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# The Daily Record

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## THE PORTUGUESE ELECTIONS.

While England has been changing its Premier and the Premier has been readjusting his Ministry with all the punctiliousness worthy of the oldest Parliamentary traditions, the elections in Portugal have shewn how the soundest democratic safeguards work out in practice where the political habits of centuries have been anything but democratic. It has been pointed out that both Spain and Portugal got their Constitutions because of the misconduct and misgovernment of their kings, not because of the capacity of their peoples for self-government. The people of the Peninsula, ignorant, superstitious, priest-ridden, illiterate, have always been the victims of tyrants and the tools of agitators; even now three-quarters of the population are unable to read or write; and the Revolutionary elements are drawn less from the peasant classes, who are the worst sufferers from misgovernment, than from those classes which in Russia are called the Intellectuals or Intelligenzia. But even in Portugal the education of the people does not stand still, and the probabilities are in favour not of either of the two orthodox parties, the Regenerators or Progressists, but of the Republicans. The result of the election was foretold in the Portuguese Press, and was foretold correctly; more than this, the actual distribution of seats has been so shrewdly managed by the prophets that in almost every instance the forecast tallies with the fact. It was predicted that sixty-one Regenerators would be returned; the actual number exceeds the expected number by a single unit. It was predicted that fifty-nine Progressists would be returned; the actual number is fifty-nine. So was it, too, with the Independents, the Nationalists, the Francoists, the Dissident Progressists, and the Republicans; in each case the expectation coincided with the result, or at least approximated to it with sufficient closeness. This is remarkable, but it is not the work of the Black Art; it is the work of the traditional Portuguese method; it is, in a word, the Rotativist system. The Constitutional practice of Portugal prescribes that the sweets of office should be shared fairly and in turn by the two Monarchist parties; and that, if the nicely calculated system of securing favourable results should break down in the process of the elections, there should be means in the process of counting the votes by which the pre-arranged distribution of seats should be effected. It had been hoped that the result of last Sunday's election would be able to prove the growth of a sense of political responsibility among the mass of the people; and the assumption would be possible were it not that the correspondence between the forecast and the result is too perfect to leave a shadow of doubt as to the manner in which that result has been attained. It would be acceptable to the good sense of other nations and to the good will which is entertained everywhere, and nowhere more than in England, for the industrious Portuguese people and the ruling House of Braganza if the elections could be regarded as a protest of the people against the terrible events of February. Whether for the reason that no means were afforded for the spontaneous expression of a lively indignation at the excesses of the extreme Republicans, or whether for the reason that the Portuguese people are not yet able to avail themselves of the Constitutional machinery for the expression of their desires, the fact must be accepted that the elections denote no advance in method or intention beyond the accustomed transfer of privileges within the ruling cliques.

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The question arises whether, in view of the events of the last few months, the political authorities in Portugal were well-advised in shaping their course according to the familiar lines; whether, in short, it would not have been securing a tactical advantage, and perhaps a lasting hold on the regard of the people, to disarm the Republican movement of its strongest weapons by putting forward an actual programme of reform, and risking upon it an actual and open battle. Such a course, it must be clear, would have paced the Monarchist parties, and the throne itself, upon a footing of security to which neither can at present lay claim. At the same time, it is equally clear that what, to an outsider, appears an easy and simple solution of a complicated situation, would take a totally different aspect in the eyes of a Portuguese statesman. On no point is speculation more insecure than on the degree in which the Portuguese electorate may be trusted to possess the interest and discrimination necessary to secure an election in its own favour. While we are assured, on good authority, that the Portuguese peasant farmers are neither so indifferent to affairs as Spaniards of the same class, nor so lacking in shrewdness as in education, it is difficult to imagine that the traditions of many years in the abuse of democratic machinery are to be overstepped in a single election. Again, it is extremely doubtful whether such reforms as the Monarchist parties would be in a position to propose could afford a basis of compromise sufficiently broad to hold the minimum of the Republican demands. To exasperate the Republicans while seeming to shew the slightest symptom of a weak or yielding spirit would be fatal to the interests of the Monarchist parties; they would fall, perhaps irretrievably, between their own generosity and the principles of their opponents. The predominant parties have not a guaranteed ascendancy, but they have, what is perhaps more valuable in the strategy of politics, the immediate sympathy of the large mass of the people. Of the two courses open to them, concession or rigidity, they have chosen the latter, probably not from a distaste for reform, but because they know the conditions of the contest and the temper of their enemies. To anticipate such Constitutional development as the country is capable of by offering reforms to oust the reformers would have been to tamper with the very danger they must be most anxious to avoid—namely, the danger by which ignorant peoples, on being taught a little, jump to extreme conclusions.

### THE HERMIT OF TREMAGAM.

A well-known character to tourists at Brest has just died in the person of Napoleon Petit, as he was called. For some years past this strange being has led the life of a hermit, living in the ruins of the old Feudal castle of Tremagam, his food consisting chiefly of roots and vegetables. Though his history was shrouded in mystery, it was supposed that he was a broken-down lawyer.

## GENERAL NEWS.

### NEWS FROM ENGLAND.

#### KING EDWARD'S STAY AT BIARRITZ.

London newspapers state that King Edward went to Biarritz, solely in consequence of the earnest advice of his physicians, in order to escape the attacks of influenza to which His Majesty has been subject every Spring for some years past.

#### FRENCH PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO LONDON.

President Fallières is to arrive in London on May 25th, and will be accompanied by M. Pichon, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

#### SUFFRAGETTES READY FOR WAR.

Miss Christabel Pankhurst, organiser of the Suffragettes, declared recently:—"We are now waiting a declaration of policy from Mr. Asquith on Women's Suffrage, and will do our best to bring it about. His increased responsibilities may make him change his opinion, but if he means war we are ready for war. All our forces are marshalled, and we will fight until we have beaten the new Prime Minister. We are at present turning all our attention to Manchester, anticipating that Mr. Churchill will have to seek re-election. We mean to make Women's Suffrage the issue of that by-election."

#### THE DRUCE PERJURY CASE.

Mrs. Margaret Jane Louise Hamilton, aged 77, was found guilty of wilful perjury committed at Marylebone Police-court during the proceedings against Mr. Herbert Druce. The judge, Mr. Justice Walton, deferring judgment, she was liberated on bail.

#### MINING DISASTER.

According to telegraphic information from Bath an explosion took place in a coal-mine at Morton-Hill, causing the death of two miners; more than ten other men are missing.

### NEWS FROM AMERICA.

#### THE PRESIDENT RECOMMENDS SPECIAL LEGISLATION AGAINST ANARCHISTS.

President Roosevelt has sent a special Message to Congress, recommending special legislation for the suppression of anarchism and laying before Congress a document drafted by the Attorney General, authorising the Postmaster General to prevent the circulation of anarchist publications through the post. The President gives notice that, in accordance with this document, he will instruct the Postmaster General not to allow the transmission of such publications in future by Post Office officials, and adds that in comparison with the suppression of anarchism every other question shrinks into insignificance. The anarchist is the enemy of society, the enemy of mankind.

#### THE GOVERNMENT AND THE HARRIMAN SYSTEM.

A Salt Lake City telegram says that with reference to the proceedings instituted by the United States Government against the Union Pacific Railroad, the financier Mr. Harriman, and others, the defendants yesterday filed their answer in the Federal Court. They collectively deny the charge that the object of the combine was to restrict competition and to monopolise traffic.

(Continued on page 3.)

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### WEATHER FORECAST FOR TODAY

of the Royal Saxon Meteorological Institute.

Moderate westerly winds, fairly bright but changeable weather, slight showers at times, temperature not much altered.