet. Like Botha, he was comparatively unknown when hostilities commenced, and affords another illustration of the adage that every war produces its own generals.

Of medium height, square build, his figure gives an impression of strength and endurance, while the strong lines of his face and keen blue eyes at once mark the man as clever and alert. In appearance he more nearly approximates the typical Boer of the veldt than do a majority of the Boer generals. His dress is careless but cleanly enough, and his beard runs wild. Apt to appear somewhat stern at times, his manner is frank and free and at once confidential relations are established.

DE WET A STRATEGIST.

De Wet is a consummate strategist. He is, in my opinion, infinitely cleverer than the average British cavalry officer, against whom he is pitted. He should have been taken, with all his heavy artillery, at Kimberley. But he wasn't. He pulled all his own chestnuts out of the fire, grabbed a big convoy, he likes convoys, as well, and opened a hole through which Cronje might have crawled had that unfortunate general been less pig-headed. He should by all the rules of club window war critics, have been nabbed "lock, stock, and barrel" at Wepener. Not he. He effected a safe retreat around the British right wing, and a junction with Botha, and lived to harass Lord Roberts' line of communications. They thought they had him at Lindley. Instead, he had them. I anticipate the English generals will have a merry chase before they round up the Free State leader.

I do not know when I ever felt so sorry for a man as I did for General De Wet at Thaba Kop. He had resolved to beat back a British force which was hovering on his flank and embarrassing his retreat; and so disposed his commandoes on a number of kopjes. The position was cleverly chosen, and an engagement would certainly have resulted in a severe check to the British had it come about.

An incident, one of the most singular in war, turned the affair into a farce. The British force, apparently numbering several thousand men, deployed, and advanced with the evident purpose of taking the Boer positions by assault. This was precisely what General De Wet wanted. He had prepared a neat little trap. The British were yet fully 1,500 yards away, and the Boers were only sniping mildly to draw them on, when suddenly two English field batteries opened, and shrapnel began to scatter leaden "stuffing" over the kopjes. Without warning, without orders, without any tangible reasons that one can lay hold of, the Boers deserted their positions and began a precipitate flight. In five minutes it was a stampede, which carried De Wet's entire force, artillery, laagers and all, back for miles. This belongs to the

INEXPLICABLE THINGS OF WAR.

When I climbed down from my position on a kopje and rode back to the Hoofd Lager, to learn what had caused the retreat of the Boers, I found only General De Wet and about fifty burghers. Tears of rage and mortification dimmed the general's eyes and trickled down his beard, and his utterance was thickened by emotion. Seeing me dismount and salute, he addressed me in Dutch, forgetting that I could not understand him. Remembering this, he called at an interpreter, for he speaks English poorly.

"I hope you will not mention in your reports the way my burghers behaved to-day," he said. "I cannot understand their action, unless the devil possessed them."

When the war began Louis Botha was unknown to fame. Under Lucas Meyer he had served with credit in a campaign or two against the Kafirs, where he distinguished himself enough to secure a seat in the Volksraad. In that body he kept modestly in the background, as befitted his youth, but quickly became recognized as a man of sense and caution, and gained a position among the leaders of the Progressive party. Like Joubert, Botha was for peace at any reasonable sacrifice, but when he became convinced that the independence of his country was threatened he donned rifle and bandolier and hurried to the border.

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The command of the Vryheid burghers was given to Lucas Meyer by virtue of his seniority and military experience. Botha was nominated assistant-general, a sort of makeshift rank hastily created for the purposes of the war. The young commander—he is only thirty-six—soon demonstrated his ability.

By the time Ladysmith was invested his name was already more on the tongues of the burghers than even Joubert's, and his defence of the Tugela raised him to first place in the hearts of the fighting rank and file. Thus, when Joubert died, the old chief's mantle fell naturally and properly upon Louis Botha.

Perversity of fate, which had denied Botha the power to act and direct when his energy and talents might have, I believe, accomplished wonders, now crowned him with authority and responsibility at an hour when it was impossible to stem the tide of adversity. Even his supposed authority as Commandant-General was, at least for a time, only nominal. The real direction of military affairs was retained by President Kruger, or by him delegated to an incompetent and vacillating war department in Pretoria.

BOTHA'S STUPENDOUS TASK.

Yet under the weight of a stupendous task Louis Botha never faltered or repined. To the end, the bitter end he maintained a bold and confident demeanour. Seldom did he betray irritation to the hindering jealousy of his lieutenants or the crass wavering at Pretoria. Once—only once—did I hear him complain disgustedly that he could not even shift a commando of 100 from one position to another without submitting the proposition to the War Office. On the occasion to which I refer the authorization did not arrive until lapse of time had nullified the proposed movement.

With an army a great proportion of which was totally disorganized and did not want to fight, with even such fighting spirit as did remain, continually sapped by the disaffection and contrariness of jealous generals, with insubordination running riot, with his hands tied by the Pretoria War Office, how General Botha ever managed to preserve his equanimity and present a cheery face to his discouraged men I cannot tell. He did manage, somehow.

KEPT HEART AND HEAD.

Harassing him always, ever marching ruthlessly on the heels of his weary rear guard, came the countless battalions of Lord Roberts' army; behind him, at Pretoria, whence should have come encouragement and aid, where only despair, confusion, uncertainty, vacillation, hope sinking in the slough of despond, treachery lifting its hideous head. Yet, through all, and in spite of all, Botha retained his good heart, and what was better still, his head.

During those weeks the man's physical exertions were marvellous. When he rested, when he slept, when he ate, no man save himself can tell. Day after day he was in the saddle, riding along the firing line, or struggling vainly to check the persistent, sullen retreat of the hopeless, hungry burghers; night after night his special train sped back to Pretoria, carrying him to a midnight conference with the aged President, from whose hands the reins of control were fast slipping.

It was at such a conference that Botha once and for all time put a quietus on the proposition to destroy Johannesburg, by threatening, if that plan was not instantly abandoned, to lay his resignation on the President's table. His was, at that hour, the one cool head; his the one strong hand.

Had Botha left the Boer army, it would have evaporated like smoke.

General Botha's personal appearance is most striking. A magnificent physique is topped by a countenance of singular openness and charm. Never have I encountered a more winning personality, a quality which greatly enhanced his influence with the independent spirit who composed the Boer commandoes.

When the war is over Botha will be a power for reconciliation.

By nature the man is gentle as a child, which seems so often true of men of unusual courage; altogether, a model husband and father, educated, refined, a devout but not bigoted Christian, a man who would be honored and respected in any community in the world.

Care of Young Children.

One of the reasons why so many of our little children are wearing spectacles is because in infancy they are often so placed in cribs or cradles that they sleep or awaken with the little lenses in their eyes exposed too much to the sunlight.

Mothers should remember not to let the baby awaken with its eyes to a sunlit window. The retina, the darkened chamber, behind the pupil, receives the light, and this chamber is the most delicate piece of mechanism in our anatomy. We realize how older people from the glare. If babies could speak they would rebel at the carelessness of some mothers and nurses.

One of the most dreaded maladies to the mother is croup. It is of two kinds—simple and membranous. The first may often be treated by home remedies, the second never. Simple croup is rarely dangerous, even though the symptoms seem very alarming. It may come on gradually with a cold in the head, with wheezing and hoarseness or the child may be awakened in the night by sudden shortness of breath and violent choking. The child should be propped up with pillows and kept quiet. Avoid everything that will excite coughing and crying. Keep the room warm. Hot clothes or poultices can be applied to the throat, and either a croup kettle, which can be bought at any drug store, or an ordinary tea kettle kept boiling in the room.

The steam from a boiling tea kettle may be introduced to the crib by placing a sheet over an umbrella raised in the crib, and the steam can then be introduced beneath the tent. If the symptoms are urgent ten drops of the syrup of ipecac should be given every fifteen minutes until free vomiting occurs.

A very simple made remedy is lemon on sugar. This will cut the mucus. This is usually liked by children, and it is easy to give. Membranous croup is entirely beyond the care of the mother, as it is really diphtheria of the larynx. Often the most critical operations have to be performed to save life.

Cholera infantum, one of the most fatal diseases among young children, usually begins with diarrhoea, or indigestion. It comes from overfeeding, heat and impure air, and is often aggravated by teething, though never caused by it.

The child loses flesh rapidly, becomes restless, feverish, has intestinal pain and excessive thirst, but no appetite, and the food does not assimilate. Medical aid should be summoned early; the child should be kept cool and usually in the open air. Complete change of air is advisable.

In our crowded cities and towns, where it is impossible for mothers to go away during the summer, babies are often attacked by this dread malady. I have seen many babies saved by being at the seaside for a day. The early morning air will revive these little sufferers.

Measles is not always confined to children, but is most common among them. It begins usually with a cold in the head, sneezing, hoarseness, sore throat, cough and some fever. The average period of incubation is about eight days. On the fourth or fifth day the eruption of pimples comes out in dark, somewhat crescent shaped patches, first on the face, neck, arms, and later on the trunk and legs. This usually lasts from two to five days. Then diarrhoea is apt to set in. The child should be carefully guarded from draughts. The utmost care should be observed during convalescence, as bronchitis, pneumonia, gastric troubles, sore eyes and ears are apt to follow this disease. All reading matter should be kept from a child until after the system has regained its tone, and some mothers have used the homely but useful green shade at times when the eyes were unusually weak.

The wind colic of infants seldom requires medical treatment. It is usually due to unsuitable food, or, in the case of a nursing baby, to the condition of the mother. Do not give the child soothing syrups, but see that its feet are warm. Let him lie on a hot water bag on his stomach. If the colic continues, a half cupful of warm water containing ten drops of turpentine is good. Rub the abdomen gently. Half a soda mint tablet may be given in a tablespoonful of very warm water, or two or three drops of gin in hot water.

The cry from colic is usually a strong, hard cry. With this there is drawing up of the feet, contraction of the muscles of the face and other signs of pain. It is well to be prompt in treating the child.

Whooping cough begins like an

ordinary cold, the peculiar whoop not being heard until after the first ten days. It lasts from one to three months. In fine weather the child should be kept out of doors, should have a light, unstimulating diet, and special care should be taken to avoid constipation. In all diseases of the lungs or air passages the child should be kept quiet, in an even temperature with pure air. The head should be well elevated, as children swallow and vomit the sputa in great quantities. Measles and whooping cough are very contagious, more so than diphtheria and scarlet fever, and whooping cough can undoubtedly be contracted in the open air.

Chicken pox commences with slight fever. After twenty-four hours an eruption of reddish pimples appears, generally thickest on the back. In a day or two these become blisters, and within a week disappear. Little medication is called for. A warm bath is good, and of course the child should be isolated, and should be watched lest it scar the face by scratching the eruption. If necessary put cotton mittens on the little hands and tie them loosely to keep them from the face.

Earache, so often common with little children, is a severe pain and is usually accompanied, with a sharp scream. The pain is likely to be prolonged and continuous. Twenty drops of warm water should be put into the ear, and a poultice of flaxseed applied warm, but not too hot, or the hot water bag may be held against the ear. A good device, recommended by Dr. Holt, is to fill the little finger of a kid glove with hot salt, and insert this in the ear before the heat is applied upon the outside.

REGARDING THE ORIGIN OF KISSING.

According to Professor Cesare Lombroso, the distinguished Italian criminologist, kissing is quite a modern practice and originated in a very curious manner. The kiss, as a token of affection, was unknown to the old Greeks, and neither in Homer nor in Herodotus do we find any mention of it. Hector did not kiss his Andromache when he bade her farewell, neither did Paris press his lips to those of the beautiful Helen, and Ulysses, who was more of a cosmopolitan than any man of his day, never dreamed of kissing the enchanting Circe, and when after long wanderings he returned home to his spouse, Penelope, he satisfied himself with putting one of his stalwart arms around her waist and drawing her to him.

The people of Terra del Fuego, says Lombroso have taught civilized nations the origin of the delightful art of kissing. Drinking vessels are unknown in that country, and the people, when they are thirsty simply lie down beside brooks and drink the water as it flows by them. It is evident, however, that infants could not satisfy their thirst in this primitive fashion, and therefore their mothers have for ages supplied them with water by filling their own mouths first and then letting it pass through their lips into the expectant mouths of their little ones. In some places the banks of the brooks and rivers are so high that water cannot be obtained in the usual manner, and the mothers in such places draw it up through long reeds.

Birds feed their young ones in similar manner. They first fill their own mouths with water and then transfer it to the wide open mouths of the little ones. This very ancient maternal practice is, according to Lombroso, the only source to which the modern practice of kissing can be traced. The custom of pressing one mouth to another originated with the women in Terra del Fuego, who could only supply their infants with drink in this manner, and it is presumable that they learned the lesson from the birds. Finally, we are told that kissing is an evidence of atavism and a memorial of that early stage in our development "during which the wife had not yet triumphed over the mother nor love over maternity."

Lombroso's views on this subject meet with the general approval of scientists, though there are some who point out that his explanation of the origin of kissing is not in accordance with the one handed down to us by the old Romans. These latter maintained that the kiss was invented by husbands, who desired to ascertain in this way whether during their absence from home their wives had been drinking their wine or not.

EASIER.

Don't you think every man is master of his own destiny?

Oh, I don't know; he gets out of a lot of blame by letting somebody else boss things.

PROPER BREATHING IN SINGING.

Breathing is an exercise in itself. Singers should not purposely study the anatomical conditions of the throat and lungs; it is with the emotional not the anatomical side of his art that the singer has to do. For the practical purpose of singing, a knowledge of the muscles of the throat is as useless as a knowledge of the muscles of the arm is for the playing of cricket. Cases are not infrequent where these anatomical studies have a tendency to set up a sort of nervous dread in the singer that the breathing is not being done the correct way. Incorrect breathing is an acquired habit, induced sometimes by an elaborate means taken to avoid it. A few simple hints are all that are necessary; the rest of what is called the art of breathing is very much a matter of instinct.

Avoid breathing through the mouth; whenever possible inhale through the nostrils. This allows the nose to purify and warm the air before reaching the throat, which needs to be warm in order for the production of good tone. It is frequently remarked that such and such an artist's voice improved later in the evening, which means that the singer's throat became warmed as the concert or opera proceeded, and not that the voice improved, though the tone may have done so. Breathing constantly through the mouth inclines to dry the throat and make the voice husky. But it is impossible to sing declamatory music without breathing through the mouth. It is even necessary, for effect, that the breathing should at times be audible; and in long Handelian passages, and florid music of that description, what are called half-breaths through the mouth are allowed; otherwise the singer could not inhale breath and keep in strict time.

Never heave up the shoulders in the act of taking breath; there should be no perceptible movement of the body at all. Never take in breath of a sudden when only practicing; although the singing of certain passages obliges the performer to do so. The ribs should expand sideways in the taking of breath—the chest rising and falling with each phrase. False breathing—such as when a lady's shoulders rise as if they were about to expand like wings—not only tires the throat, but makes a disagreeable impression on the audience. Singers should once a day practice before a lookingglass, in order to correct any faults arising from defective breathing or from grimace. Breath must never be taken between a head note and a chest note; the transition from the one voice to the other must be done with very little breath and very softly.

Nasal singing destroys the carrying power of the voice. Voices which are metallic in sound carry best. Singers whose voices are naturally soft in quality should therefore try to acquire a little stridency in tone; and, vice versa, singers whose voices are too strident should aim at a rounder and softer quality. In some halls the reverberation blurs the tone of the voice, therefore the singer must accommodate the amount of tone to the acoustic properties of the place where he is singing. In a warm, oppressive room, it is necessary to reserve the power of the voice, because forcing the voice under such circumstances allows it to become easily fatigued and used up. The best way of combating an echo in a hall is never to shout. It appears easy to sing in a hall full of vibration, but this is a deception. The tone goes all around the singer's ears, and he cannot hear properly when he sings aloud, and so he loses control of the tone; it is therefore advisable to sing piano and feel the way, as the quieter tone travels better and the percussion is not so great as in a loud, shouting tone.

Increase and decrease of tone are produced by the breath alone. A man in a raging passion will swell the muscles of the throat and grow red in the face in attempting to give utterance to his anger; but he is, indeed, as the phrase goes, "choking himself with rage," because he is trying to get a terrific volume of voice by physical pressure on the throat, and the more he swells his veins and muscles the less able is he to speak at all. Singers, therefore, should not attempt to get a crescendo by pressing the muscles of the throat. Command of breath is the only method.

SHE WAS.

Clara—What a pretty bonnet you have on!
Irene—Yes, but I'm over my ears in debt for it.