

THE WAR.

REASONS FOR LORD ROBERTS'S DELAY.

THE BOERS AND PORTUGAL.

A RUPTURE POSSIBLE.

BRITISH CASUALTIES TO DATE 17,000.

THE TERMS OF PEACE.

[BY CABLE.]

LONDON, April 12. Both the Transvaal and Orange Free State have protested against the action of the Portuguese Government in permitting British troops to land at Beira en route to Salisbury. This, they say, is tantamount to a hostile action.

LONDON, April 13, 7.10 a.m. There are indications that if Portugal is attacked by the Boers and asks for assistance, General Buller will send troops to Delagoa Bay.

At the instance of British passports were withheld from twenty-five out of seventy-five men who recently landed at Delagoa Bay. The twenty-five men carried ammunition.

POSITION IN THE FREE STATE.

LONDON, April 12. A correspondent at Delagoa Bay reports that 35,000 Boers with ninety guns are intently entrenched in different positions between Kroonstad and Winburg.

Winburg is the new capital of the Orange Free State and is situated sixty-five miles north-east of Bloemfontein. Kroonstad is a similar distance to the north of Winburg, and is also situated on the railway. Winburg is about midway between Bloemfontein and Kroonstad, the latter being ninety-six miles south-east by road of Johannesburg.

Lord Roberts has received a supply of new boots and of khaki serge uniforms suitable for winter wear for the troops under his command.

The necessity for concentrating stores at Bloemfontein is delaying the march of the British to the northwards, but in the meantime the permanent defences of Bloemfontein are being completed.

It is recognized that Lord Roberts's tentative leniency to the rebels is a prudent act pending the arrival of reinforcements for the British troops.

THE NATAL FORCES.

LONDON, April 13, 7.10 a.m. General Botha, Commander of the Boers in Natal, tried to isolate Major-General Clery and the forces under his command at Sundays River. The Boer position in Natal covers a distance of fifteen miles. The attempts of the enemy to creep towards the British line of communications were checked.

General Buller's prospective movements consist of containing and buying the Boers.

It was Major-General Hunter, and not Major-General Hart, who received instructions to leave Natal with a portion of General Buller's command. Major-General Hunter, with a large force, including the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, the Connaught Rangers, and the Somersetshire Light Infantry, embarked at Durban. His destination is unknown, but it is believed he is going to Bloemfontein.

THE TERMS OF PEACE.

LONDON, April 13, 7.10 a.m. Sir Alfred Milner, British High Commissioner in South Africa, in acknowledging an address of confidence from forty-six clergymen belonging to the evangelical churches, said a recurrence of the war between Britain and the Transvaal must be made impossible. He commended the words "Never Again" as a motto to all thinking and humane men.

The settlement after the war, he declared, must not be a patchwork of two antagonistic systems in a country which history and nature alike declared to be one.

Speaking of the rebels, Sir Alfred Milner said they must be dealt with severely, but not vindictively, as the fusion of the two races must be promoted.

CASUALTIES TO DATE.

LONDON, April 12. The casualties amongst the British forces up to the 7th instant amounted to 17,701, but this total does not include the recent disaster at Reddersburg, when there were 591 British casualties. Altogether 211 officers and 1960 men have been killed in action, while forty-eight officers died from wounds. There were 1532 deaths from disease.

By "casualties" is meant deaths whether in battle or from disease, wounds, and taken prisoners, but it does not include those sick in hospital or from disease. Of the 17,701 given above as the total casualties about 4000 are prisoners, and there must be several thousand wounded, of whom a large proportion have recovered and returned to the ranks.

GENERAL MESSAGES.

LONDON, April 12. The Italian Government has assured the Boer delegates, Messrs. Abraham Fischer (Secretary of State of the Orange Free State), J. M. A. Wolmarans (member of the Transvaal Executive Council), and C. H. Wessels (President of the Volksraad of the Orange Free State), who recently arrived in Italy on a peace mission to Europe, that it will not intervene in the present war unless both combatants desired its mediation.

CABLE MESSAGES.

THE AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH BILL. LONDON, April 12. The Hon. J. H. Carruthers, ex-Minister for Lands in New South Wales, in a letter to "The Times" on the Australian Commonwealth Bill, says that the rejection of the clause providing for the limitation of appeals to the Privy Council will neither offend the susceptibilities of the people of Australia nor delay federation for one hour.

LONDON, April 13, 7.10 a.m. The Boers have expelled the Rev. Father De Lacy, an ardent Johannesburg priest, for showing sympathy with the British prisoners, and providing them with Christmas dinners.

LONDON, April 13, 7.10 a.m. Trooper William Bonner, of the First Australian Horse, was killed during an engagement with the Boers at Glen, to the north of Bloemfontein, on the 28th of March. Corporal D. H. T. Booth and Troopers H. R. Martin and T. V. Wessell, also of the First Australian Horse, were wounded during the same engagement, while Corporal E. Hopkinson, of the New South Wales Lancers, was slightly wounded.

LONDON, April 13, 7.10 a.m. It is understood that the Right Hon. J. Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, is willing if the restrictions on appeals to the Privy Council are removed, to pass the remainder of the bill unaltered, and also simultaneously to introduce a scheme for creating an Imperial Council of Appeal on the lines suggested by Mr. R. B. Haldane, Liberal member for Haddington.

The delegates are confident the bill will be passed unaltered if the Premier of the various colonies will adhere to the instructions they gave to the delegates in January last before leaving for England.

IN THE COLONIES.

QUEENSLAND. BRISBANE, April 13. Since the fine weather has commenced the conditions at the camp of the fourth contingent at Lytton have become much more pleasant, though the nights are now somewhat cold. In the horse lines everything is most satisfactory. Some of the men, however, are still suffering from the effects of the recent wet weather. There are 560 horses attached to the camp. Taken altogether they are not a particularly smart looking lot, though there are some very nice animals amongst them. A great deal of trouble has been experienced from the strangles, at least 100 horses having suffered from the complaint, whilst a number are still being treated. There are 369 officers and men in camp. Each day two or three men arrive, but none have been taken on, while occasionally for some time or other a dismissal takes place. The men are being vigorously drilled, and are showing up satisfactorily. The rather dull monotony of routine work has been broken by the arrival of the headquarters band in camp to-day. The band will remain until Monday night. With the exception of the very latest arrivals all the men have gone through shooting tests. In a number of cases they have not come out satisfactorily, as it is stated on pretty good authority that a certain proportion of the men know very little about shooting, but when the time for the departure of the contingent draws near they will be weeded out. Even where this is done, however, there will be an ample number to make up Queensland's quota. Until it is definitely stated when the contingent leaves, the work of swearing in will not be commenced.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SEPARATION. LONDON, April 13. Mr. Griffith has protested to Mr. Chamberlain against the action of Sir John Forster (Premier of Western Australia) in delaying the transmission to England of the petition for separation by the residents of Kalgoorlie.

THE MONEY MARKET. LONDON, April 13. The following are the latest quotations for consols and colonial Government securities, with the rise or fall since last week:—

Imperial Consols, 2 1/2 per cent. £101 (5s. lower). New South Wales, 4 per cent, 1908, January, July, £117 (10s. lower). New South Wales, 3 1/2 per cent, 1918, March-September, £107 1/2s. (unchanged). New South Wales, 3 per cent, 1935, April, October, £119 10s. (5s. higher). Victoria, 4 per cent, 1920, January, July, £111 (10s. lower). Victoria, 3 1/2 per cent, 1921-25, £104 (5s. higher). Victoria, 3 per cent, 1921-25, January, July, £96 (unchanged). South Australia, 2 1/2 per cent, 1930, £106 (5s. higher). South Australia, 3 per cent, 1916, January, July, £105 1/2s. (5s. lower). Queensland, 4 per cent, 1915, January, July, £112 1/2s. (unchanged). Queensland, 3 per cent, 1924, January, July, £104 10s. (5s. higher). New Zealand, 4 per cent, 1929, May, November, £110 5s. (40s. lower). New Zealand, 3 1/2 per cent, 1940, January, July, £106 5s. (unchanged). New Zealand, 3 per cent, 1945, April, October, £98 10s. (3s. higher). Western Australia, 3 1/2 per cent, 1915-35, May, November, £102 10s. (unchanged). Tasmania, 3 1/2 per cent, 1929-40, January, July, £105 1/2s. (5s. higher).

THE FROZEN MEAT MARKET. LONDON, April 13. The following are the latest quotations for frozen meat:—

New Zealand mutton (crossbred wethers and maiden ewes, 55 lb to 65 lb).—Canterbury, 3 1/2d; Dunedin and Southland, 3 1/2d; North Island, 3 1/2d. Australian mutton (crossbred or merino wethers).—Heavy (over 50 lb), 3 1/2d; light, 3 1/2d. River Plate mutton.—Heavy (over 50 lb), 3 1/2d; light, 3 1/2d. New Zealand lambs, prime Canterbury, including Dunedin, Southland, Wellington, and Second Canterbury (32 lb to 40 lb), 4 1/2d; fair average, 4 1/2d. Australian lamb (fair average quality).—Prime ox forequarters, 100 lb to 200 lb, 2 1/2d; prime ox hindquarters, 100 lb to 200 lb, 2 1/2d; secondary fore, 2 1/2d; secondary hind, 2 1/2d. Australian Lamb.—Prime, 4 1/2d; the fair average being 3 1/2d.

CABLE MESSAGES.

NEW ZEALAND frozen beef (fair average quality).—Prime ox forequarters, 100 lb to 200 lb, 2 1/2d; prime ox hindquarters, 100 lb to 200 lb, 2 1/2d. Sugar: German beet, 10s. 3d; Java, 10s. 6d. Bradford Tops: Common sixties, 2 1/2d; superior sixties, 2 1/2d, with the mark 1 1/2d less. The wheat markets are tending upward.

STANWELL. [From Our Own Correspondent.] The weather during the past week has been a most successful one for the building of the water supply. On Wednesday night, the 4th instant, turned quite chilly, evidently the effect of a rain set in, and on Monday morning a thunderstorm set in, heavy rain falling again a few showers fell, varying in localities from 0.15 in. to 0.40 in. The farms situated on Stewart's Quarry, and Sandy crooks and other places, have been decidedly benefited, but all parts of the district have had a share, and the grass is growing rapidly. Of course more rain is anxiously looked for, but the present is provided for. A strong protest is being made by some of the cattle-owners on Mackade Creek on account of the action of the stock inspectors in letting cattle from the country travel through their clean country. There were two mobs recently, one from Mackade Creek and one from Belmont. The quantity going to Barradine, Longreach, and other western railway stations is enormous.

Mr. D. Fraser has completed his contract for the building of the Custom House, Rockhampton, from the Stanwell quarry. He estimates the quantity of stone supplied for this building at about 4000 yards, in addition to which 400 yards will be supplied from the Stanwell quarry. This quantity is for the building of the Fitzroy Railway Bridge. All this stone has been supplied during the last twelve months. Mr. Fraser hails from Sydney, where he has been connected with quarry supplies for many years, and is amongst the Stanwell stone is, for building purposes, the best in the colony, and in respect of that, handsome edifice, the Rockhampton Custom House, just erected, is a fine specimen of the stone.

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COMMERCIAL MESSAGES.

THE AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH BILL. LONDON, April 13. The market rate of discount for three months' bill is 4 1/2, 16d. per cent. The following are the latest quotations on the metal and produce markets:—

Copper: Spot quotation, £75 per ton; three months' quotation, £77 15s.; with the market firm. Tin: Cash quotation, £119 3s.; three months' quotation, £138 17s. 6d.; with the market firm. Iron: Glasgow warrants, £3 16s. 8d. Sugar: German beet, 10s. 3d.; Java, 10s. 6d. Bradford Tops: Common sixties, 2 1/2d; superior sixties, 2 1/2d, with the mark 1 1/2d less. The wheat markets are tending upward.

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