

# The Daily Record

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and THE DRESDEN DAILY.

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## THE AMERICAN FLEET.

(DAILY RECORD CORRESPONDENT.)

New York, May 4.

The United States Navy is perhaps the most criticised organisation on earth. The voyage which the principal part of its battleships recently made round the world, far from allaying the acrid criticisms of a few self-elected "experts," has had precisely the contrary effect. Last week the air at Washington was full of rumours more or less alarming. It was said that the strain of the voyage had been so great, and the defects in structure and machinery so striking, that the whole of the sixteen great battleships would practically have to be rebuilt. In the case of certain vessels explicit reports were made of the engines being entirely out of running order. Mr. Meyer, the newly appointed Secretary for the Navy, has now issued an official and sweeping denial of the allegations in toto. The battleship fleet, he says, is in excellent condition, a fact attributable to the constant presence of the repair ship which accompanied the mastodons on their world encircling trip and executed all minor repairs on the spot. The disquieting rumours in regard to the fleet are due to the retention of certain vessels at the dockyards for a month longer than was originally anticipated. This delay, says Mr. Meyer, is solely on account of materials necessary to the work of repair having been withheld by the contracting firms, and has nothing to do with the vessels themselves, which stand in no need of lengthy and exhaustive overhauling. It is true, however, that the repairs are being executed in accordance with the valuable experience in which the world cruise was fruitful. The heavy seas which the fleet sometimes encountered proved the unsuitability of the heavy military masts erected on some of the battleships. They rendered the ships unsteady in a sea-way, and are therefore to be replaced by lighter pole masts, as are already mounted on the latest British, German, and Italian warships. This decision meets with the cordial approval of all naval experts, who repeatedly expressed their fear that heavy seas, taken in conjunction with the recoil of the big guns during an action, might very probably cause the older vessels to turn turtle. Prior to the great cruise, however, the experts' advice was ignored by the Government; and it is therefore certain that the large amount of smoke which arose from the controversy indicated the existence of fire after all. The armour belts of many of the latest United States armourclads are completely submerged when the vessels are loaded normally, and the thin hulls would be entirely defenceless before the enemy's fire. It is also believed that this defect is now being remedied. The Secretary for the Navy, in the course of his report, contradicts the statements made by foreign newspapers relative to the cost of the world cruise. It has been repeatedly asserted that this cost entailed no less a sum than 25 to 50 million dollars; whereas Mr. Meyer now declares that the maintenance of the fleet during its voyage cost only one and a half million more dollars than would have been expended had the fleet remained in home waters and engaged in the ordinary manoeuvres.

## THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR AT HARVARD.

Boston, May 12.

Count Bernstorff, the German Ambassador, paid a visit to Harvard University today. A luncheon was given in the house of Professor Münsterberg, at which the Exchange Professors and the Deans of the University were present.

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## BUDGET DEFENDERS' IRRITATING TACTICS.

London, May 13.

A long debate ensued in the House of Commons yesterday on the Budget resolution imposing various taxes on newly acquired property. The Chancellor of the Exchequer and other speakers pointed out that a system of taxing increments of value was in operation in many of the larger cities of Germany. In reply to the criticisms of the Opposition, Mr. Lloyd George defended the proposals contained in the resolution as appropriate and practicable, and concluded by moving the closure, amid loud protests from the Opposition. The closure was adopted by 296 to 120; the resolution was then put, and passed by 330 votes to 120.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain, who was the next to speak, sharply attacked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and accused him of having proposed the closure in order to avoid answering the arguments of the Opposition.

## AUSTRIA'S "DREADNOUGHT" PROGRAMME.

London, May 13.

In the course of yesterday's sitting in the House of Commons, Mr. Lonsdale (Unionist) asked the Prime Minister whether the expressed intention of Austria-Hungary to build warships of the most modern type would be recognised by the Government as introducing a new factor into the naval situation which would make necessary the laying down of the four provisional "Dreadnoughts" this year. Mr. Asquith replied that he had nothing to add to his former statement on the subject.

## MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S RETURN.

According to a telegram from Cannes, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain will leave for England tomorrow (Saturday).

## A REAL INVASION OF ENGLAND?

(DAILY RECORD CORRESPONDENT.)

London, May 12.

Sir George Doughty, the Unionist member for Great Grimsby, has put the following remarkable question on the notice paper of the House of Commons:—

To ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, whether the Admiralty have been informed that quite recently an exercise was carried out by the German War Department, namely, that two large steamers were suddenly commandeered at Hamburg and a number of soldiers were marched on board; that these steamers at once set out across the North Sea, steamed into the River Humber, and returned again to Hamburg; and whether this manoeuvre was carried out completely without being observed by any British guardship or other British authority.

Sir George Doughty told a Press representative last night that there was no doubt that the "manoeuvre" was carried out, and he had reason to believe that the Admiralty knew of it. "My information," he said, "became known through German sources and not through any observations made in England."

## THE FRENCH POSTAL STRIKE.

(DAILY RECORD CORRESPONDENT.)

Paris, May 11.

## CLEMENCEAU'S LOST OPPORTUNITY.

The extraordinary bungles in which French postal routine and discipline have recently become involved, are curiously human in their elements and profoundly interesting. Perhaps I may be permitted to briefly outline, on behalf of those amongst *Daily Record* readers who have not followed the course of the struggle, the history of events as they have occurred so far. It is but two months ago since the whole complex system of postal and telegraphic communication in this country was suddenly rendered useless by an almost general stoppage of work amongst the postal staffs, and we are now on the eve of a similar catastrophe. There is, happily, a bare chance that the disaster may be averted, as the "postiers," with that common-sense and foresight which has marked all their movements, are evidently not inclined to be rash, and seem disposed to wait until the re-assembling of Parliament tomorrow, in the hope that the Chamber may be able to impose a peaceful settlement of affairs on the Clémenceau government. The Prime Minister seems to be thirsting for a fight and he is decidedly a "strong man," holding his majority well in hand. Strong men, however, have a tendency to be tyrannous and M. Clémenceau is no exception. Somewhere or other in this hot-potch of cross-purposes and misunderstandings there has been singularly bad management, and there is no evidence, so far as a detached observer may see, that a prudent solution of the difficulty has been sought. The first strike, whatever sleeping dogs of anarchy and revolution its clamour may have awakened, was largely accidental and personal in its origin. The men complained of the brutality of their chief, the now notorious Simyan, and if the words which they ascribe to him, and the acts with which they charge him, are substantially true and correct, no body of men and women who respected themselves could have failed to rise in protest.

## THE DETESTED SIMYAN.

It is alleged and, practically, not denied by the authorities, that M. Simyan instituted a system of gross favouritism; made distinctions between employes according to their religious views or political colour; placed irritating stumbling-blocks in the way of promotion; economised mercilessly, and ruthlessly ignored the standard regulations in regard to hours of duty and Sunday labour. An exasperated commercial world is also willing to testify to his incompetence to deal with the vast and ever-growing needs of a public service, and only the ability of his parliamentary chief, M. Barthou, the Minister of Public Works, enabled M. Simyan to retain the confidence of the Chamber. The end of the first strike was somewhat ambiguous, on account of the delicate nature of the negotiations as between a Government and its functionaries, but, nevertheless, it was fully understood that the grievances of the "postiers" would be sympathetically enquired into, that the condition of things prior to the arrival of M. Simyan would be re-established, and that the transfer of that detested individual to some other sphere of operations would be a matter for early arrangement. "Go back to your duties," said M. Clémenceau to the postal deputation, "and tell your comrades that they may trust in the Government, and that no one shall be punished for his or her share in the strike proceedings."

(Continued on page 2.)