

The Daily Record

and THE DRESDEN DAILY.

№ 530.

DRESDEN AND BERLIN, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1907.

10 PFENNIGS.

The First Daily Paper published in Germany
in English.

Office: Dresden, Steube Strasse 51. Telephone: 1755.
Berlin W., Potsdamer Strasse 10/11.

Subscription for Dresden and the whole of
Germany and Austria:
1 mark a month.

On account of the Reformation
festival our next number will appear
on Saturday next.

THE CONGO.

A very illuminating document addressed by Mr. E. D. Morel, the secretary of the Congo Reform Association, to Sir Edward Grey has been made public. It tends very conclusively to justify the attitude of suspicion which has been adopted by the British Foreign Office towards the proposed Belgian Annexation Bill. Mr. Morel, speaking at Liverpool on September 24, observed that the Bill would effect little or nothing except to perpetuate the vices of the present system, and pointed out that King Leopold was pulling the strings in order to keep the financial control in his own hands. The Congo, as is well known, is not a possession of the Belgian people, but of the Belgian monarch; it was not, however, until some years ago, when the Reverend A. E. Scrivener made his second tour from Bolobo to Lake Leopold II, that the abuse and gross outrages practised there were revealed, and that many promises and some actual reforms were made. With the object of ascertaining the success of these measures, Mr. Cassie Murdoch, of the Baptist Mission at Bolobo, undertook a walk of inspection through the "Crown Domain", and his report is submitted by Mr. Morel to the Foreign Office together with a resolution of his Association condemning the proposed annexation scheme as it stands at present.

The revelations made by this obviously sincere and disinterested missionary are almost incredible. A system of slavery, of the most unscrupulous kind, appears to be administered by the white officials who represent the authority and especially the financial claims of King Leopold II. With a very few exceptions the whole of the people in the "Crown Domain", a region ten times the size of Belgium itself, are subject to a so-called rubber tax; but rubber has almost entirely disappeared from this particular district, so that in order to produce their monthly subsidy the natives are bound to travel a considerable distance. This does not only involve a monthly journey of at least ten days over three hundred miles of swampy ground frequented by wild beasts, but also a ten days sojourn in the forest, quite without protection and comfort, during the hot days and cold nights of the summer as well as during the heavy downpour of the rainy season. The "tax" for each man is fifteen lengths of rubber, and for his labour of twenty or twenty-five days he receives half a fathom of cloth and sometimes a few pieces of salt. He is further subject, firstly, to the assessment of arrears should his produce prove imperfect; secondly, to the frequent depredations of the native corporals themselves. The natives declare that two months out of five they get nothing at all. Actual shortage is punished severely by imprisonment or by the administering of a noxious liquid compounded of green tobacco leaves and red peppers. Individual acts of atrocity, such as were rife a few years ago, do not any longer occur. "The state agents", says Mr. Murdoch, "have come to the conclusion that it is a waste of cartridges to shoot down this people. But the whole system is a vast atrocity involving the people in a state of unimaginable misery". Even the natives themselves recognize the difference between organized slavery and these methods of exploitation. "No", they say, "we are not even slaves. Slaves are happy compared with us. Slaves are protected by their masters; they are fed and clothed".

It is not possible that in the face of these facts the delegates of the Belgian people will allow the Annexation Bill to become law without considerable alterations. That a free people, which has in the

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past suffered the persecutions of a foreign tyrant, which has won its liberties in the face of European opposition and has embodied in its constitutional maxims the highest principles of political freedom should allow the continuance of such practices would be revolting to the morality of all civilized States. Four years ago the Powers declined to intervene, but if, after every opportunity of amendment has been given and ignored, Sir Edward Grey carries out his threat of reconsidering British treaty rights and the treaty obligations of the Congo State, we trust that he will be backed by the other Powers. It would be a fitting climax to the humanitarian ideals expressed in the course of the year at the Hague Conference and elsewhere and to the general understanding still prevailing among diplomatists if pressure were brought to bear from the proper quarters upon King Leopold as sovereign of the Congo, or upon the Belgian government of which King Leopold is a member.



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THE KING AND QUEEN OF SPAIN IN LONDON.

London, October 29.
The King and Queen of Spain, with the Crown Prince, arrived here this evening.

MINISTERS ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

London, October 29.
Speaking at Newcastle, Mr. Haldane, the Secretary of State for War, said that Liberalism was at the summit of its power; its representatives, however, should not proceed self-consciously. So long as complete concord did not prevail among the nations England must not neglect the national defence. The Hague Conference had shown that other States are not in agreement with the wishes of England. Advanced Socialism was striving for an improvement of existing conditions, but difficulties arose when it attempted to turn those efforts to practical use.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Asquith, in a speech delivered at Dundee confined himself entirely to the subject of the reform of the House of Lords.

THE DISTURBANCES IN INDIA.

London, October 30.
Reuter's Bureau publishes a report from Peshawur in these terms: "A band of Afridis made an attack on Pubbi, a place where an outpost of the 54th Sikh regiment is stationed. One soldier was wounded and a number of horses were carried off by the robbers. The police attacked the Afridis, and recovered three of the stolen horses. Three of the police were wounded, two of them severely. The robber band escaped".

DROUGHT IN INDIA.

The Viceroy of India telegraphs that the state of the provinces affected by the drought is getting worse. Moderate rain has fallen in other parts of India.

THE HEALTH OF THE EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA.

Vienna, October 29.
The Emperor took his first walk in Schönbrunn Park today, and much enjoyed it.

NEWS FROM AMERICA.

THE FINANCIAL CRISIS.

Washington, October 29.
When the meeting of the Cabinet was over, Mr. Cortelyou, the Secretary of the Treasury, conferred with President Roosevelt on the financial situation. It is an established fact that Mr. Cortelyou, since the beginning of September when he commenced to support the National banks, with money, has deposited with them 70,000,000 dollars.

New Orleans, October 29.
The Louisiana and New Orleans Exchange has entirely suspended business until Monday.

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