

## PROBABLE RESULTS OF THE WAR.

An Oblate missionary writes to England from an outlying part of the Natal vicariate: 'We are going to have a most horrible war, and God only knows the complication that we may see. The native tribes may rise. With the Boers it will be war to the hilt. And there are relations in opposing camps. England is very slow in sending out troops, and when is it going to end? The feeling of hate and revenge won't die out for many and many a year. Pray for our missions.'

## THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES.

Of the many absurdities of the *Daily Mail* is its attempt (says the *Catholic Times*) to hold Sir William Butler responsible because the British preparations for war in South Africa were not more advanced. Childish journalism of that kind is amusing. Sir William filled the position of deputy for Sir Alfred Milner whilst he was on his holidays, and he made clearly known his opinion that what South Africa wanted was not a surgical operation, but rest. The men on whom the responsibility falls are the Colonial Secretary and Sir Alfred Milner, who contemplated war and exercised authority—one as a member of the Cabinet and the other as High Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief at the Cape.

## THE POSITION AT KIMBERLEY.

The Rev. Father Miller, O.M.I., who arrived in England from Kimberley in the early part of November, gave good reports of the Sisters of Nazareth who stayed in the beleaguered town to serve the sick. In view of the threatened bombardment, however, it is disquieting to hear that the convent is close to the powder magazine. Father Miller feared there might be a scarcity of food if the siege lasted for some time.

## THE FRENCH PRESS AND THE WAR.

Human nature would not be what it is (says the Paris correspondent of the *Catholic Times*) if France, by the mouthpiece of its Press, did not triumph over us in our present difficulties. Yet in the torrent of blame, if not of abuse, with which we are favoured, a just and a generous sentiment with regard to England appears here and there. The *Croix*, lately termed by a prominent anticlerical the smallest and at the same time the most largely circulated of French newspapers, was among the first to pay homage to the conduct of General White in taking upon himself the entire responsibility of a great disaster. The *Figaro* admires the reserve, dignity, and sang froid of the English people in presence of harrowing news constantly coming to them from the seat of war. Even Paul de Cassagnac, hating the English with an unrelenting hatred, as he admits he does, has lately in the columns of the *Autorité* paid tribute to certain moral qualities of theirs. 'It must be admitted,' he says, 'that the English bear with remarkable dignity the disasters which are now overwhelming them in such an unexpected manner. In France,' he continues, 'the day following a first defeat the Ministry would have been overthrown, on a second defeat it would have been the turn of the Government to fall, and so on until the country was in a state of revolution.' Apart from exaggerations of the Press and from sentiments the consequence of racial animosities, it is certain that by calm, clear minds in France—and there are such who judge dispassionately and admire and esteem the Anglo-Saxon race—the present war is looked upon in the light of a national blunder and a national crime. A French priest, pre-eminent in mental gifts, whose intention every day while offering the Holy Sacrifice is the conversion of England, and who by tongue and pen strives for the priority of the Anglo-Saxon race because he believes this to mean the advancement of religion and civilisation, said to me a few days ago on the subject of the present war: 'This is the first time my sympathies have not been with England. In this matter she has the conscience of Europe against her, and her prestige cannot but suffer.'

## THE NICHOLSON NEK DISASTER.

In connection with the Nicholson Nek disaster, some of the Home papers state that all the officers will be brought before a court-martial when the war is over, but this will not necessarily be the case. A court of inquiry will be assembled by the general officer commanding in South Africa at the conclusion of the war, at which the circumstances attending their surrender will be investigated. This court will record an opinion as to whether the capture of the officers was due to their misconduct, and the proceedings will be forwarded to the War Office. When any misconduct is found proved by the court of inquiry the officer or officers implicated will be brought to trial, but only in this case.

## LORD TALBOT'S DEPARTURE.

Among the soldiers of the Empire who have sailed for service in South Africa is Lord Edmund Talbot, of whose departure from Arundel the *Times* gives the following description among its items of the movements of troops:—

'The departure from Arundel of Major Lord Edmund Talbot, 11th Hussars, for special service in Natal, was made the occasion of a remarkable demonstration on the part of the townspeople. The route from Arundel Castle to the station had been bedecked with bunting, and was thronged by the inhabitants. The band of the 2nd V.B. Royal Sussex Regiment turned out and headed a carriage procession, in which were the Mayor and Corporation, and the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Edmund Talbot's brother, and other members of the Howard family. At Arundel station the National Anthem was played as the prelude to the reading by the Mayor of an address, bidding the gallant Major God-speed, and expressing the hope that on his return a successful and lasting settlement of affairs in South Africa would have been arrived at, by which equal rights would be secured to all who live under the British flag. Lord Edmund Talbot said, in responding, that by their good wishes the town had added another link to the long chain of associations between his family and Arundel. As the train left the station the crowd cheered heartily, and the engine in its progress exploded a number of specially laid fog-signals by way of a salute.'

I am rather surprised (writes a London correspondent) that the departure for the front of Lord Edmund Talbot (of the 11th Hussars) has not been more noticed. Lord Edmund is the only brother of the Duke of Norfolk, and may, under the circumstances of the young Earl of Arundel's precarious state of health, be regarded as standing in a very peculiar relation to the dukedom. He is, of course, a very prominent figure in the Roman Catholic world, and the fact that he volunteered for service has made a certain sensation, for, were anything to happen to him, and were his only son to die unmarried, the dukedom would ultimately pass to Protestant cousins of the present Duke. Lord Edmund, who took the name of Talbot on inheriting a considerable amount of property from the late Earl of Shrewsbury, will celebrate his silver jubilee as a soldier next year; but, oddly enough, this is his first campaign, the 'Cherubims' not having been in active service since the Crimea, when, however, they so much distinguished themselves that it must be admitted they deserved a good long rest. Lord Edmund Talbot left Arundel, amid a scene of considerable emotion and the display of much goodwill by the townspeople, some three weeks ago, so he will be one of the first of the later contingent to arrive at the front.

## THE TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Not very long ago a statement was made in some of the Irish papers that the charge of intolerance made against the Boers was unfounded, and that a number of Catholics were employed by the Transvaal Government, amongst those being the well known Dr. Leyds. This statement was questioned in several quarters, as it was well known that a stringent Test Act prevented any Catholic from holding a Government appointment unless he was false to his religion. A letter appeared a few weeks since in the *Daily Nation* from the Rev. Father O'Reilly, of Wynberg, South Africa, who gives an absolute denial to the assertion that the Transvaal Government showed the slightest symptom of tolerance towards the Catholic religion. Speaking from personal experience Father O'Reilly says:—

1. It is against the law of the S.A. Republic for any Catholic to hold office of any kind in the State, or to vote for the Raads, or the President, no matter how long he may have been in the country. Catholics and Jews are ranked with coloured people and "illegitimate" in these disabilities.

2. President Kruger to gain their favour, quite recently proposed to remove Catholics and Jews from such a degrading category, but, whether he was sincere or not, the Raad rejected his proposition. Consequently, if the rather wild assertions of your correspondent were true, this would simply mean defiance of the law, and an enemy would merely have to draw the attention of the Government to the fact in order to oust such Catholics out of their positions.

3. The only people who employ Catholics in the Transvaal, aye and liberally support Catholic institutions, too, are the much-decried capitalists, who employ 100,000 people, irrespective of creed or nationality, and pay four millions annually in taxes to the Government.

4. As to Leyds, he must have concealed his Catholicity very successfully. I for one should not be more astonished if I heard that Satan himself were a loyal son of the Church!

With regard to a statement also made in some Irish newspapers as to an alleged gift by the Transvaal Government to Catholic nuns in Pretoria, Father O'Reilly says:—

As to the Pretoria nuns, the gift, if any, was from the British Government, which in 1881 stipulated for the non-disturbance of existing institutions, when handing over to the Transvaal Executive. My own conviction is, however, that there was no gift whatever, but simply compensation for destruction of property during the siege—the British garrison having occupied the convent as the best strategic position for the defence of the town.

Father O'Reilly's letter should hardly have been necessary (says the *New Era*), since the facts which he states as to the intolerance of the Transvaal Government were well known long ago, and the contrary statements which have appeared in several papers must be attributed to a too lively imagination. We trust we shall hear no more of such nonsense after Father O'Reilly's exposure.

## T I M A R U.

(From our own correspondent.)

The Rev. Father Kimbell, who is here on a visit, is acting for the Rev. Father McDonnell, who has gone on a holiday.

The festival of Christmas was celebrated here in a befitting manner. A large number of people received Holy Communion at the early Mass. The decorations of the church were effective and in good taste, especially the sanctuary and the altars. A grotto was erected near Our Lady's altar, this being the work of Mr. G. Venning. The decorations were carried out by Miss E. McGuinness, assisted by several lady members of the congregation. The music at High Mass was Gounod's, which was very creditably rendered by the choir under the direction of Mr. Mayne. Miss McGuinness presided at the organ.

After High Mass on Christmas Day the choir of the Church of the Sacred Heart took the opportunity of presenting Mr. Mayne (the conductor), who is about to take a holiday, with a travelling bag and dressing case, as a mark of their appreciation and in recognition of his many services. The Rev. Father Tubman made the presentation, and in the course of his remarks said that not only had Mr. Mayne worked hard to bring the choir to a state of efficiency, but he had also been most energetic in assisting in everything that was for the benefit of the parish. Mr. Mayne, in replying, said he did not deserve any reward for the little he had done in connection with the choir and church matters generally. He thanked Father Tubman for his kind remarks, and the choir for their generous gift.

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