

If Nazis Go To South Africa—Continued from P. 1

"Mr. Pirow has gone to see that we get from the British Government and the British manufacturers the means of defence which are vitally necessary for the protection of South Africa."

Those words reveal the reactions to Germany's ambitions no less than the fiery rhetoric heard at meetings of the Tanganyika League.

South African opinion is crystallised in a speech by General Smuts in Maritzburg this week. He said:

"We are going to defend South Africa to the utmost. South West Africa has been entrusted to South Africa as a sacred trust by the League of Nations and if the necessity arises we shall fight for South West Africa because it is essential for the safety of South Africa."

AND what does the man in the street think of it all? I sat in a busy barber's shop to-day and heard the conversation. At least half of it was on the colonial question.

A clerk said: "The first line of defence for the Union should be Tanganyika, the Rhodesias and South West Africa."

An air pilot: "Flying has annihilated distance. No country is safe from invasion. With a German menace on our borders our South Africa, with its rich gold mines, would become a Naboth's Vineyard. In a few years we would be giving the Nazi salute."

THE BARBER: "IF GERMANY OBTAINS CONTROL OF SOUTH AFRICA, THE KEY TO THE BRITISH EMPIRE IS LOST. AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND INDIA WILL BE AT THE MERCY OF ANY POWERFUL NAVAL FORCE."

A naval officer from Simon's Town, the British naval base near Cape Town: "One of the greatest sea bases in the world can be created at Walvis Bay (on the South West coast). It would cost less than the Singapore job to make a harbour there that could accommodate the entire navy of any first-grade Power. If Germany should possess such a base at Walvis Bay, America would not feel happy, either."

I LEFT the barber's shop with much food for thought. Is it true that such dangers exist? That is the disturbing uncertainty that haunts every South African, whether he be English, Dutch or Jew.

In an eloquent address on Armistice Day, Mr. J. H. Hofmeyer, one of the leaders of South African thought, analysed the position:

"The Union has received South West Africa as a solemn trust under a mandate from the nations of the world, with obligations to its peoples. As long as Germany has at heart the spirit of intolerances, as is evidenced by the way in which she treats her own minorities, for so long will it be utterly and entirely wrong to surrender those peoples to Germany."

"So, then, before that potential cause of war can be removed, there must be a change of heart in Germany."

SOUTH AFRICA HAS LITTLE FAITH THAT SUCH A SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION WILL TAKE PLACE FOR, WHILE GERMANY DECLARES SHE DESIRES PEACE, SHE ALSO SAYS SHE IS NOT APPALLED AT THE THOUGHT OF WAR.

Frankly, South Africa is appalled at the thought of war and is preparing for it as the best way of avoiding it.

In his statement about South Africa's war plans, Mr. Pirow revealed that the Government had decided to establish a railway factory in Pretoria which would in the first instance build lorries for the railways, but the factory would be so established—defence would pay for it—that in war time South Africa could produce her own cannons, tanks, bombs and armoured cars on a large scale.

He said an ammunition factory would be in operation within three months, and would be capable of producing 30,000,000 rounds a year.

To-day South Africa's first ammunition factory, attached to the Royal Mint, Pretoria, is working at full production.

Mr. Pirow also said it was being arranged with reluctance for a supply of poison gas lest the enemy should use it, and gas masks would be manufactured in the country.

SINCE then Parliament has voted £6,000,000 for a new defence programme. This includes £1,000,000 to be spent on new harbour defences and a considerable sum on the purchase of war planes and the development of a strong air arm.

Mobile commandos which can disappear into the bush and make detours are also contemplated. A great fleet of transport aeroplanes, as apart from fighting planes, can be marshalled already within a few days.

Another important preparation is the vast scheme of docks extension in Cape Town. This is absorbing another £6,000,000.

If the Mediterranean should ever be a closed route the strategic importance of the Cape route is certain to make big demands on Cape Town; and Cape Town will not be found wanting.

This World of Ours

Overseas poet's Ode on a Distant Prospect of famous showman C. B. Cochran: "Is this the face that launched a thousand hips?"

Said a German air officer cryptically a few days after the crisis: "Our air force brought us peace with victory; but our best allies were the people in charge of England's A.R.P. arrangements."

Christmas Rush

REGISTRARS of births, deaths and marriages reported last week that they were doing a brisk business in licences for Christmas weddings

by
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and the Wellington registrar says that people planning to be married at Christmas should apply for licences early and not leave it till shortly before Christmas, thus causing a last-minute rush.

One of the clerks told us last week that it nearly makes him sick, the way some of these Christmas shoppers of licences go on. There a poor chap is behind his counter, worn out by the day's work, and all these brides and their grooms, banging on the counter for attention, thrusting and snatching and making a chap get out all the different varieties in licences on the shelves and trying them out. . . . "Have you got a yellow one," they say (this chap reports), "I can't bear blue. Well then, have you got . . . what have you got? Let me see a green one. No green? No sun-tans? Good gracious, what sort of a place do you call this? Only blue? I shall never come here for my licence again."

Not a thought for the poor fellow behind the counter, says this chap, no human feelings for his corns and on his feet all day, too; it makes him weep every time he speaks of it. Only thing that cheers him up is when the bridegroom goes wistfully out after his bride with a funny wondering look in his eye.

Take a woman shopping before you marry her, says this chap bitterly, and see Nature in the raw.

Horrid Verse

MR. H. G. WELLS, who is also a famous rationalist, may visit New Zealand after his trip to Australia.—"Record" news item.

(After E. C. Bentley, a good distance after.)

Asked by a booksy lass

Why he was rational,

Mr. H. G. Wells put down his glass.

"A chap's got to do something, sweetie," he said, "and when he gets to my age he's past being rational."

See to you

JOLLY news that a large-scale model of New Zealand is to be one of the outstanding features of the exhibition was released last week. Behind closed door, say the Press boys, in a remote shed accessible only along a narrow board-walk, modellers are feverishly making ready to build again the mountains of New Zealand beside Centennial Avenue. Though we have not peeped, the idea (we gather) is to have this large-scale model of the country with mountain ranges 25 feet high, and cities and towns with their principal buildings will be put in.

No doubt all the visitors to the exhibition will walk through this model of the countryside, so as a merry little touch of realism we suggest that the tourist chaps from a broad

should land up at the end of their walk alongside the models of their hotels on the map about five minutes after meal times and ask: "I say, can we get a bite to eat?" At these words the host will then pop out of the little hotel and say, "Good Lord, you don't expect to get anything at this hour, do you? The meal's over five minutes ago. Where do you think you are? Switzerland? This is New Zealand."

The tourist will then sit down and burst into tears while all the locals will laugh like anything and shout "Gert-sheer!" and probably throw a brick or two at them in derision as well. Thus will the bonds of Empire be drawn even tighter.

Lawful Occasions

A LEADING Palmerston North bookmaker said that the notice from the Post Office threatening to cut off their telephones had left them more

amused than perturbed.—News item.

But, no bookmakers being allowed in New Zealand by law, it seems the Government has now decided that it would be absurd to cut off the telephones of people who do not exist. "You don't cut off your nose to spite your face," a high legal authority told us, rubbing a hand over his own homely pan. "Still less do you cut off your nose to spite your face when legally you haven't got a nose, if you see what I mean. There's a nice issue bearing on this very point in Rex v. Crockett, 1665," he said, fondling a book of Torts. "I'll look it up for you in a moment if you'll just wait half a tick while I put a ring through for a double at Trentham."

(Next week's story: A leading poisoner will comment exclusively for this page on the "Drugs Act.")



What will the barometer show next?

—New York Times.