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The Daily Record

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and THE DRESDEN DAILY.

THE FIRST DAILY PAPER IN ENGLISH PUBLISHED IN GERMANY.

No 983.

DRESDEN, WEDNESDAY, MAY 5, 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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RICHARD WEHSENER,
 DRESDEN, Zinzendorf Strasse 16.

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WHALE AND ELEPHANT.
THE RUSSIAN INTERVENTION IN PERSIA.

(DAILY RECORD CORRESPONDENT.)

London, May 3.

With the best intentions in the world, it is impossible to refrain from viewing with some trepidation, not unmixed with amusement, the latest phase in the Anglo-Russian entente. During the long years that the two nations were more or less at daggers drawn, Persia was one of the chief bones of contention. It was general knowledge that Russia cast longing eyes on the Persian Gulf, and that Russian agents were particularly active all over the Shah's dominions, endeavouring to find a pretext for gaining predominant political influence which would eventually open a way to the Gulf. But years passed, and the Muscovite was baffled. Persia remained fairly tranquil and offered no excuse for intervention. Then came the much-belauded Anglo-Russian agreement, according to which Russia pledged herself to make no further advances in the direction of the Persian Gulf. The celerity with which she agreed to this hampering clause is only explainable on the grounds that she despaired of the long hoped-for opportunity coming her way. But no sooner had the agreement been signed and countersigned in an atmosphere of spontaneous cordiality than disturbances broke out in Persia. We can imagine the St. Petersburg statesmen biting their lips with chagrin, and we can also imagine the contented smile of the British Foreign Office at its prescience in thus rendering innocuous the Russian peril in Persia. Civil war very soon came to Persia; the Shah demonstrated his utter inability to keep order within his dominions, and the commercial interests of every country represented in Persia suffered grievous detriment. It is admitted on all hands that, had the Anglo-Russian agreement not been concluded anterior to this outbreak, the two nations might well have found a *casus belli* in the Persian imbroglio. As it was they contented themselves with peacefully exchanging amicable notes on the subject and making representations to the Shah, who received them with suave politeness but did absolutely nothing to restore order. Finally, with the siege of Tabriz, Russia awoke to the fact that the lives of her nationals and the safety of their property was actually threatened, and she forthwith sounded the British Foreign Office as to its attitude in the event of a Russian occupation of Northern Persia. Wonder of wonders, they would raise no opposition; they would, in fact, welcome such a move. Forthwith Russian troops crossed the frontier and are now duly installed at Tabriz. It is confidently expected that they will withdraw in the Greek Kalends. Once having set her foot in Persia, it is practically certain that Russia will make of it a second Egypt. This probability is now recognised by the English press, which is manifestly perturbed thereby. However, there is one way out of the difficulty. There is talk of peril threatening British interests in the South, talk that may or may not be inspired by official quarters. In any case, it is quite on the cards that the elephant will not be allowed to peacefully repose on the Persian carpet to the total exclusion of the Whale. The Whale, though an amphibious creature, has often proved his complete ability to come ashore when necessary; and if the straw does not err he will shortly prepare for a cruise to the Persian Gulf. He may, it is true, find himself in rather hot water there, but in this respect he is known to be pachydermatous.

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BRITISH COLONIAL NAVIES.

London, May 4.

During question time in the House of Commons yesterday, the Prime Minister, replying to an enquiry, said the Government had taken steps to ascertain the views of the self-governing Colonies as to the early assembling of a Conference to discuss the subject of the defence of the Empire by sea and land. Special consideration would be given, if such a Conference met, to the proposals for maritime defence which had lately been made by Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The Government were awaiting the answers to their communications to the Colonies.

CHEAP "DREADNOUGHTS."

(DAILY RECORD CORRESPONDENT.)

London, May 3.

Mr. Lucien Wolf, the well known essayist on foreign affairs, writes an interesting letter to the press on the subject of financial provision for "Dreadnoughts." He says:
 "The new Budget invests with actuality an ingenious idea mentioned to me a little time ago by one of the most eminent financiers in Europe. We had been chatting about the naval crisis and I had expressed the opinion that, in view of the complete breakdown of the European equilibrium as construed in terms of armaments, we should not be safe in 1912 unless we had at least 30 'Dreadnoughts.' My friend agreed with me, but said he was inclined to go very much further. If we are to be absolutely secure (he said) and at the same time to deter all competition, we shall want—not, perhaps, in 1912, but a little later—quite 60 'Dreadnoughts.' It would be a tremendous relief to the country and a mercy to our rivals, who are being tempted to bankruptcy by our hesitations, if we were to provide for these ships at once by a fixed naval programme. You will, of course, say that the cost would stagger Parliament. But why should it? Sixty 'Dreadnoughts' would cost, roughly, £120,000,000—in other words, a little less than £4,000,000 a year. Now this money can be found without imposing a penny of fresh taxation. All you have to do is to take £4,000,000 out of the £9,000,000 to be appropriated for old-age pensions and make the employers and employed supply that sum on a contributory system similar to that which prevails in Germany. Even then our pensions would be given on a far more liberal scale than in Germany, seeing that seven-eighths of the money raised in that country are contributed by masters and men."

THE AMERICAN PEACE CONFERENCE.

Chicago, May 3.

The second Peace Congress met today for the first time, when a letter was read from President Taft accepting the honorary Presidency of the Congress and saying that he would always exercise his legitimate influence in the cause of peace. The Federal Government is represented by Mr. Ballinger, Secretary of Interior. In addition to the diplomatic representatives of Mexico, China, and Sweden, the German Ambassador, Count Bernstorff, has promised to address the Congress on the 5th instant, the last day of the proceedings.

EVENTS IN TURKEY.
ABDUL HAMID TO BE TRIED?

Constantinople, May 4.

There are persistent rumours here that the ex-Sultan Abdul Hamid was conveyed to Salonika for the purpose of being put on trial for his life. In spite of official denials, the report is credited in many authoritative sources. It is argued that his presence, even as a strict prisoner of State, would be a constant source of peril to the new régime, and it is known that a majority of the Young Turk leaders view his continued existence unfavourably. In the event of his trial, there is little doubt that sentence of death would be passed upon him. The report spread in the foreign press that another change in the monarchy is about to take place in favour of Mohammed's son, Zia'eddin, is imminent, is completely unfounded. A large number of chests and sacks containing gold coins and English five-pound notes have been found in the Yildiz Kiosk. The treasure was opened before a special commission, and subsequently handed over to the Imperial Treasury.

Constantinople, May 4.

A State Council was held yesterday, when the following regulations were formulated: Immediately after his coronation Sultan Mohammed will take the oath of loyalty to the Constitution and the Sheriat laws. He will appoint only the Grand Vizier and the Sheikh-ul-Islam. The Grand Vizier will be entrusted with the formation of the Cabinet, which must resign immediately the Chamber expresses its mistrust. In the event of the Chamber being dissolved, new elections must take place within three months. The censorship will be abolished. Societies having as their object hostility to the Constitution or national unity are prohibited. If the Chamber twice rejects a Government proposal, the assembly will be dissolved; but should the new Chamber also reject the proposal, its rejection will be regarded as final. Each session is to last six months. The Senate will consist of 45 members, a third of whom will be appointed by the Sultan, the others by the Chamber, and these will retain office for nine years. All sittings of the Senate must be public. The prerogative of the Sultan to banish persons inimical to the State is finally abolished.

Constantinople, May 4.

Tewfik Pasha tendered the resignation of the whole Cabinet to the Sultan this morning, at the Palace. The appointment of Hilmi Pasha as Grand Vizier is hourly expected.

BRITISH CONSULS IN GERMANY.

(DAILY RECORD CORRESPONDENT.)

London, May 3.

In the House of Commons today, Sir E. Sassoon will put the following question to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sir Edward Grey: Whether he will state the names and nationality of British Consular representatives at Wilhelmshaven, Kiel, and other important shipbuilding centres in Germany; if paid or unpaid; and if they are German citizens whether they can be relied upon, in view of the stringency of the requirements of German naval laws, to keep the British Foreign Office in touch with naval developments and occurrences in Germany. It is said to be stated on good authority that the British Consular representatives in these shipbuilding centres are all Germans.