

It is not expected that Gentlemen will present themselves at the Drawing Room, except in attendance on the Ladies of their families.

Any Gentleman who under these circumstances should desire to be presented to The Queen will observe the same regulations as are in force for Her Majesty's Levées.

The State Apartments will be open for the reception of Company coming to Court at two o'clock.

HOPETOUN,
Lord Chamberlain.

War Office, May 8, 1900.

THE following despatch has been received from Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, V.C., G.C.B., &c., Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa:—

Army Headquarters, South Africa,

Government House, Bloemfontein,

MY LORD, 20th March, 1900.

I HAVE the honour to submit for your Lordship's information a despatch dated 15th February, 1900, from Lieutenant-Colonel R. G. Kekewich, Commanding in Griqualand West and Bechuanaland, describing the military operations in the vicinity of Kimberley, from the 13th September, 1899, to the 15th February, 1900, and the defence of the town up to the latter date, when its relief was effected by the Cavalry Division, under Lieutenant-General French.

2. The casualties during the period above referred to, together with those on the 16th February, appear to have amounted to 2 officers killed and 12 wounded, and 34 non-commissioned officers and men killed and 97 wounded. In addition, 4 Europeans and 1 native of the civil community were killed, and 16 Europeans and 8 natives wounded during the bombardment.

3. I am of opinion that the greatest credit is due to Lieutenant-Colonel Kekewich for the able dispositions which he made for the defence of Kimberley, an unwallied town spread over a wide area; for his rapid organisation of an auxiliary force which, in conjunction with the Regular troops, enabled him to keep the enemy in check; and for the tact, judgment and resolution which he displayed throughout the siege. I confidently recommend this officer to the favourable consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

4. I am further of opinion that the services of the officers and men of the Regular, Colonial, Volunteer and Irregular forces, and of the Town Guard, whose names Lieutenant-Colonel Kekewich has brought to special notice, are deserving of recognition.

5. I would add that the citizens of Kimberley, conspicuous among whom were the Right Honourable C. J. Rhodes, Mr. H. A. Oliver, the Mayor, and Mr. R. H. Henderson, the Ex-Mayor, seem to have rendered most valuable assistance. These gentlemen, in common with the others mentioned by Lieutenant-Colonel Kekewich, helped to maintain order among the civil inhabitants, encouraged them to hold out to the last, regulated the issue of food, attended to the sick and wounded, and co-operated generally with the Military Commander. By the active part which he took in raising the Kimberley Light Horse, and in providing horses for all the mounted troops in Kimberley, Mr. Rhodes in particular contributed materially to the successful defence of the place.

I have, &c.,
ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding in Chief, South Africa.

From Lieutenant-Colonel R. G. Kekewich, Commanding Griqualand West and Bechuanaland, to the Chief of Staff, South Africa.

Kimberley,
15th February, 1900.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report concerning the military operations which have recently taken place in Griqualand West and Bechuanaland.

2. On my arrival in Kimberley on the morning of 13th September, 1899, I met the following Imperial Officers who had been detailed for special services on the western frontier of the Orange Free State, viz:—

Captain and Brevet-Major H. S. Turner, Royal Highlanders, Staff Officer, Kimberley.

Captain W. A. J. O'Meara, Royal Engineers, Intelligence Officer, Kimberley.

Lieutenant D. S. MacInnes, Royal Engineers, detailed for special duties in connection with Royal Engineer services.

3. These Officers had been employed for several weeks in Kimberley and the adjacent country; in consequence many questions relating to the defence of Kimberley and the eastern frontiers of Bechuanaland and Griqualand West had been already investigated by them and were submitted for my consideration. For political and other reasons no immediate steps could be taken by me in connection with the preparations for the defence of Kimberley.

Captain H. V. Gorle, Army Service Corps, arrived in Kimberley on 20th September 1899, and at once took up all questions relating to supplies and transport.

4. At this time the defence of the Cape Government railway from the Orange River railway bridge northwards was in the hands of the Cape Government, and a certain number of important points on the railway, and also the larger railway bridges north of Kimberley were being guarded by small detachments of the Cape Police.

5. On the date of my arrival in Kimberley, portions of the Burgher forces of the South African Republic were already out on "commando" along the Bechuanaland border. Many reports having been received that not only disloyalists in Cape Colony, but also certain Burghers of the Orange Free State had expressed a determination to destroy the Orange River and Modder River railway bridges, I arranged on the 15th September with Commissioner M. B. Robinson, Cape Police, for small Police guards at the two bridges referred to.

6. On the 20th September, the following Imperial troops arrived in Kimberley:—

23rd Company, Royal Garrison Artillery (Western Division) with 6—7-pr. R.M.L. guns (3 officers and 90 non-commissioned officers and men).

One Section, 7th Field Company, Royal Engineers (1 officer and 50 non-commissioned officers and men).

Head-quarters and 4 companies, 1st Bn. Loyal North Lancashire Regiment (9 officers and 413 non-commissioned officers and men).

Detachment, Army Service Corps (5 non-commissioned officers and men).

Detachment, Royal Army Medical Corps (1 officer and 5 non-commissioned officers and men).

On the 26th September, a detachment of Mounted Infantry, 1st Bn. Loyal North Lancashire Regiment (1 officer and 21 non-commissioned officers and men), also arrived in Kimberley.

7. The Volunteer force in Vryburg (5 officers