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The Daily Record

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and THE DRESDEN DAILY.

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MR. ROCKEFELLER IN THE WITNESS BOX.

(From our New York correspondent.)

It is not often that ordinary mortals have an opportunity of observing to their hearts' content one of the many Cæses of this country. The average American takes great personal interest in his millionaires, even if an outcry is raised now and then against "bloated plutocrats." Thus many ears tingled when it became known that Mr. Rockefeller would be called as a witness in the action brought by the Government against the most powerful of all corporations for a breach of the Sherman Anti-Trust law. The scene around the Standard Oil Company building on Lower Broadway was a lively one. From both sides of the street and out of the windows of numerous "sky-scrapers," thousands of eyes were on the watch to get a look at Mr. Rockefeller when he should leave the building to go to the Court. Once he was in the Court all eyes were again fixed upon him; and this man, who has been persecuted more than any other, who has been caricatured to an incredible degree in newspapers and the butt of countless wits, did his best to appear human; showing a variety of gifts and a power of adapting himself to every situation, that were really surprising. He lost no opportunity of impressing the army of reporters who surrounded him by his unconcerned and natural manner, and with the idea that, in spite of the burden of his great wealth, he sees life in its cheeriest aspect and is thoroughly jovial. With these newspaper men he joked, read them lectures on long life and good digestion, assured them again and again, when they asked him questions about Standard Oil, that he had never felt better in his life, thanks to the course of diet he had followed all his life. He allowed himself with the readiest good-will to be photographed and sketched, talking and laughing with his tormentors in that way. To the draughtsman of a New York journal he remarked that he envied him his talent: to which the artist promptly replied that he wished he had his, Rockefeller's, talents—a retort which amused the Oil-King immensely.

In the witness-box Mr. Rockefeller willingly entered into the details of the early history of the Standard Oil Company, from the day on which, in the year 1858, he had borrowed 2,000 dollars to start an oil shop. He described his taking up the loan as follows. He went to a Cleveland banker, Mr. Handy, to borrow 2,000 dollars. That sum was in those days thought more of than it is now, and a young man could not easily obtain it. "I told Mr. Handy," said the witness, "what I wanted the money for, and exactly how I intended to spend it and to start the oil business.

"Are you sure," asked the banker, "that you will carry on your business exactly in that way, and that your ideas will not change?"

"I told Mr. Handy," continued the witness, "that I had fixed my plan and should not alter it."

"Well," said he, "if you will promise not to alter it, I will lend you the money."

"He handed me the 2,000 dollars and charged me no interest; and to that loan I owe my success. I have never ceased to be grateful to the man who enabled me to take my first step in business life."

Mr. Rockefeller then proceeded to relate, with expressions of pride, the immense expansion of his business, the introduction of new business methods which had paralysed competition. With calm complacency he admitted that the Standard Oil Trust had earned eighty million dollars in the year 1907; and detailed the purchases of other businesses and

Madonna and Child

Oil painting, epoch 1560 to 1580.

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refineries. He endeavoured to show that the immense development of the business was due purely to business principles and not, as has been supposed, to the employment of illegal and inconsiderate methods of eliminating competition. Thought had always been taken, he said, for the general good. Mr. Rockefeller carried his evidence on to 1882, the year in which the Standard Oil Trust was formed. Here, to the public's surprise, the counsel for the Oil Company stopped the examination of Mr. Rockefeller, in order that the further development of the business of the undertaking should be deposed to by other witnesses. Mr. Rockefeller's readiness to supply information was shown by his offering to give the representatives of the Government a particular description of the oil-casks! The Oil-King evinced a great memory for persons and figures, which rarely failed him even under the sharpest cross-examination by the Government counsel. If placed in an awkward situation, he quickly extricated himself by some witty remark. Thus he often alluded in the most serious tone to the "poor" Standard Oil Trust, and generally had the laugh on his side. Whole sheets of the newspapers are filled with his evidence, and with endless sketches of him and his gestures.

GENERAL NEWS.

NEWS FROM ENGLAND.

HEALTH OF KING EDWARD.
(From our own correspondent.)

London, December 9.

It may be taken for granted that the many wild and sensational rumours mooted abroad with reference to King Edward's health lack foundation, or at least serious foundation. The majority of these rumours have appeared in the foreign press, and it is a sufficient commentary on them to learn that the best informed English journals have elicited nothing from official sources which bears out the startling statements made on the subject of the monarch's health. It is quite true that His Majesty has been more or less indisposed for the past week, but this has not prevented his public appearance on one or two occasions in that period. A slight touch of influenza, together with slight rheumatic symptoms, are, it is understood, the sum total of the case. An official bulletin issued at Brighton today announces that the King suffered no inconvenience from the journey down from London, and is now sojourning at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Sassoon. On Tuesday His Majesty drove in a closed carriage from Buckingham Palace to Victoria, and conversed for a few moments on the platform with several friends. He appeared to be the reverse of unwell, and it was remarked that

he looked very much better than on arriving in London on Monday. The King derived great benefit from his visit to Brighton last year, and his physicians, including Sir Francis Laking, are sanguine that a few days' stay by the sea will quite restore His Majesty's health. Neither the Queen nor Princess Victoria will go to Brighton, a fact that completely dissipates the absurd rumours which appeared in some of the foreign papers to the effect that members of the Royal family had hastily been summoned.

(In view of the foregoing remarks made by our Correspondent, our readers would do well to take the lurid accounts of King Edward's condition published in certain of our contemporaries *cum grano salis*.— Ed. D.R.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

London, December 9.

The Prime Minister made a statement today as to the business which remains to be done by the House during the rest of the Session. Referring to the Licensing Bill, he remarked that it had met with a fate that had befallen many other useful measures. Much might be said on that question ("Hear, Hear," from the Ministerial benches) but he would postpone what he himself had to say upon it until a fitting opportunity should offer. The Government intended to carry through several measures in the course of the Session; among them the Eight Hours Bill for miners and the Port of London Bill. Among the measures that would not be proceeded with would be the Bill for amending the present system of land purchase in Ireland.

In the further course of his remarks, the Prime Minister announced that another Government measure that would be put down for discussion would be a Bill prohibiting the importation of hops and the employment of substitutes for hops in brewing. Hops in packages bearing the name of the grower or owner and of the country in which they were grown would be exempt from the prohibition. The Government hoped that this Bill would be allowed to pass, but would withdraw it if it should meet with any opposition.

Mr. Asquith concluded by mentioning the 18th instant as a possible date for closing the Session.

In reply to a question, Mr. McKinnon Wood, the Under Secretary for the Foreign Office, said the Government had not yet recognised the transfer of the Congo Free State to Belgium.

NEWS FROM AMERICA.

THE PRESIDENT ELECT AND THE TARIFF.

In well-informed Washington circles it is regarded as certain that President Taft will call a special session of Congress next year to deal solely with the Tariff, and meantime all sides will be given careful hearing. European parties concerned in the matter may take it for granted that any cabled statements purporting to make announcement of Government decisions taken at Washington in connection with the revision of the Tariff are entirely untrustworthy if not wholly invented. Obviously, nothing can be done by the present Administration, and it is an absolute fact that Mr. Taft has so far carefully refrained from pledging himself to any particular line of action. In regard to Tariff revision as a matter of policy the President-elect has merely declared himself in favour of carefully thought-out revisions of the schedules.

Washington, December 9.

Mr. Charles N. Fowler, a member of Congress, has brought in a Bill for the appointment of a stand-

(Continued on page 2.)