

SAN MARINO,

World's Smallest Republic, Celebrates Election of Regents

By SONIA TOMARA.

THE old heavy Rimini bus brought me to San-Marino on a day of fiesta, when all the chimes of the town were carolling merrily. At dawn the archpriest had drawn from an urn the names of Enzo Balducci and Aldo Busignani, two young San-Marinese citizens who were to become for a term

republic in the world. It was founded in the fourth-century of the Christian era and it has remained independent throughout all the invasions of Italy and the civil wars of the Middle Ages. It has failed to become a part of the unified Italian kingdom and has been left intact by the all-powerful Dictator Mussolini.

It has its own administration, its own department of finances for a

litary rock. From the distance it seems impregnable. But on its crest, high up in the sky, sparkle the towers of a castle and the dome of a church.

"La città di San-Marino sul Monte Titano!" says the driver pointing out his hand at the rock. "The town of San-Marino on the Titan Mound." And the bus continues to puff and to roll, leaving behind it a cloud of dust. On the tenth mile from Rimini it passes the frontier of the Independent State. A little stone pillar marks it but no Customs agents come to inspect the luggage of the passengers. The only goods prohibited on the San-Marino territory are fire-arms.

Half an hour after the frontier is passed the road begins to make hair-pin zigzags and the bus climbs the steep hill of the Titan. It passes the lively market of the suburb and finally stops near a Mediaeval gate with the San-Marino coat of arms, three mounds bearing towers and a crown—the symbol of independence.

I VISITED the town prison which stands at the very top of the hill, over a precipice a thousand feet deep. The view from its old tower is unlike any other in the world. Below lies an immense sunburnt valley striped with the ribbons of narrow white roads. Far down, in the East, sparkles the Adriatic. In the West the hills are piled up higher and higher. Ancient towers and fortresses surmount some of the peaks. At the horizon the chain of mountains disappears in a blue haze.

The cells of the prison were empty when the old keeper took me round them, ringing a bundle of huge keys. "We do not often have criminals here," he said smiling. "Tutti in San-Marino sono boni!" (All people of San-Marino are good). He showed me his only ward—the eagle Rocco whom the San-Marino Ambassador to Rome had sent as a present to his fellow-countrymen.

There is no capital punishment in the republic and no military service. The only social duty of its citizens is one-day service per year in the town militia, and the parades on the days of the elections. Only the fathers of families are entitled to vote and become members of the Arringo, a Parliament composed of sixty members. The younger set is considered too radical to partake in the country's public life.

No European international or social conflict can ever interfere with the happiness of the San-Marino people. But they have their own miniature difficulties of which the chief one is the growing conflict between the cittadini who inhabit the upper town and the contadini who live in the villages. Some time this conflict may develop into a crisis. And then the powerful rejuvenating influence of the Fascist régime will put an end to this outlived but charming vestige of the Middle Ages.

FLYING.

By KITSBY.

Nearer and nearer the heavens we go,
Leaving behind the world below;
Flying between the earth and the sky
Into the realms of mystery.

Suppose from star they did the same
And sent out also an aeroplane,
Suppose that we were to meet in the
air,

Were able to talk to the people up
there.

Perhaps they could tell how it all came
to be—
The sun, and the moon, the stars, and
the sea,

And why we're born, and live—*must*
die,
What is meant by eternity.



Outgoing Regents in Costume of Office.

of six months the Presidents of the smallest Republic in the world, the Capitani of the 12,000 people who inhabit the San Marino Free State.

THE procession with the outgoing and newly elected Presidents was just leaving the Cathedral as I walked up a steep narrow street where no car could ever pass. They were moving towards the townhall. First marched the military band, with trumpets and drums, in azure and white uniforms. The Presidents could have come down from a 16th-century painting. They wore all-black costumes; silk knickers and stockings, short tunics and velvet floating cloaks. On their heads were velvet berets trimmed with ermine, at their left side short swords and round the necks of the two old Capitani hung heavy golden chains with the San Marino order. The procession closed with a detachment of the Noble Guards who walked most dignified and solemn in their blue and orange cloaks, with a mass of white plumes flying over huge two-cornered hats.

They passed on the marble-paved square in front of the Town-Council that is perched right at the edge of a vertical cliff and entered the palace accompanied by the shouts of the crowd: "Evvivan i nostri Capitani!"

In the vast richly decorated hall of the Municipal Palace, the outgoing regents of San-Marino took seats on crimson thrones while the sixty councillors who compose the republic's Parliament formed along the walls a row of live Mediaeval statues. Balducci and Busignano, the new Capitani, approached their predecessors and received from their hands the golden chains with the insignia of power, the seals of the city and the keys of the prison.

This was not a ceremony staged for the foreigners, nor a pageant intended to amuse the population. It was a part of San-Marino's public life, the fulfilling of a social rite such as it is performed twice a year, at every election of new chiefs of the State. To me it seemed that for a while I had lost all contact with the outer world and with the 20th century and had gone right back into the Middle Ages. Time with its all-destroying scythe had spared the independent Republic of San-Marino.

BUT a tiny pink spot marks the Republic on the map of Fascist Italy. Its whole territory measures thirty-two square miles and its population does not exceed 12,000 inhabitants. No railways lead to it and San-Marino seldom figures on the itineraries scheduled for tourists. Yet it is the oldest

yearly budget amounting to half a million dollars. Its own diplomatic and Consular representatives in foreign countries, which means Italy, the Vatican City, France, Switzerland, Germany and Belgium. Its stamps, sold to philatelists, contribute greatly to its income.

Once a day a pre-war bus, with creaking brakes and groaning wheels, takes the visitors who want to see the independent republic. It leaves the



San Marino's Crag.

antique Rimini market-place, on the Adriatic Coast, in the morning and painfully labors its way through a vast plain, by a winding road thick with white dust. The voyage is slow and tiring but in the middle of it the travellers are recompensed by a sight which makes them forget the dust and the heat.

At the edge of the plain, against the horizon formed with the blue Apennine hills, suddenly rises an immense so-

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