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and THE DRESDEN DAILY.

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THE KAISER.

This day is the German Emperor's birthday who was born on January 27th, 1859. Although there is so much talk of the German danger in these excited times of the British elections, even the most fervent advocate of the necessity of war with Germany may acknowledge that the emperor has been the furtherer of peace during his reign, since 1888, and that Germany under his reign has advanced in the right direction with enormous strides. To this advance—which is not directed against any nation but which benefits the world at large—the emperor's strong personality and straightforward character have largely contributed, and it is our pleasant duty to wish the German Emperor all the blessings which he so richly deserves.

THE PREMIER'S DILEMMA.

(FROM A LONDON CORRESPONDENT.)

Now that the results of the British elections, so far as they have gone, render it practically impossible that the Government can have a majority in the House except by the grace of the Nationalists and at the price they will exact, everyone is asking, What will Mr. Asquith do? The answer is not so simple as some of his supporters who are still whistling to keep up courage in their churchyard of buried hopes would suggest, nor is it one to which any person versed in politics would attempt to give an off-hand answer.

Let us look at the position in which Mr. Asquith is likely to find himself when he meets a vigorous and united Opposition on February 15. How different a picture will the House present to that of 1906, when the Unionists, a small and dispirited force, faced the big battalions of the largest majority of modern times, and had on their flank the Irish Nationalists, then powerless for good or evil, and the Labour party, invigorated by the polls. Taking an estimate, which is by no means immoderate, if we look to the victories already won, the next Parliament is likely to be something like this:—

Unionist:	Liberal:	Labour:	Nat.:
296	258	36	80

This, then, is the known position (for a vote or two either way affects neither the argument nor the issue), that whatever schemes a Liberal Government desired to carry through could only be effected with the assistance of the avowed enemies of the Empire—a party whose members have been enemies of the British Constitution years before the action of the Peers in relation to the Budget brought forward a House of Lords question. Mr. Asquith, then, can do nothing without the help of the Irish. What is the price? Well, we know two items in their list of demands—a crippled House of Lords and complete self-government for Ireland. Mr. Asquith and Mr. Pease may prevaricate now that the Irish vote in the boroughs is safe; such action will avail them nothing. Mr. Redmond, with his hand on his heart, protests that Mr. Asquith will be true to his pledges, because he knows that the more he asseverates belief in the Prime Minister's Albert Hall speech the closer is the grip on the legislative purse when the time for payment comes.

This election is being fought in the main on the Budget and Tariff Reform, with the conduct of the Lords as a secondary issue (Home Rule was not mentioned until the eleventh hour), but the Nationalist support in the Commons will be at the price of making the Lords and Home Rule the cardinal points of immediate politics. They want the Lords' veto crippled, not that they care a fig for the question as it affects English finance or English legislation, but because they recognise that the Lords alone stand between them and a Parliament on College Green, between the integrity of the United Kingdom and handing over a part of it, with its loyal minority, to men who, in Mr. Redmond's words, are as much rebels to English rule as their forefathers were in '98.

It is whispered in political circles that Mr. Asquith is known to have declared in private before the Elections that he would not take office without a clear majority in the British constituencies. That majority we now know has been denied him. The result of the

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strong language of Mr. Lloyd George and his lieutenant in chief, Mr. Churchill, the attempts to read into the Budget even more than it offered, the effort to set class against class, and inflame feeling against the Lords has come to—what? Such a verdict against Socialism that the Liberals can only pretend to power so long as the Irish help them to play the game of bluff. Now the Liberal Press is seeking to bring intimidation into the highest quarters. Mr. Asquith asked the country for "safeguards" necessary for "legislative utility and honour of the party of progress." The country, by its emphatic verdict, has denied both "safeguards," and the need of them. The *Daily News* of Monday suggests that the King must furnish what the constituencies have refused, and that he "cannot, without grave peril, venture to go behind" what they are pleased to regard as the facts of the Election.

Intimidation has failed signally throughout this controversy, and it will not succeed now. The Liberals have one Budget on mortgage, and another will soon be due. Mr. Asquith will have to face not "a stream of facts," but two or three very potent factors. He is at the mercy of the Irish, who hate parts of his Budget just as much as the Unionists, and some of his own party hate others. He will have to accept the situation, submit a Budget with the Lloyd George stings of Socialism extracted, and then wait for orders from Mr. Redmond.

NEWS OF THE WORLD.

THE FLOODS IN FRANCE.

PARIS, Wednesday.—The Pont de l'Alma was blown up by the municipal engineers yesterday morning with the object of preventing a damming of the Seine flood water. The continuous rising of the river left no other course open.

PARIS, Wednesday.—Yesterday afternoon President Fallières and M. Briand visited those parts of Paris which are suffering most severely from the floods. The President ordered that all measures necessary be immediately taken to relieve distress and that formalities be set aside. An invalid who was isolated in his house by the water was personally rescued by the President. At Ivry the streets can only be navigated by boat. The river Marne has risen at Alfortville to the first stories of the houses; during the afternoon 3,000 people were rescued by boats, 3,000 saved themselves, and 10,000 are still in danger. Two girls were drowned there. Strong measures are being taken against plunderers who

are pursuing their nefarious trade with great success amidst the confusion. Everywhere the floods are becoming disastrous. The Paris press has opened a fund for the relief of the sufferers, and a sum of 248,000 francs has already been collected. The Seine has now risen to the unprecedented height of 28 feet. Great concern is felt as to the fate of the bridges spanning the river. The foundations of some of the older bridges have been seriously weakened by the tremendous current, and the Pont de l'Alma is reported to be showing signs of weakness. The worst features of all is the increasing scarcity of drinking water. Special precautions have been taken to protect the pumping stations from the flood, but notwithstanding this there is reason to fear that the invading tide will find its way into the works and throw the machinery out of order. An official notice has been issued warning Parisians to boil all water to be used for drinking purposes. The river presents an appalling spectacle. A dark brown torrent flows steadily past at incredible speed, and in the boiling waters are seen great tree trunks, furniture, wire barrels, and dozens of dead animals. At each of the bridge arches is a seething whirlpool of eddying foam, giving the onlooker some idea of the tremendous force of the water. It is impossible that the bridge foundations can stand much of this grinding tear without collapsing. It is estimated that eighty thousand people lined the banks yesterday to watch the amazing spectacle. The plight of inhabitants in the low-lying streets near the river is terrible. Everything is soaked, and the damage must be inestimable. Parts of the city strongly resemble Venice, only more so, as in some cases the water is over the tops of the doors and rising steadily to the first floor.

PALERMO, Wednesday.—Since two days a violent storm has been raging here and causing widespread damage. Telephone and telegraph wires are down in all directions.

BELLINZONA (Swiss-Italian frontier), Wednesday.—Seven Italian smugglers were yesterday overwhelmed by an avalanche in the Forcola Pass, and six of them swept away. Only one member of the party was able to save himself.

NEW YORK, Wednesday.—The *Evening Sun* reports from Bluefields (Nicaragua) that the Government troops, after an hour's severe combat with the revolutionaries, retired from the field. The revolutionist forces admit a loss of 400 killed and wounded, while the Government casualties must be considerably heavier.

PHILADELPHIA, Wednesday.—The German-American National Bund has addressed a memorial to President Taft begging that the Washington authorities will abandon their claim for the free entry of American meat into Germany, thus preventing a disastrous tariff war.

WASHINGTON, Wednesday.—According to press reports, the State Department has finally decided to temporarily abandon its demands on Germany in the meat question, in view of the supposition that American meat prices would mount still higher if the German market were opened to American meat.

WASHINGTON, Tuesday.—In a speech today the president of the National Chamber of Commerce discussed the German-American tariff question, and while recommending a friendly spirit towards the German Chambers of Commerce, he also advocated support of the State Department.

NEW YORK, Tuesday.—According to reports from Washington, the Government is preparing an organised plan of campaign against the trusts and similar monopolies which retard legitimate competition, and will prosecute its design by every legal means.

BODENBACH, Tuesday.—The local authorities have arrested as a vagrant a former seaman of the Russian battleship Potemkin, whose crew mutinied some years ago at Odessa. The man states that after the mutiny was quelled he fled, and has since been wandering through Europe. When arrested he begged not to be handed over to the Russians, as he feared heavy punishment.