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The Daily Record

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THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT.

(From a London correspondent.)

Although Mr. Asquith put a bold enough face upon it, his Liberal Cabinet can hardly look forward to the coming session, opened with due pomp and circumstance by H.M. the King, with superlative confidence. Rumours are rife as to recent dissensions within the Cabinet itself on the all-important question of the up-keep of the Navy, and though the Prime Minister has found himself able in this particular matter to enforce his will upon his colleagues, he has been obliged to throw a sop to Cerberus, in a promise that he will once more embark upon the stormy seas of Welsh Disestablishment.

Of the clauses in the Speech from the throne, none have found more general appreciation than that which, in graceful and tactful phraseology, refers to the recent eminently successful visit of Their Majesties to Berlin. At bottom the English people are more sentimental than is generally believed, and the memory is yet green among them of the German Emperor's hurried dash to England upon the death of his venerated grandmother; and opinion was rife in the British Isles that her genial successor had delayed overlong in paying a ceremonial visit to his august nephew. The enthusiastic reception which King Edward and his consort were accorded in the new world-metropolis has been commented on most favourably by the whole British nation, and it is being gradually but increasingly realised that the everlasting bickering of sections of the London press is absolutely purposeless, and that a real *entente* between England and Germany is more than desirable and even necessary: it is natural.

Of the other references to foreign policy in the King's Speech little need be said. An euphemistic reference is made to a hoped for solution of the difficulties that have arisen in the Balkans, and a somewhat cryptic hint is given as to joint British and Russian action in much harassed Persia.

The special appeal to the Lower House, for the wherewithal to carry on the nation's business, is couched in most unusual language. The customary and formal sentences expressing reliance on the House of Commons for providing funds is replaced by a somewhat gloomy paragraph, relating to increased expenditure, and one can well understand that that self-dubbed "robber of henroosts," Mr. Lloyd George, views with anything but composure his coming budget in which, while faced with an almost unprecedented falling-off in revenue, he has to provide for an increase, so distasteful to him, in the naval estimates, and at the same time make provisions for the ever increasing burden of that over-hasty sample of Liberal legislation, Old Age Pensions. Ever somewhat lacking in reticence, Mr. Lloyd George has made threats many and diverse upon public platforms, threats by the way usually modified in subsequent speeches, as to the means by which he is to extort money from the British taxpayer. But taxes on the liquor interest, and even the threatened supertax on the really rich, so welcomed by the ultra-Radical contingent, will hardly suffice to make up the alarming deficit, and the Chancellor's position is hardly one to be envied at the present juncture.

To the rest of the King's Speech one might without irreverence apply the latest term in London jargon "swank" so paltry is it in promises, so rich in omission. No reference is made, for example, to the preposterous state of affairs in Ireland. Nowhere, save perhaps in Russia, does anarchy reign so supreme as in the South and West of Ireland at the present time. The King's Law is openly dis-

regarded; boycotting, that most odious of crimes against the social order, holds undisputed sway; arms are being imported wholesale into the disaffected districts; cattle driving is becoming the national pastime once again as in "the bad days" of '81; policemen are being driven to their barracks by armed mobs; the while Mr. Birrell, the optimistic, but wholly incapable, author of *Obiter Dicta* complacently folds his arms and murmurs Ireland for the Irish, oblivious to the scenes of violence that marked the recent sittings of the National Convention in Dublin, scenes that only recalled the unlicensed orgies of Donnybrook fair.

The much discussed question of unemployment is dismissed in the King's Speech with a few curt sentences on the proposed establishment of co-ordinated labour exchanges, at which already the truculent Labour members, including the returned but encephalic hooligan, Victor Grayson, are already up in arms and for substantial legislation we are left to Bills regulating the capture of fish, the supply of milk and the status of inebriates.

The Government, realising probably that their tenure of office, with all its much desired loaves and fishes, will be brief enough, remains true enough to its creed of assimilating its policy to that of one of its more notorious members, Mr. Winston Churchill, the young man in a hurry. Without waiting for the report of the Poor Law Commission, they propose to legislate on unemployment; without waiting for the report on the activity and utility of the Church in Wales, they propose to bring in once more a Disestablishment Bill. That it will, if seriously pressed forward, meet with the same fate as its predecessor no sane man doubts. It will, of course, be passed by the subservient majority in the Commons, and equally of course it will be unceremoniously rejected by the Lords. That being the case, one turns instinctively to find in the Speech from the throne an echo of the frothy utterances of the Cabinet Ministers during the recess anent of the dire vengeance they are about to wreak on these turbulent peers. We turn in vain. The King's Speech is absolutely silent as to recriminative measures against the Lords. Thrice and thrice again has Mr. Lloyd George blown his sonorous trumpet round this modern Jericho. He has mouthed at it his fullest curse but "What gives rise to a little surprise, nobody seems one penny the worse." Can it be that this all puissant Government is looking forward with anything but calm confidence to the four bye-elections pending in canny Scotland?

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

London, February 24.

The Bill for the reform of the Government administration in India was read a second time today, *nem. diss.*

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

BILL TO PUNISH DISORDERLY PERSONS.

The Bill to make better provision for punishing strangers who abuse the privilege of admission to either House of Parliament, was issued on Tuesday afternoon. It provides that anyone found guilty of disorderly conduct shall be liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months, and a fine not exceeding £100. Anyone may be arrested under the Act unless the Lord Chancellor or the Speaker orders otherwise, and no proceedings are to be instituted without the sanction of those officials. The Bill is introduced by the Attorney-General, and supported by the Home Secretary and Mr. L. Harcourt.

AVIATION IN GREAT BRITAIN.

PROPOSED PRACTICE GROUNDS.

A scheme is being discussed for providing England with well-equipped aviation grounds. An area of some 3,000 acres of land lying between the Thames and the Crouch, in Essex, which is level, treeless, and sparsely inhabited, is proposed to be utilised for the purpose.

THE NAVAL ESTIMATES.

London, February 25.

The *Daily Chronicle* says the Cabinet came to a decision as to the Navy estimates yesterday and that the Admiralty ship-building programme for the coming financial year will include four new battleships of the "Dreadnought" class.

FEMALE SUFFRAGISTS AND PARLIAMENT.

London, February 24.

Female advocates of women's suffrage made an attempt this evening to force their way into the House of Commons, but were stopped by the police. A scene of wild commotion ensued.

LIBEL ACTION AGAINST LORD ROSEBERY.

London, February 24.

Mr. Drysdale, agent to the Earl of Rosebery, has brought an action for libel before the Criminal Court in Edinburgh against the Earl, and claims £10,000 damages.

U. S. NAVY LEAGUE IN LONDON.

WASHINGTON CELEBRATION.

The London section of the United States Navy League dined at the Hyde Park Hotel, London, on Monday night in celebration of Washington's birthday. Mr. J. Morgan Richards presided and the American Ambassador was the principal speaker.

Mr. Whitelaw Reid confessed that in such a matter all speeches were superfluous, as the ships themselves were the best talkers. He referred to achievements of the American Navy, and said it was a happy coincidence that enabled President Roosevelt to review the returning American battleship fleet on that day.

ATTACKED BY A RHINOCEROS!

LORD MINTO'S MILITARY SECRETARY INJURED.

Reuter reports from Calcutta that Lord Minto, returned to Calcutta on Monday last on the conclusion of his short tour in Assam. The trip was marred by an accident to Col. Victor Brooke, the Viceroy's Military Secretary.

A rhinoceros charged the elephant ridden by Col. Brooke, dashing that officer against the howdah so violently that his right arm was fractured in two places. The Viceroy alone was shooting the rhinoceros, and Col. Brooke was attempting to take a photograph of the shot, and also to turn the charging animal.

REPORTED DEATH OF ABE HUMMEL.

There is an uncertain rumour afloat of the death, at an hotel at Nice, of Mr. Abe Hummel, the well-known New York lawyer, who played a prominent part in the recent Thaw trial. Mr. Hummel had been staying at Nice for some time.