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The Daily Record

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and THE DRESDEN DAILY.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

GENERAL ELECTION IN JUNE?

(From our own correspondent.)

London, March 15.

In Parliamentary circles there is a growing conviction that the present Administration must appeal to the country before many months are past. Apart from the lessons of the by-elections, the Government are pledged to "end or mend" the House of Lords. It is admitted on all hands that useful and constructive legislation is an impossibility until the acrid feud between Peers and Commons has been brought to a definite issue. Minor members of the Government are complaining of the invertebrate attitude of their leaders towards this burning question. Though the question of the veto, according to Mr. Asquith, is the "dominating issue" of current politics, he invites his party to wait for the production of his scheme for dealing with it for two reasons—first, that Ministers may pass the measures to which they are pledged; secondly, that they may give the House of Lords to understand that they will not take orders for a dissolution from their lordships. But it is obvious that if the Upper Chamber is in the way of progressive legislation, there can be little hope of passing the measures on which Mr. Asquith has set his heart, if not his office, and that, if this be so, the dissolution will, in effect, be forced by the Peers, come what may. The plain truth is simply this. According to the barometer of the by-elections, the country is set against the Government, and they would have preferred taking no chances till they had tried the effect of fiddling some rather more popular tunes.

A journalistic Member, whose Parliamentary information has so far proved itself wonderfully accurate, states in his journal that there will assuredly be a General Election next June—after the Lords have thrown out the Finance Bill, by way of a direct challenge to the Government to take the verdict of the electorate on the "dominant issue." In other words, just as Mr. Asquith denies the date at which the Ministry is to render to the nation an account of its stewardship, so Lord Lansdowne repudiates the right of the Lower Chamber to fix the date of trial of the Peers. Both contending parties have solid grounds for their respective attitudes, and each claims to believe that the electorate is substantially on its side. Feverish activity is displayed both in the Unionist and Liberal camps, for in the event of the June prophesy coming true, the leaders do not intend to be caught napping. A great deal depends upon Mr. Lloyd George's forthcoming Budget, which is expected to be sensational in every respect. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has spoken so much of late with regard to the "robbing of hen-roosts" that his proposals are anticipated with anxiety by capitalists, land-owners, and others of that class.

London, March 16.

Mr. Wood, the Under Secretary for the Foreign Office, replying to a question as to the building of the Shanghai-Hankau-Ningpo Railway, said it was true that certain terms specified in the treaty for the taking up of loans had not been complied with. The British Ambassador at Peking had therefore been instructed to make representations to the Chinese Government with respect to the building of the railway.

PENDING ELECTION IN ENGLAND.

CROYDON.

The death of Mr. Arnold-Forster, M.P., finds the Unionist party in Croydon fully prepared for a contest, says a London contemporary. The late member intimated some time ago to the Executive his resolve not to seek re-election on account of ill-health, and steps were taken to select a prospective candidate, Sir R. Hermon-Hodge being unanimously chosen.

The last election was fought when the Parliamentary register of voters contained 23,871 names, and the by-election will take place on a register containing 26,470 names.

The adopted prospective Radical candidate, Mr. J. E. Raphael, is well-known as a cricketer and football player. The Labour party in the borough have no candidate definitely in prospect, and are badly off for funds.

Former elections have resulted as follow:—

1885.		1892.	
W. Grantham, Q.C. (U.)	5,484	Hon. Sidney Herbert (U.)	6,528
Jabez S. Balfour (R.)	4,315	E. W. Grimwade (R.)	4,834
Unionist Majority	1,169	Unionist Majority	1,694
1886. By-election, January.		1895.	
Hon. Sidney Herbert (U.)	5,205	C. T. Ritchie (U.)	6,876
Sydney Buxton (R.)	4,458	C. C. Hutchinson (R.)	4,647
Unionist Majority	747	Unionist Majority	2,229

1906.	
H. O. Arnold-Forster (U.)	8,211
Somers Somerset (R.)	7,573
S. Stranks (Labour)	4,007
Unionist majority over Radical	638

THE FUTURE OF WEI-HAI-WEI.

London, March 16.

The *Morning Post* of this morning reports from Shanghai that the Chinese Government is endeavouring to regain the port of Wei-Hai-Wei, at present occupied by the British. The Peking authorities are said to be contemplating the conversion of the port into an Imperial naval base, and throwing open the mercantile harbour to the oversea commerce of the world.

AUSTRALIAN-GERMAN CO-OPERATION.

Melbourne, March 16.

The joint Anglo-German expedition to New Guinea has proved that the native population of that territory were in 1908 guilty of gross misbehaviour. The Commonwealth Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. E. L. Batchelor, expresses his gratification at the fruitful results of the harmonious co-operation between the Australian and German authorities.

SEPTUAGENARIAN AS PEDESTRIAN.

New York, March 16.

Mr. Weston, seventy-one years of age and a renowned pedestrian, started from this city yesterday on a walk to San Francisco, which he expects to reach in 100 days. His departure was witnessed by an immense crowd, who cheered the aged athlete with great enthusiasm.

AMERICAN TARIFF REFORM.

Washington, March 15.

The Extraordinary Session of Congress commenced this afternoon. The new Tariff proposals and President Taft's Message respecting the same will be laid before Congress today or tomorrow.

THE NEAR EASTERN CRISIS.

AUSTRIA'S REPORTED ULTIMATUM.

Vienna, March 15.

The Austro-Hungarian Government will, in the course of the next few days, despatch a final Note to the Servian Government. An answer will be demanded within the space of a week at the utmost.

Budapest, March 15.

The Hungarian Telegraphic Correspondence Bureau has the following to say with regard to the last Servian Note: "The Note is unsatisfactory in its political phases. The Servian reference to the Circular Note cannot be accepted by us, since its contents are insufficient. The Note proves that in Belgrade every imaginable effort is made to frustrate our endeavours to create a clear atmosphere between the Dual Monarchy and Servia, and to put an end to the continued warlike preparations."

Belgrade, March 15.

It is officially reported that the Minister for Foreign Affairs has commissioned the Servian Minister at Constantinople to decisively deny to the Porte the rumour circulated there, to the effect that Servia contemplates the occupation of a Sanjak. Servia, it is asserted, has not the slightest idea of entering upon such an adventure.

Belgrade, March 15.

The Servian answer to the Austro-Hungarian note is unanimously condemned in diplomatic circles here. Russia has advised Servia to adopt a conciliatory attitude. The Servians themselves are well pleased with the reply.

AUSTRIAN PRESS OPINION.

Vienna, March 15.

The *Fremdenblatt*, commenting on the Servian answer, writes: "The Servian note does not fulfil the expectations that were here indulged. The Belgrade Government evades our well-meant efforts to clear the way; and today, instead of giving us distinct and specific information, begins with a reference to the circular despatch which we certainly cannot accept instead of the desired information, because it contains an undue formulation of the Bosnian matter as a Servian affair, although Servia refers this to the Powers. The circular despatch closes the door on our side behind the Bosnian matter, and at the same time opens a door on the other side; unties the knot with one hand to tie it again with the other; it is ambiguous, and we cannot doubt what the aim and object of such ambiguity is. Servia wants to gain time, by hiding behind the Powers. Through the communication of the Entente Protocol to the Powers the Bosnian matter has assumed a purely formal character, and public opinion in Servia will only be misled by the supposition that a Conference could concern itself with the Servian desires. The suggestion that we should again lay before Parliament the commercial treaty concluded last year, we put up with as a further trial of our patience of the kind to which we have been sufficiently accustomed for the last three months. We let it pass over us, in the conviction that the unusual language with which Servia approaches us is calculated to show Europe still more clearly where, in this pending dispute, right and pretension lie; which side is endeavouring to make sacrifices for the peace so generally needed; and on which side the danger of a disturbance of that peace is kept in view with lamentable infatuation."

(Continued on page 2.)