

probably hear of many a baggage mule and many a disabled charger being converted into food that Thomas Atkins loathes in time of peace but must learn to tolerate, perhaps to relish, under the stern conditions of war. By an easy association of ideas we are reminded of the things that befel the city of Paris after the German army had cut it off from the outside world with a double line of sullen earthworks guarded with bristling bayonets and menacing guns. Readers of the history of that greatest of all sieges will readily recall the siege-dinner given at the beginning by Baron Brisse to the members of the Paris Jockey Club. The first course consisted of soup of corned horse, cutlets of donkey, mule's liver *sauté*, horses' lights with white sauce, and fried gudgeon. The second course was equally characteristic of siege days—grilled quarter of dog, roast leg of rat, rat-pie with mushrooms, &c

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The time soon came, however—in January, 1871—when Baron Brisse and his merry guests had to subsist on seven ounces of black bread per day and one-third of an ounce of horse-flesh, which looked as if it had been cut out by a tram-conductor's punch. To secure this the besieged Parisians had to await their turn for hours at the food depôts in snow, sleet, sunshine, or rain, or under the more pitiless downpour of German shells. Sometimes a family contrived to secure from carefully hidden sources of supply a dog at £3 to £8, or a turkey at £5, or a goose at £4, or a fowl at 36s, or a cutlet of donkey at 15s, or an apple at 3s, or an egg at 2s. A vigorous trade was done in rats, mice, and 'rabbits'—the 'rabbit' being in practically every instance a cat. Adults can tolerate for a period the stunted and unnatural fare of siege-times. Children, as in Paris, die like flies: The war-demon is a Herod that slaughters the innocents.

LONG before the war broke out in South Africa we expressed in fitting terms our strong conviction that there would be no armed struggle merely to compel Oom Paul to enable a certain number of British Uitlanders to give up, on easy terms, their allegiance to the flag under which they were born. We maintained that if war broke out, whatever its pretext, its direct and immediate object would be the reconquest of the South African Republic and the Orange Free State. The jingoes made no secret of this before the war. British Ministers are making as little secret of it now, although they do not set forth their purpose with the brutal frankness of the speculators—chiefly with German names—whose interests lie in the rich mining regions of the Transvaal. Even Mr. Chamberlain, in his laboured and unconvincing defence of the Government policy, treats the franchise question as a trifling item in the South African muddle. The chief element in the situation, according to him, was the independence of the Boers and their manifest determination to defend the integrity of their Republics, if necessary, by force of arms. Briefly, his speech was, in effect, an admission that he deemed war to be necessary, not for the sake of the Uitlander franchise, but in order to establish or re-establish British prestige in South Africa. A poor justification, indeed, for a war which is to cost such a vast deal both of blood and treasure, which will set back the progress of South Africa by fifty years, and will leave behind it an enduring legacy of mutual distrusts and race-hatreds between Boer and Briton!

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From time to time we have published extracts which go to show the marked aversion with which this unhappy war is viewed by a considerable section of the clergy who man the Protestant pulpit. Every mail brings fresh instances in point. Perhaps the most outspoken utterance we have read is that in which the Rev. Hirst Hollowell, in a speech delivered at the Congregational Union at Bristol, on October 19, referred to the war as 'the assassination of a free people.' No words of such exalted vigour as these have, so far as we know, fallen from the Irish Nationalist Party, who join with the British Liberals in condemning the war as unnecessary and unjustifiable. In the columns of the *Times* Mr. Justin McCarthy thus deals with the jingoes who condemn the Irish Nationalists for their attitude regarding the war: 'We Irishmen condemn the war because it is unjust, cruel, and ignoble, and we are entitled to say that the policy which directs this war is not English in the true sense of the word. The best intellects and the highest minds amongst Englishmen are opposed to this war as we Irish Nationalists are. Herbert Spencer, Frederick Harrison, John Morley, Leonard Courtney, Sir William Harcourt, Sir Edward Clarke, W. T. Stead, Philip Stanhope—these are some of the men who have again and again denounced the war. Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Cecil Rhodes are its principal authors. There can be no glory to be won for English arms in a struggle like this, where the overwhelming superiority of strength on the side of the British force leaves the ultimate issue of the contest only a question of time and money.'

UNEXPECTED PRAISE.

DR. RENTOUL, of Melbourne, is the hero of the Orange lodges and the oratorical champion of ultra-Protestantism in the colony of Victoria. Rome is to him the Mistress of Abominations, and the Pope the Man of Sin. His utterances upon both have been termed grand displays of verbal pyrotechny. They might more aptly be compared to the rush and roar of a forest on fire in a high wind. Dr. Rentoul's prejudice is of the robust quality which often marks the honest and upright bigot who hates, not the Catholic Church, but the hideous effigy with horns and tail and cloven hoof which he erroneously fancies to be the Catholic Church. Dr. Rentoul has, however, at last come to see that there is some good in the Old Church of the Ages. The discovery must have come to him with the impact of a blank surprise. His announcement thereof struck the Melbourne *Age* with a great astonishment which it did not try to conceal. At the Presbyterian Assembly on November 23, the doughty Doctor figuratively patted his old antagonist, the Archbishop of Melbourne, on the back for his Grace's timely and effective utterances on the sanctity and the moral obligations of the marriage bond. We dealt editorially with the Archbishop's pronouncement in our last issue. The *Age* of November 24 reports Dr. Rentoul to have spoken as follows: 'He honoured Dr. Carr the more because he had had at times to oppose him, and might have to do so again. They all honoured the Roman Catholic Church for the high estimate that it had always put upon the marriage tie. Perhaps that Church had taken too strong an attitude as to divorce, but it must be honoured for the high standard of morality of its womanhood. He thanked the Archbishop for his courageous utterance, which was made just at the right time. (Applause.) . . . The utterance of the Archbishop struck a chord that would vibrate in the churches—Protestant and Catholic. He again thanked Dr. Carr for his courage and tactfulness. (Applause.)'

THE LAITY AND THE CHURCH.

PERHAPS we shall get back some day to the pre-Reformation plan of parochial finance. In those days the laity undertook the task of providing funds for the erection, repair, and maintenance of churches, chantries, presbyteries, schools, and for church requisites, etc. Nowadays the burden falls almost wholly upon the priest. In many instances he finds it like a millstone around his neck, and a hindrance to much of the good work that he might effect for the welfare of souls if he could devote his energies untrammelled to other fields of activity. The Montreal *True Witness* has the following lines in point:—

It would be a blessing if the priests did not have to bother or worry about the temporalities of the parish, but could devote all their time to the spiritual work of the congregation. When they do, because they must, as circumstances make it necessary, touch on money matters, some, and the least generous, say: 'Oh, I wish we did not hear so much about money.' Take your share of the burden and it will not be necessary to bring up the subject so often.

Just so. You will find many well-to-do persons who are ready and willing to travel to heaven at their neighbours' expense, just as, according to Sydney Smith, 'you will find people ready to do the Samaritan without the oil and the two-pence.' In a letter written some time ago to an English Catholic weekly, a poor and hard wrought priest wrote as follows on the subject of giving the laity the part they had of old in bearing the burden of parochial liabilities:—

I have no objection to the principle of no taxation without representation; but if I have laymen, they do something besides contracting parochial bills and then sending them to the rector to pay. So I would inquire if your modern Catholic church-wardens will actually raise the cash and meet the bills like men. It will not be of any use for them to come to the rector to organise a bazaar; for the obvious reason that if the rector has to money-grub at all, it is much more pleasant to grub for the debts he contracted himself than for those contracted by his beloved flock. To the principle of no taxation without representation I would add another: no responsibility without control. No priest, no *man*, will accept liability for bills sent round for payment. My own congregation is at present in want of a good organ; about £600, they say, will do it. Will any group of the laity band together and, with my blessing, get the money? But they must not disturb me reading *The Spiritual Combat*. Let us have church-wardens, by all means; let them foot the bills, and, if necessary, face the bailiffs. But they must not go cheerily into the contract of £600 for an organ and send me round to beg from door to door. If any lay gentlemen are willing to be church-wardens on these terms, they are just the men I want.

We know an odd dozen or two of Catholic priests who are also pining to find among their flocks such ideal modern representatives of the trusty Catholic church-wardens of the olden time.

THE POPE AND HIS ASSAILANT.

THE Liverpool *Catholic Times* tells the following interesting incident of Leo's life at Brussels. The story is told by a personage of high station in the Vatican:—'Our Pope,' he said, 'reads character at a glance, and is rarely deceived. One evening when Nuncio at