

Office:
Struve Str. 5, I.
Dresden A.
Telephone
1755.

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and THE DRESDEN DAILY.

THE FIRST DAILY PAPER IN ENGLISH PUBLISHED IN GERMANY.

No 949.

DRESDEN, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 1909.

10 PFENNIGS.

The Daily Record is delivered by hand in Dresden, and may be ordered at any Post Office throughout the German Empire. It is published daily, excepting Mondays and days following legal holidays in Dresden.

Monthly Subscription Rates: For Dresden, mark 1.—; for the rest of Germany and Austria, mark 1.20. For other countries, marks 2.50.

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A NATION IN ARMS.

CURIOUS ENGLISH PHENOMENON.

(From our own correspondent.)

London, March 22.

The wave of agitation which swept the entire country subsequent to the naval debate in Parliament last week continues unabated. Old political hands are at one in declaring that rarely in their experience have they witnessed such a popular upheaval, which is involving extreme Imperialists, Unionists, Radicals, and peace apostles alike. It would be possible to count on the fingers those journals which are still keeping aloof from the movement, and with these few exceptions the press is solidly vociferating the national need for increased naval effort. Circumstances being what they are, it was inevitable that the battle-cry should be framed on the time-honoured "German Peril" lines. Thus the *Times*, which even in these degenerate days endeavoured to dissociate itself from rabid sensationalism, publishes a startling leading article entitled "The German Peril." Its columns overflow with energetic letters from every shade of party politician and publicist, from Earl Rosebery to Lord Esher, and Mr. Frederic Harrison to Mr. W. T. Stead. The tenor of these communications is similar in every case. Mr. Harrison, a venerable writer whose entire life has been spent in advocating international peace, now contributes a two-column indictment of German policy; Earl Rosebery dilates on the possibility of invasion; and Mr. Stead resumes his lately adopted chant of "Two British keels to every German one."

The examples cited are symptomatic of the national feeling, which is not so much one of irritation against Germany on account of her marvellous progress in shipbuilding—which, indeed, elicits unstinted admiration from all sides—as indignation against a Government which, on its own showing, has allowed itself to be hopelessly misled on a question of vital national importance. Leaving Germany and the German Navy entirely out of the question, as they should be left, there is no doubt that by a persistent course of ambiguity, misguided parsimony, and vacillation the Government has failed to maintain the Empire's maritime forces at the standard which for a quarter of a century has been regarded as the minimum consistent with the requirements. This much is admitted by Mr. Asquith and his advisors. What they do not admit, and yet what is equally manifest, is the detriment to Anglo-German friendship which may be a direct result of their policy. Hence we have the spectacle of an Administration which literally bolted into office on a platform exclusively constructed of peace planks, unwittingly doing its utmost to throw difficulties in the way of firm friendship between two great nations. Peace advocates must perforce remain silent until the Empire's maritime strength regains the degree at which it stood previous to the last General Election. The nation will not listen to soft words while it feels itself in a position of insecurity, and indeed their utterance might be more harmful than the ebullitions of the Jingos.

OLGA MOLITOR BETROTHED.

Munich, March 22.

Olga Molitor, who figured so prominently during the sensational trial for murder of the German-American lawyer Hau, has become betrothed to Herr Gratjes, a Würzburg physician. The announcement was made at the local "Standesamt."

THE BALKAN TANGLE.

IMPORTANT STATEMENT BY AUSTRIAN PREMIER.

Vienna, March 23.

Before proceeding to the Order of the Day at yesterday's sitting of the Chamber of Deputies, the Minister President, Baron von Bienerth, delivered himself of the following statement:—

"I believe it my duty to give to the Chamber at this juncture some information as to the political situation in its present phase. Last week I was in a position to state that the Servian Note in answer to our representations did not fulfil our expectations. According to further information which has reached us up to now, it appears that the Servian answer is not considered satisfactory in other Cabinets. We have refrained from at once answering the Servian Note because an ambiguous reply would have the consequence of further accentuating the critical situation, which we desire to avoid so far as it depends upon ourselves. The aim of our policy is the security and consolidation of the situation arising out of the declaration of annexation. We harbour no aggressive intentions, neither do we wish to pursue a policy based on the acquirement of prestige. There is still time for Servia to clearly explain herself with regard to the situation. We prefer not to hurry ourselves in answering the latest Servian Note because we learn that other Powers are giving fresh advice to the Servian Government, advice which we hope will receive earnest consideration. If we, in accordance with our pledge, still preserve the greatest patience, it is nevertheless a duty we owe to ourselves to speedily end the intolerable situation on our frontier. Today, however, we remain true to our present policy, and extend towards Servia a hand which, if she is thoroughly cognisant of her interests, she will be able to grasp."

The Minister President's speech was frequently interrupted by loud and prolonged applause, especially when he referred to the "intolerable situation" on the Austro-Hungarian frontier.

It is reported from Budapest that the Austro-Hungarian Minister at Belgrade, Count Forgach, will present on Friday at latest a note to the Servian Cabinet, demanding the withdrawal of the resolutions adopted by the Skupshtina (Servian Parliament) and the demobilisation of the Servian forces. A period of three days will be granted for the acceptance or refusal of these demands.

Speaking at an election meeting yesterday, Herr Weisskirchner, the Austrian Minister for Commerce, described the annexation of Bosnia as the cause of the present crisis. This annexation, he argued, merely converted into an actual fact an existing hypothesis. He was a believer in peace, but was nevertheless convinced that in case of war the people of Austria would unite in defence of their rights.

STRANGE STORY DENIED.

Vienna, March 23.

The *Fremdenblatt* says: "The *Paris Figaro* recently published what was represented to be an extract from a letter written by a member of the Imperial Austrian House to his relatives in Paris, in which the writer expressed his conviction that war would not break out, in spite of the martial rumours. In reproducing this paragraph a Vienna journal thinks it probable that the writer was the Heir Apparent, Archduke Francis Ferdinand. We are in a position to assert authoritatively that this supposition is incorrect."

ENGLAND AND GERMANY.

SCENES IN PARLIAMENT.

London, March 23.

Mr. George Faber, Liberal member for Boston, asked the Prime Minister whether, in view of the statement recently made by the German Secretary of State for the Navy, that no proposal had been made by the British Government to the German Government with respect to a fleet reduction, he could give the House any information as to what had taken place between the two Governments in reference to a mutual reduction of naval expenditure. Questions of a like purport having been put by other members, the Prime Minister replied to all as follows:—

"I must refer to the statement I made in this House on Tuesday last, which represents the facts exactly, and to which I in every respect adhere (Cheers). The matter was more than once last year the subject of informal exchanges of ideas between the two Governments, on our side with the object of assuring ourselves whether any proposals of the kind indicated in the questions that have been put to me would be taken into consideration. We made no proposals because we were given to understand that the German fleet programme was settled by law and in no way depended on that of Great Britain. So far as I know, there is no authentic report of the remarks alleged to have been made by Secretary of State von Tirpitz before the Budget Committee of the Reichstag; but, as I see from the German newspapers, the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will before long take an opportunity of making a statement on the subject. I do not doubt that a full report of his remarks will be rendered, and I reserve further comment until that report is before us."

Mr. Mackarness, Liberal member for Newbury, then asked the Prime Minister whether at any time since the information reached the Government in the autumn of last year that in the programme of the German fleet the building of four ships was to be accelerated, friendly enquiries of any kind had been addressed to the German Government in order to ascertain the extent and purpose of that acceleration.

Mr. Asquith replied that Sir Edward Grey, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, would take an early opportunity of making a statement that would embrace this and other circumstances, and would be a more satisfactory way of throwing light on them than the way of question and answer. The vote of non-confidence which was to be moved by the Opposition would give Sir Edward Grey the opportunity of making such a statement.

In the further course of the sitting the First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. McKenna, said in reply to a question: "The extension of the Krupp works and the obtaining of a loan by the firm for the purposes of that extension were well known to the Government. The extension had undoubtedly indicated an intention to accelerate the building of ships and to avoid the delays that had previously occurred, but did not necessarily imply that the German Government intended to anticipate the dates fixed for laying down the ships provided in the law."

The debate on the vote for the effective strength of 128,000 men was then resumed; and the date for moving the vote of want of confidence was fixed as March 29.

(Continued on page 2.)