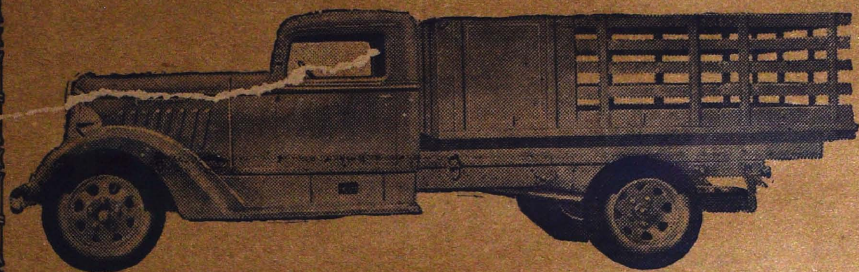


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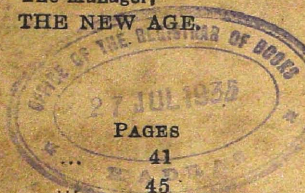
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VOL. II

JULY 1935

NO. 2

KARL LIEBKNECHT

THE GERMAN SOCIALIST LEADER

By K. Satyanarayana M.A.

II

Liebknecht's bold stand in the midst of an atmosphere of corruption, hypocrisy and cant aroused great enthusiasm among the left elements of the Social Democratic Party. His legal as well as illegal anti-militarist campaign continued unabated. The authorities still hesitated to arrest him, on account of the wide popularity enjoyed by the hero. Nevertheless, the leaders of the Social Democratic Party, through their official organ, ceaselessly carried on a slanderous campaign of reactionary propaganda, by declaring that the "irresponsible activities" of Karl Liebknecht were "of service to the enemy" and "bordering on treachery to the fatherland."

In January 1915 Liebknecht made a vigorous speech at a Party meeting, where he lucidly exposed the imperialist nature of the Great War and earnestly appealed to the Social Democrats for turning the imperialist war into a class-war against the internal enemy.

Truth about the Imperialist war.

In February of the same year Liebknecht was notified by the Government not to undertake any political activities apart from those connected with his duties as a Reichstag deputy. A few days later, Rosa Luxemburg was arrested by the German police for her work with Liebknecht in the Spartacus movement. With redoubled enthusiasm Karl began issuing a series of illegal pamphlets which he got distributed among the soldiers and the working-class. Their gist was: "The main enemy of each of the peoples involved in the War is within their own country. The main enemy of the German people is German Imperialism, the German war party, German secret diplomacy. The German people must defeat this enemy in a political war, in alliance of the proletariat of other countries, whose fight must be directed against their own imperialists....."

At the same time, Liebknecht followed a policy of obstructing the Reichstag proceedings by means of a volley of

questions and interruptions, which enraged the official lackeys and the Social Democratic leaders, but which earned for him greater and greater popularity and confidence among the German workers and soldiers.

First anti-war Socialist Conference.

On September 5, 1915 the first International Socialist Conference against war was held at Zimmerwald. There, a German delegate vociferously cried down Karl Liebknecht as a traitor who played into the hands of the enemy by voting against war debts and thus breaking the Party discipline. Rosa Luxemburg from her prison cell, and Karl Liebknecht from the Russian front, sent secret letters to the delegates of the Conference, expressing their view points respectively. In the course of his letter, Liebknecht said :

" Friends, Socialists of all countries, it is your destiny to lay the first stone of this foundation. Be implacable when you come to judge the false Socialists. Mercilessly chastise the opportunists and waverers of all countries — including Germany..... The perspectives and the hopes of our friends in each country depend on our friends in other countries. French Socialist comrades and German Socialist comrades, your fates are particularly bound together. My French Socialist friends, I warn you not to succumb not only to the phrase about national unity—you are secure against this—but also the equally dangerous phrase about Party unity !"

Arrest and Imprisonment.

On January 12, 1916 Liebknecht was expelled from the Social Democratic Party, and the way was thus cleared for his arrest. When a fresh demand for war debts was made by the Govt. in April, eighteen centrists voted against them this time. Liebknecht tried to make a speech in the Reichstag, but was not allowed. He then decided to

organise a huge working-class demonstration on May 1. Appeals were printed and distributed. More than ten thousand workers joined the demonstration on the evening of May 1, and staged several street-fights with the police. Liebknecht was glad for his correct estimate of the solidarity of the German workers. The centrist Social Democrats, who had tried to dissuade Liebknecht from organising the demonstration, declaring that the German workers were not yet ready for direct action, were now astonished and disillusioned.

For his participation in the May Day demonstration Karl Liebknecht was arrested and sentenced to four years' imprisonment. In July Rosa Luxemburg was again imprisoned. In spite of these attempts of the German Government to crush the working-class movement, it gained strength in increasing volumes.

III

Release.

The thrilling news of the Russian Revolution of October 1917 reached the ears of Karl Liebknecht while in prison. On October 21, 1918, owing to the persistent demands of the German workers, Liebknecht was granted amnesty and released from jail, after two years of imprisonment. A huge demonstration of workers met him on Berlin platform. There he addressed the demonstrators, urging them to follow the footsteps of their Russian comrades and achieve a quick victory over the German ruling class. On November 9, 1918, at a time when the leaders of other political parties in Germany were wavering, Karl Liebknecht marched at the head of a small group of German sailors to the Berlin palace, occupied it and proclaimed revolution. Two days later the Berlin Soviet of workers' and soldiers' delegates met.

Rise of the German Communist Party.

Soon the Central Committee of the Spartacus League met and began to formulate plans for transforming the Social Democratic revolution into a Bolshevik revolution. But a well organised revolutionary Party was essential for the success of such a revolution; and events were moving too rapidly for allowing any time for establishing a Party. At the same time the leaders of the Social Democratic Party began playing the part of counter-revolutionaries. Although the vast masses of the German factories and workshops accepted the programme of the Spartacus League, the soviets were almost entirely controlled by the Social Democrats. The Spartacists proposed to the Independent Socialists, a centrist party which had seceded from the Social Democratic Party, for a meeting of the All-German Independent Socialist Party. But its leaders refused to do so, being afraid of the influence wielded by the Spartacists among their own followers. Hence the Spartacists decided to put an end to their alliance with the vacillating Independents, and to convert the Spartacus League into the German Communist Party.

The Social-patriots' offensive.

Now began, in right earnest, the furious counter-revolutionary propaganda by the Social Democratic leaders, who controlled the reigns of Government. Sensational wall-posters were pasted in working-class quarters, depicting Liebknecht as "Russia's Agent" out to misuse Germany as a "battle-field for Russian Bolshevik ideas and ideals." At the same time, the Social Democratic Government dismissed several of the Independent Socialists from official posts, thus making their position more secure. An officers' corps was also organised to disarm and terrorise the workers and the police

force who were entirely under revolutionary influence.

Now reports were quickly called for by the Spartacus League as to the relative strength of the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces of Germany. The sailors and soldiers of important places of Germany promised to support the overthrow of the Ebert Government. After a careful consideration of these reports, the Central Committee of the League decided to call for a struggle against the Government until power was captured by the masses, and to organise a general strike throughout the country. A committee of three, consisting of Liebknecht and two Independent Socialists was appointed to put these decisions into force.

Attempt at Insurrection.

On the 6th of January, 1919, as many as 200,000 workers and soldiers came out into the streets of Berlin, fully armed to the teeth and with a grim determination to fight the Ebert Government to a finish. At this critical juncture, the Independent Socialists could not give a bold and correct leadership to the insurrection. They opened negotiations with the Counter-revolutionary Government, with the result that for three days, the 6th, 7th. and 8th. the militant workers and soldiers were left without any clear leadership. These negotiations were carried on against the votes of Karl Liebknecht and Pieck. On the 8th, the Government realised the strength of Counter-revolutionary forces and began to threaten the demonstrators and the committee of action. The latter body, however, remained firm and issued a manifesto, calling for an immediate insurrection to overthrow the Social Democratic Government.

The Counter-revolution.

But it was already too late for a general insurrection. The Government

mobilised all their forces and began the Counter-revolutionary offensive. An orgy of white terror was opened. All the railways and factories were captured from the workers. Hundreds of rebels were mercilessly shot down. The bourgeois press loudly demanded the execution of Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. On the 16th of January both of them were arrested by the Government police. They were put in two closed cars and were carried to unknown destinations. Rosa Luxemburg was shot in her temples and thrown into a canal with a huge stone tied to her neck. Liebknecht was shot in his head and chest several times and thus assassinated. Next day the Government announced that Liebknecht was shot on his way to Moabit prison while trying to escape from the motor van.

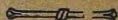
In March 1919 Lenin wrote in his thesis submitted to the first Congress of the Communist Internationale thus :

" If arrested persons, that is, persons taken by the State power into its safe

keeping, can be murdered with impunity by officers and capitalists, under a Government of social patriots, it follows that a democratic republic in which such a thing is possible is a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie."

Thus ended the career of a sincere and bold Social Revolutionary. Karl Liebknecht stands as the warmest friend of the international working-class. The life of Karl Liebknecht teaches that in the cause of socialism, all illusions about class-collaboration and the united front have no meaning and that the socialists will have to throw in their lot with the workers and peasants and participate in their day-to-day struggles.

The Indian Socialists should never under-estimate the strength of the working class for fighting for their rights. It is correct leadership that is badly required. It is the duty of Socialists in India to come forward immediately for organising the workers and peasants.



GOLDEN SAYINGS

The law in its majestic equality forbids the rich as well as the poor to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets and to steal bread.

—Anatole France.

To mortal man great loads allotted be ;
But of all packs, no pack like poverty.

—Robert Herrick.

Our inequality materialises our upper class, vulgarises our middle class, brutalizes our lower class.

—Mathew Arnold.

The endurance of the inequalities of life by the poor is the marvel of human society.

—James Anthony Froude.

Hereditary bondsmen ! know ye not
Who would be free themselves must
strike the blow ?
By their right arms the conquest must
be wrought ?

—Lord Byron.

Do not waste your time on social questions. What is the matter with the poor is Poverty; what is the matter with the Rich is Uselessness.

—Bernard Shaw.

SEDITION AGAINST THE CONGRESS !

AN AMAZING TRIAL AND ITS RESULT.

(From a Police Court Reporter)

The court-room was packed to suffocation. The Congress volunteer corps was regulating the crowd in a non-violent way with their lathis, and effectively preventing the people coming into the court in large numbers. The brilliance of the summer sun, supplemented by the unusual heat in the court-room, made every one sweat profusely ; and the people assembled in the court took out their handkerchieves to wipe their perspiration off their bodies. A few punkahs made of palm leaves were not sufficient even for the distinguished members of the bar and with characteristic generosity the legal fraternity exchanged among themselves this precious weapon of breeze-creator (for the electric fan was disallowed under the Anti-machinery Ordinance).

The clock struck 11. At once the usherer of the court announced the presiding Judge. There was pin-drop silence in the court-hall and the members of the Bar and the Jury stood up when the Judge came to the rostrum to occupy his chair. After he sat, the audience in the court too took their seats.

Justice Brahma, representing the Congress, the embodiment of fairness to all classes in India, including the princes and zamindars, capitalists and labourers, landlords and the peasant-workers, asked the accused to be brought into the dock. The sergeant of the National Volunteer corps, assisted by three more volunteers, brought

the accused and placed him in the dock, and posted themselves on either side of the accused. The Judge coughed a little, made some slight movements, took out the charge-sheet and read aloud:

" That you, the accused in the dock, Socialist Subbu, have brought the Congress established by tradition, reputation and past sacrifices and non-violent coercion, into hatred and contempt by systematically preaching against the declared policy of the Congress and wilfully misrepresenting to the people that the Congress is an upper class institution and that the workers and peasants are not represented in it, and that you further incited the masses to join the Congress in large numbers in order to capture it and overthrow the present leadership of the Congress, and as such you are punishable under Sec. 123, A.B.C. and D. of the Congress Code. Do you plead guilty or not ?"

There was a flutter in the court hall. The people were looking to the dock with bated breath. All eyes were turned towards the accused who had a smiling appearance and who was looking at the Judge with an attitude of indifference. Then he turned to his legal adviser who was sitting opposite to the august public prosecutor of the Congress. Socialist Subbu said, " I do not plead guilty and I have Committed no offence."

The Judge then asked the Public prosecutor to open the case on behalf

of the prosecution. The public prosecutor, Babubhai Dikshit, on behalf of the Congress, opened the case in the following words:

"Gentlemen of the jury, the case against the accused is a very serious one. He has been responsible for the numerous meetings in the country for spreading socialist ideas and for bringing the Congress into hatred and contempt. His ideals are fire and revolution and his profession is to preach sedition against the Congress! He has brought the Congress into hatred and contempt. He alleges that the Congress is controlled by vested interests and that it is attempting to bridge the gulf between Imperialism and Nationalism. He charges the Congress for its seasoned and moderate policy. To him no leadership is sacred, however high it may be. He has incited the masses to overthrow the present leadership, capture the institution and substitute a workers' and peasants' regime. This act of his, gentlemen of the jury, is the grossest offence under the Congress Code. I request you to view this with utmost concern. I have witnesses to depose against the accused, and I shall presently examine them one by one, with the consent of the court."

Babubhai Dikshit took out the list of prosecution witnesses and called out the first witness, Hariprasad Mody.

Hariprasad Mody!—Hariprasad Mody!—echoed and reechoed the court sergeant and the court hall. There was a quick movement of steps, and a fat flabby-looking man entered the witness-box, with cough and gesticulations.

The court clerk administered the oath, "Before God, the Congress and myself, I swear that I speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth!"

Public Prosecutor:—"You know the accused?"

P. W. 1, Hariprasad Mody:—"Yes, I saw him addressing many meetings at the beach."

"What did he say in those meetings?"

"He said that the Congress had abandoned the genuine struggle for Complete Independence; that it is an organisation controlled by the vested interests of the country; and that the masses should join it in large numbers for overthrowing its present reactionary leadership."

Cross-examined by Comrade Mohanlal Patani, Counsel for the accused, P. W. 1, said that his profession was money-lending, that he was a Congressman ever since the Congress abandoned its unlawful activities, and that he used to charge only 35% interest on secured loans and 75% on promissory notes. He also deposed that he was a member of the District Congress Executive Committee, and that once when a motion was brought forward recommending to the Congress Government to bring in a bill for repudiating all the debts of the poor peasantry, he voted against the measure and led a deputation to get the bill dropped.

Sgt. Bumbledom was the next P. W. He deposed that he regularly attended the meetings addressed by the accused, for the accused used to criticise in those meetings people of his type who were supporting the Congress so long as it enabled them to sell their wares at a high rate of profit on account of the Swadeshi campaign; that now their profits had gone down as the campaign was not in full swing and as persons of the accused's type carried on agitation among the masses to take power in their own hands for liberating themselves from all exploitation. Sgt. Bumbledom said that he knew the accused when the latter came to him once for financial assistance, and that he offered him help on condition that he stopped the campaign of Socialism, which he refused.

Cross-examined by the Defence Counsel, P. W. 2, said that he was a young mill-owner and a Congressman; that he was always supporting the Con-

gress only so long as the movement fetched him larger profits; that for sometime, on account of the intervention of some higher forces, he ceased to be a Congressman; but now he had again become an active Congressman. He had no personal animosity against the accused, and he was always prepared to assist him if he gave up his seditious activities against the Congress.

P. W. 3, was the Congress C. I. D. head-volunteer who deposed that the accused had brought into hatred the established leadership of the Congress, and that in every meeting he heard the accused advocating a radical programme and supporting the overthrow of the present Congress leadership, which he characterised as degenerate and compromising.

On cross-examination, P.W. 3. stated that he had been deputed to watch the movements of the accused by the Congress High Commands, that he was following the accused's activities very closely, he was corrupting the minds of the people by preaching sedition; and that always the accused charged the Congress for not fighting for Independence and for having compromised with Imperialism by adopting a reformist policy.

Two short-hand reporters on behalf of the Congress completed the evidence for the prosecution.

The learned Judge then directed his attention towards the accused and asked him whether he had anything to say.

Socialist Subbu then filed a written statement. The following are its extracts :—

"I am accused by the Congress High Commands of having brought the Congress into hatred and contempt by preaching Independence and Socialism which are against the declared policy of the Congress. If my preaching to the masses that they should have all the power to mould their destinies on the basis of justice and fairplay and equality

of opportunities, and that the Congress leadership had grossly failed to do this, is an offence, then I do not understand what sort of freedom an individual is allowed to enjoy under Congress Rule. Every individual should be at liberty to carry on a campaign in order to free our nation from the thralldom of oppression and exploitation, and in my opinion nobody has any right to challenge such persons who are engaged in these activities. The movement in which I am engaged will only add to the prestige of the Congress if the latter declares itself in favour of the great mass of humanity and stand by a programme which will bring economic prosperity to the teeming millions of our countrymen instead of benefiting a particular class. Therefore, learned Judge and gentlemen of the jury, I have done no offence.

"If anyone is attempting to bring the Congress into hatred and contempt, it is the right reformist wing of the Congress which in season and out of season preaches for co-operation with Imperialism and for acceptance of the Reforms. This gross betrayal of the struggle for independence—a struggle if pursued to the logical end will certainly secure the emancipation of the masses—has made many people like myself despair of the future of the Congress policy and work. Therefore in order to keep the prestige of the Congress against which I have no quarrel I have carried on this campaign and will continue to do so. In order to restore confidence among the masses the Congress should prosecute all those right wing reformist opportunist elements who use the Congress machinery for their petty class interests, instead of prosecuting men like myself. I appeal to the jury to discharge me from this so-called offence."

Justice Brahma summed up the evidence for the jury: "Gentlemen of the jury, the task you are asked to per-

form is a very serious one. Here is the accused charged with an offence against the Congress—a very serious offence—of having preached sedition against it by bringing it into hatred and contempt. You have the evidence before you of three respectable witnesses who have deposed against the accused and have substantially corroborated the evidence. The short-hand reports give us a fairly accurate account of the speeches delivered by him.

"The statement of the accused shows that he is unrepentant of what he had been doing. Rather it clearly indicates the mentality of the accused. He wants nothing short of a sudden change in the Congress institution. It is for you, gentlemen of the jury, to decide whether the accused is guilty of the offence he is charged with or not. Now you will retire and bring your verdict."

The jury went and returned after 30 minutes and 20 seconds.

The Judge:—Gentlemen of the jury, are you unanimous in your verdict?"

The foreman of the jury replied, "Yes, your Lordship. The accused is guilty. But we plead for mercy."

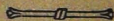
There was a commotion in the court hall. Words of murmur disturbed the silence of the court. The noise gradually developed, and shouts and hisses were freely indulged in, until the presiding deity issued a stern warning which brought on the scene the sergeant who with the non-violent use of

force stopped the crowd from pushing into the court hall. The noise abated and the judge announced his judgment.

"Prisoner at the Bar, by a unanimous verdict of the jury, you have been found guilty of a very serious offence of having brought the Congress established by tradition, reputation and past sacrifices into hatred and contempt, by your speeches. In the Congress Code this offence is the gravest, and in spite of warnings, you seem to have indulged in a systematic campaign against the Congress leadership and wish to overthrow it. It is needless to say that on behalf of the Congress High Command, I should inflict on you a severe punishment which will be an eye-opener to those who are engaged in a similar campaign as yours. The jury, however, have pleaded for mercy, which denotes that the gentlemen of the jury were convinced a bit of your reasons as to why you committed this offence. I, therefore, sentence you to 14 days fast in order to purify yourself, and to hard labour of spinning takli for a month."

The prisoner was at once removed from the Dock, and the court rose for the day. The crowd cheered the judge, jury and also the accused, and dispersed.

An appeal against this conviction was at once preferred to the High Tribunal of the people. I am informed that the Tribunal quashed the lower court sentence and acquitted the accused of all charges and allowed him special facilities to carry on his work.



Whoever produces anything by weary labour, does not need a revelation from heaven to teach him that he has a right to the thing produced.

—Robert G. Ingersoll.

If there is anything that cannot bear free thought, let it crack.

—Wendell Phillips.

Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad.

—Ecclesiastes.

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WHY GERMANY BUILDS 35 NATIONAL ARENAS.

MEANING OF THE OPEN AIR THEATRE CULT.

By K. A. Walter

THE National Socialist Revolution has not only brought in its train radical changes in the structure of society and economic life. It has also called into being new forms of expression in art and culture. If the cultural aspect of the new Germany does not yet present a unified whole, we can none the less trace the tendencies which will one day achieve that result. The true type of National Socialist German character will emerge all the more clearly as Adolf Hitler's task of instructing and reconstructing the nation comes more and more to be fulfilled.

Open Air Plays for the Masses.

In the field of drama, that great pageant of the people, a transformation has taken place. The effect on popular consciousness may be remarked in particular in the rejection of various downgrade tendencies. In close contact with the life of the theatre a movement has sprung up which has its roots deep in the historic campaigning epoch of the National Socialist Party. In its fruits may be seen unmistakably the expression of the new order. This movement has set itself the task of glorifying the new found community sense of the German nation in an artistic form worthy of such a purpose.

Under the leadership of Fr. Joseph Goebbels, the Reich Minister of

Popular Enlightenment, a body called "The National League of Open Air German Drama For the Masses" has come into being. Its task is to promote the summer time production of plays under the open sky of heaven and, still more important, to foster in so doing, a national festival cult in the popular consciousness.

The National Association is erecting for this purpose great open air arenas (so-called "Thingplatze".) suitable alike for massed assemblies and for the production of epic dramas on a vast scale in which choruses join in massed movements of declamation and song. Facing the threefold stage of such an arena is the half-circle auditorium, also, of course, open air. Individual performers and choruses appear on the various stages along paths converging from all sides through the ranks of the auditorium, thus emerging the audience in a sense of community participation with the spirit of the drama portrayed. Adjoining the arena there is a meadow which serves as parade ground for masses moving in close formation.

Recalling Historical Traditions of the Race.

The German word "Thing" literally untranslatable into English, is used to describe this form of spectacle. But this very word recalls the great German

tradition of community celebrations and Justice reaching far back into the twilight of antiquity. There are ancient arenas reminiscent of those far-off times still to be traced in present day Germany. Usually they are to be recognised by a group of mighty ancient oaks or linden trees encircling them about.

The first new arena of this kind designed by Otto Laubinger, the Leader of the National League and his leagues Gerst and Tiessler, is situated in the Brandberg hills near Halle. This arena was largely constructed by labour service volunteers. In 1935 altogether 35 such arenas will be available. Particularly worthy of mention are those on the Holy Mountain near Heidelberg, in Heringdorf on the Baltic coast, on the Island of Usedom, on the Rugard mountain near Bergen in the Island of Rugen, at Annaberg in Upper Silesia, at Schleswig-Haithabu, where were enacted in primeval times the ancient Germanic rites, and likewise in Coblenz Trier and at the Lorelei-on-Rhine.

On these arenas great ceremonial demonstrations will take place, brought into being for the first time in Germany by National Socialism. Such an arena lends an artistic consecration to such demonstrations and endows it besides with a deep and lasting sense of mission. The fate of the nation, the heroes of its history, times of stress and combat, uprising and reconstruction, everything that concerns a people, in its communal life finds living and

dramatic expression in poetic utterance.

Poetry for Public Occasions

The National Dramatic Director Dr. Rainer Schlosser is entrusted with the supreme responsibility of choosing the dramatic works to be presented upon these arenas. Especially noteworthy among the number of those already selected are: Richard Euringer's "German Passion", performed on the occasion of the National Festival at Heidelberg and also at Halle, Heymick's "Neurode," presented at Halle and at Breslau, Max Barthel's "Play of the German Workman," as well as works by such poets as Heinrich Zerkaulen and Hand Jurgen Nierentis.

This open air theatre movement deserves particular attention and recognition among the cultural achievements brought about in the new Germany by the National Socialist supremacy. In harmony with the best traditions of the nation, paths in cultural activity have carved out such as never have been known before.

The younger generation of poets now realises that with these arenas they are presented with a platform for their message exceeding all precedent; arenas from which it is possible for a poet to address the whole nation. The plays for such arenas have nothing in common with the ordinary theatre. They constitute a new form of drama in choric utterance, the effect of which far exceeds that of the theatre.

The New Age will infuse New Spirit.

SRI SUBRAHMANYA BHARATHI

REVOLUTIONARY POET AND PHILOSOPHER

By **Cayes**

The dawn of the 20th century may be claimed almost as the dawn of the New Age. Especially in this ancient land of ours, the rays of the bright summer sun which announced the distant dawn were strikingly perceptible. The insistent urge of patriotic call and furthermore the sense of the heaped up patriotism culminating in the international fraternity of love and brotherhood are to a shrewd student of history the prime factors that marked the dawn of a new age. Consequent upon this new sense and upon the various relations between the rulers and the ruled, Mother India saw some of her brightest sons engaged at the most noble and solemn task of finding ways and means of freeing her—attachment for whom was their sole passion. The National Congress owed its birth to the endeavours of a few far-sighted worthies. To gain by co-operation with the Government was the policy of the Congress in its early days. It was the purpose of the forerunners of the National movement to correct the defective methods of the Government and to help the public cause. But it is a matter of history to trace the evolution of the Congress till the present day. Congress itself has been confronted by many threatening creeds which savoured of a very extreme order of things. The universal support which the Congress has gained in the hearts of our countrymen is due to the arousing in them of a very high patriotic instinct. Our countrymen have been

for ages preaching the doctrine of forget and forgive revelling on the virtues of pacific spirit and benign benevolence of ahimsa, musing on the meditation of women-saints like Mitreyi, voicing forth around the eternal woe, and finally proclaiming to the world the efficacious benediction, "Om! Shanti! Shanti!"

India especially has been the land of sages and seers, poets and philosophers. She has suffered enough and Indians had borne them calmly. But it was Lord Curzon's indiscreet and high-handed act—the Partition of Bengal—at the beginning of this century that hastened Indians to fasten themselves to the love of their Motherland automatically. Response to the patriotic call came from all quarters, especially from young men. One of them was the late *Subrahmanya Bharathi*.

Now Bharathi is a household name throughout South India. Even such a genius of Bharathi languished for a proper want of treatment. The budding flower of Bharathi's genius was nipped before it could blossom out with fragrance and petals.

Bharathi, as could be expected, had in his father a Tamil scholar reputed in one of the South Indian Samasthans. Very early in life the genius of Bharathi was attempting to find its outlet. He composed poems which were very much admired by many who gave him the title "Bharathi."

Bharathi was not spared from the vicissitudes of fortune. His father died in his youth, and consequently he ran to Benares and remained without any regular schooling. But as regards English language he had enough grounding so as to understand the subtle thoughts of great poets like Keats and Shelly. The necessity to earn his livelihood compelled him at first to seek service as a Tamil Pandit in the Madura Setupathi School and subsequently as Sub-Editor of "Swadeshamitran".

At the instigation of a few friends he started under his management a new Tamil Weekly called "India." It was this journal which expressed the voice of New India. This paper was the only one where the full feelings of Bharathi were given vent to. The purpose of Bharathi was the purpose of a patriot. The purpose at first was the propagation of love and affection for Indian culture and glory. It is held by some sections that Bharathi was a revolutionary in the field of Indian politics. Bharathi's patriotism helped a great deal in the awakening in our countrymen a genuine spirit of nationalism. The purpose could not be achieved by any easy means at all; no doubt the giving expression to such forceful ideas involved a real taste for one's capacities. The fact that Bharathi succeeded in such a strenuous task which in its literary aspect must be considered still more difficult testifies to his high talents and brilliance.

The nature of Bharathi's poetry is also very important for our consideration; not a single word is inexplicable to the ordinary reader. A musical rhythm and harmony prevail throughout. His poetry is both elegant and chaste, simple and serene. It is no wonder that by reason of his commanding such unique traits he was able to appeal directly to each and everyone who knew Tamil script. His poetry stands unexcelled in its spontaneous

appeal to all readers. His words are not easily forgotten, they live, they are virile. Bharathi has indeed touched upon various themes.

Recollecting the outburst of national fervor in South India in the years 1905-08, when Bharathi sought to give literary form and poetic expression to the national craving for freedom in a manner of touching even his political adversaries, a distinguished countryman of ours wrote that in a moment of "weakness" as he would describe it a great Moderate leader whom Bharathi was pillorying in the press pretty frequently, yielded to the temptation of hearing him sing in his house a few pieces which he had composed, and found himself a captive to the charms of his melodious strains. It goes without mention that at that time the conversion of a loyalist into a Nationalist was complete. Thus it will be seen that Bharathi revolutionised the thought of the people to the extent of giving new impetus to the keen sense of patriotism which was lying dormant in them.

The series of verses in "Our Motherland" enumerating her ancient glories, her rich heritage, her distinguished record, and her heroes and philosophers are sufficient to assure him permanence of fame. "Breathes there the man with soul so dead," asks Sir Walter Scott, "who never to himself hath said this is my own, my native land?" In the same way as Scott immortalised in his works the glory of his Scotland, likewise has Bharathi done for our Motherland. But Bharathi was the harbinger of hope only. His work was to stir up into activity the latent patriotic instinct in us. His life was not an active one devoted for the fulfilment of an avowed creed. More often than not he retired into the dim background of a secluded life. Great men do possess frailties, and Bharathi was no exception to this.

In the meantime, Bharathi's definite advocacy of the Indian political cause against British domination in the press was full of pitfalls for him. Keenly aware of such difficulties the poet ran to Pondicherry where he spent nearly ten years. Though he wrote valuable works there also, he could not earn the same deserving recognition as he did while staying in Madras. Things do not always happen as we wish them to. It is also a matter of deep regret that Bharathi should not have grasped the helping hand of the late Mr. Subrahmanya Aiyar and later of Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar. Mr. Iyengar, who was deeply struck by Bharathi's great gifts had the satisfaction of taking him in his office. Even previously Mr. Iyengar had forced him to send to him daily contributions which appeared under pen-names. After this he was not destined to live long, and he passed away in September 1921 in his 35th year.

Considering the record of undying services he had rendered to the country within such a brief span of earthly existence, it is one of the tragedies of our political and social life that till his death his merit was not recognised widely in such a manner as his memory is now cherished in the Tamil Nadu.

Though it is not possible to analyse his works which comprised of poetry

and philosophy, sayings of sages and social topics, stories and Puranic episodes, we can easily point out to his wide range of scholarship, both in Tamil and Sanskrit. Indeed it goes without saying that he loved music and expressed himself musically. His chequered career illustrates the paucity of scope for the full-fledged expansion of the brilliance of such people to promote public welfare and provide usefulness for others to come. Bharathi did not want to shine under the brilliant light that beats upon his throne of intellectual eminence and culture. He belonged to the common people: he lived among them: and he passed away in their midst. Hence another distinguishing feature that marks his works is his intimate knowledge of their life and their daily problems. Some view this aspect of his poetry as revolutionary: but if the preaching of patriotism be read as teaching revolution, Bharathi is a revolutionary. He is our national hero. He is a hero because of his bold expression of views, of a brave purpose to lift our sunken countrymen into international esteem, and of his undaunted courage to use his mother-tongue as the vehicle for the thoughts surging tumultuously within him. To sum up, Bharathi is our national asset. It is for us not to waste it away by our foolish and faithless propensities!

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WHITHER SOCIALISM

By

A. S. K. Iyengar, M.A.

"There once was a preacher of sense,
Who sat very tight on the fence,
When the folks of the town,
Said "Preacher, come down!"
He replied with a feeling intense,
"The question is Whither, not
whence!"

"The counterfeit debases the genuine." Today we hear a great deal of Socialism and every other man calls himself a "Socialist." We hear of "Congress Socialism," "Indian Socialism," "German National Socialism," "American Socialism," "Fabian Socialism" "Christian Socialism" and so on.

In the July issue of the "Social Democrat" (U.S.A.) dated 20th, 1910 we read:

"There is no such thing as European Socialism or American Socialism. There is only one kind of Socialism the world over, International Socialism which means everywhere the same."

The famous Socialist Morris Hillquit, writing in "The Worker," of March 23rd 1907 says,

"It is high time the American public abandon the myth of the "diverse meanings of Socialism" and the "diverse kinds of socialism." There is not and probably never was, a theory and movement of more striking uniformity than the theory and movement of Socialism. The International Socialist Movement.....is all based on the same Marxian programme and follows substantially the same methods of propaganda and action."

Heaps of people, a few of them even millionaires like some "American

Socialists" call themselves "Socialists" and propagate something in the nature of Socialism. A few belonging even to the clergy advocate some kind of "Socialism." Each type draws certain boundaries and limits for "Socialism" which are sometimes ethnographic, sometimes geographic, but always superficial and false. These several kinds of "Socialism" are, in the language of Hillquit, "bastard offshoots clustering about the main trunk of the tree."

The Socialist movement is an international movement. To assign to it the narrow limits of geographic or other boundaries is false and mischievous. It is a deliberate corruption of Truth. The Marxian ideology of equal opportunity and an equitable distribution of wealth, with the principle, "to each according to his needs and from each according to his capacity," has been so mauled and hacked to pieces by the so-called "Socialists" that one wonders what it all means. One very great difference between the so-called "Socialists" and the genuine Socialists, by which of course, I mean the members of the International Socialist movement, is one of action. Of course other differences there are, such as the faith in a personal God, views on marriage, etc., etc. *ad infinitum*. In this connection I cannot help quoting William Libknecht, one of the world's greatest socialists. Writing of the necessity for the spread of Atheistic thought, in his "materialistic Interpretation of History" Libknecht says!


"It is our duty as Socialists to root out the faith in God with all zeal; nor is anyone worthy of the name who does not consecrate himself to the spread of atheism."

I do not know if many or even a few "Congress Socialists" are atheists. If all or even many of them are not, I wonder how they will ever be able to approach the "working classes" who, be it well borne in mind, are for the most part uneducated and highly superstitious with the Karma theory of life permeating every thought and action of theirs. This is the crux of the problem.

But intelligently enough our "Congress Socialists" have not been blind to this difficulty. Unless they root out religion, it would be practically impossible to explain to the "working classes" the very fundamentals of Socialism, and the creation of more and more "class consciousness" in the workers will be very much more than a technical difficulty.

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C. M. SRINIVASAN, B.A.. B.L.,
General Secretary.

A TRIPLE TRAGEDY OR LOVE AVENGED

By S. M. Gouri Shankar

The twenty-fifth year of the accession to the throne of King George the Fifth, the Silver Jubilee, was fast approaching. A few aristocratic gentlemen, who were after some titles, began to collect funds—funds collected for Indians from Indians to be spent on such useful institutions as the St. John's Ambulance corps and the society for discharged soldiers. Such benevolent enthusiasm on their part was never witnessed before—even when funds were raised to relieve the distressed and suffering in the stricken province of Bihar. People who did not contribute even a pie then gave thousands and tens of thousands of rupees now, without any grudge.

The Zamindar of Pedhamangalam was one of them. He had donated a very munificent sum of a lakh of rupees for the Jubilee Fund. Such course of generosity generally meant in official circles that the subscriber in question, personally did not care for the Jubilee but that he expected, as a lawful return, a title. And the Zamindar would not take anything less than a 'Rajah' title for his huge price of one lakh. The eloquent Press wagged and waxed over the personal merits of the Zamindar. Newspapers that had once said something caustic about him now wrote leading articles on his great gift, and said he was one of the greatest patriots of the country, and such rot of a flattering, mean nature.

No one but the ryots of the Pedhamangalam estate knew whence this 'munificent' sum came. They were overtaxed and tortured in every possible way to produce whatever they had with them. The few pies they had earned

with the sweat of their brows were forced out of them by the liveried servants of the Zamindar; and every such hard-earned pie went to make up that 'munificent' sum, of which the papers said so much. The poor ryots, who were made poorer, did not dare to say anything against their master, though they knew he was the most hypocritical and cruel-hearted rogue they had ever seen.

The day of the Jubilee fell on the sixth of May. Municipalities that once refused to allow a little amount towards the alleviation of the hardships of its scavengers and the employees now sanctioned, without any division, big sums towards electrical lighting and fireworks. On the Jubilee day a vast amount of money was spent on illumination of public buildings, grand displays of fire works and such luxurious 'tamashas'.

The Governor held a banquet to celebrate the Jubilee at the Government House in Ooty. The Zamindar of Pedhamangalam was one of the distinguished guests. The feast broke up late in the night. And the guests repaired to their respective abodes.

* * * *

The road was silent and deserted; and the trees stood still. A lazy, light wind was blowing at intervals. The night had considerably advanced and was waning.

Two persons were walking casually arm in arm at a little distance from a cluster of low huts. One was a young man of strong build and dark, rustic appearance. The other was a girl of nineteen or thereabouts. Evidently

THE NEW AGE

they were of the depressed classes. They were 'lovers' who were to be married the next day.

The full moon, shedding its cool rays on the two strollers, seemed as if it was ashamed of the earth and its people who unnecessarily attach so much importance to such silly trifles as love, of men who perform terrible deeds that fail description for the love of a woman, of women who undergo ever so many hardships for the sake of a smile from their partners. And the stars twinkled like fireflies and mocked at the wordliness of the couple below. White, silvery clouds that were idly floating in the sky like the graceful swans of old collected together in a big mass and hid the moon.

The two solitary beings who were engaged in a conversation were interrupted by the noise of an approaching vehicle. They swerved from the road to give way to the coming car. The driver who was obviously drunk also turned. A piercing female cry disturbed the ominous silence that prevailed in the place.

The clouds dispersed and the moon was again clearly visible. But now it was cruelly smiling at the body from which life had so lately departed.

"Well, what now?" coldly demanded the Zamindar, for it was he that did the act.

The 'pariah' did not pay any heed to his words. He was bending over his beloved, whom he had lost for ever, placing wreaths of flowers in the shape of passionate kisses on the lips that would never respond.

"I hope this will satisfy you," said the aristocrat, flinging a hundred rupee note at his face.

The other man was silently shedding tears. The Zamindar had a look at the body, the life of which could not be brought back by his money—a look expressing mingled contempt and pride; and then got into his car.

Hardly had he gone a few yards, when a thick paper flew past him—the note he had given in exchange for the life he had taken.

"Damned brutes," he philosophised, "there are some in this rotten world of ours who foolishly reject worthy chances when they are offered them and then repent why they had refused. He has the impudence to refuse my money! Has he? The beggar he is! And this fellow wants love! My God! Love and Life for an ugly pariah? Upon my word, how she shrieked when she was caught between the wheels! And if she had been fair I would have taken her with me; and it would have been worth while then. But now....."

* * * *

The Jubilee day came and went. The Zamindar of Pedhamangalam had become the Rajah of Pedhamangalam. And Mammon added another victory to His long list of victories.

Two days had passed. Disappointed people who expected to find their names in the Honours' list had partly recovered from the shock. On the third day all the newspapers came out with bold headlines. "A rich man killed," "The new Rajah brutally assaulted," "The Zamindar of Pedhamangalam ruthlessly murdered" and so on.. A pariah's arrest as a sequel," ran another headline.

It was true that the Rajah was murdered, stabbed by a knife. And a young man of strong build and dark, rustic appearance was arrested on suspicion.

The accused was committed to sessions. He pleaded guilty but refused to state why he committed the murder. The Jury sentenced him to death—sentenced to death for having murdered a person.

* * * *

I, the counsel for the accused, was sleeping late in the morning. To us, who belong to the criminal side of the

bar and the medical profession, death is as common as a mosquito. It is all the same to us : whether our clients win or are condemned or whether our patients die, we do not shed even a tear. But we will not have a wink of sleep till we pocket our fees. And, then, we go our ways and the clients to the dogs. A 'philanthropic' gentleman, who wanted to come into prominence as all philanthropists like to do, had paid me the fees, on behalf of the accused ; and I had said something in the Court about section that-and-this and what so-and-so said in the case of such-and-such-a-one vs. Somebody. So it was not unusual if I slept soundly on that day when my client was doomed to breathe his last.

"Sir," said some one.

I recognised the person as one of the employees of the Penitentiary.

"The prisoner wants to see you urgently, and here is a packet which he wanted to read before you see him."

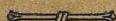
Cursing the world in general and its creator and the Bar in particular, I got

up from my bed. Snatching away the envelope from him, I tore it open and began to peruse the contents.

I read the sad story which you have all read just now. The supercilious indifference I had towards him, my client, now changed into compassion and pity.

I wondered at the inexorability of the Law. He was the nearest and dearest to the girl that was killed. He avenged her death and faced the consequences.

Something might yet be done with this written statement of the accused in his favour, thought I. So I hurried up to the prison. But I was late. He was dead, and had escaped the cruel pangs of the gallows. Some said he took poison ; others pronounced he had an attack of apoplexy. The way he had died was not determined ; and it mattered little whether he died naturally or otherwise. But of this I am sure. He had gone to that glorious world, where all are equal and all belong to one caste, to find happiness. And his beloved had received him gladly with her open arms.



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A SQUARE MAN IN A ROUND HOLE!

THE GRADUATE— A MISFIT

By R. Bangaruswami, B.A., F.R.E.S.

The Indian Graduate is a misfit—an uncomfortable square man in an uneasy round hole. He is cabined, cribbed and confined on all sides and is utterly unable to find a loophole of escape from his most distressing situation.

Never was his condition enviable, never were his prospects really bright. Barring a lucky few who managed to reach the pedestal of officialdom, the Children of the Indian Universities have had to scramble through life's large problems with tastes blunted, mind worried, and their souls submerged in sullen gloom.

But now the plight of the Indian Graduates is simply appalling. His fate is to master weak endings and feminine endings, study the causes and effects of the Thirty Years War, get up meaningless theorems and work out profitless riders, embitter parents and relations, blind his eyes, wear specs, write endless examinations, and—

It matters little whether he is ploughed deep or gets off with distinction. In any case the amplest liberty of spending more money and sitting at more examinations is given to him. Also the freedom to starve and to look into the Beyond.

Of course the portals of the Law College are wide open and he is always welcome there, no matter how old he is or otherwise unfit for the lawyer's profession. And of course there is the well-known text—"Sufficient for the

day is the evil thereof"—to give him consolation. But it is the mad courage that is born of despair, the faith that rises out of folly, the mirage of metropolitan life for another two or three years, that drives the Indian Graduate to that rendezvous of ninety-nine per-cent unfortunates.

Failing Law College, he enrolls himself in that unorganised and utterly uncared-for army of unemployed gentlemen-at-large but for whose unstinted support, one wonders, whether the Post Offices and the Service Commissions could get on for any length of time.

Every Indian village has now to its credit two or three graduates and half a dozen under-graduates eagerly, very anxiously, breathlessly looking for jobs. Every town has them in scores and hundreds, and every city in hundreds and thousands. And the tragedy of it is every year the squadron of the jobless is getting bulkier—in numbers. Add to the list the discharged retrenchment-hands and pensioned needy-mouths, and we see no end to the trouble.

If this goes on what is to become of the educated youths of our country, the custodians of our Future? One shudders to think. It was only the other day the papers reported that a graduate put an end to his life because he could not keep the wolf off his door. But the pity of it is that this sort of thing has become so common, that we have become accustomed to its grimness and to its horrors.

Somebody said, in a vain of nonsensical humour, that B. A. stands for Big Ass. But there is an atom of profundity in this remark. Big Ass indeed! What choking patience, what degrading humility, what contentment in quill-driving, what fortitude in forbearance, what willingness to suffer others' burdens without a mutter or a mumble!

Alas! that this should be the state of things!

Where has vanished that metaphysical intellect which revelled in the mysterious subtleties of fact and form? Where has gone that national genius which made Aryavarttha the Queen of the World? Oh where is that prophetic insight, the tapswic grandeur, the consciousness divine?

The Indian Graduate is intelligent and industrious. But the greatness of his forefathers will blaze forth into an effulgent fire only at the touch of prosperity. Now the hearth is lying cold. It is almost all ashes. Will our statesmen supply the spark and kindle the fire?

But those that steer the ship of our State are defunct. They seek to feed empty stomachs with platitudinous pomposities. Their parrot-like words—"art for art's sake"—"learning is its own reward"—rattle like skeleton's bones to the ears that yearn for the tingle of gold. Stony advice chills the blood that asks for nourishing bread.

Bereft of imagination and earnestness, our henchmen, all their cares engrossed in self-centred schemes and fruitless pursuits, do not see that Unemployment of the Cultured is a gigantic social evil that must be wiped out. They do not see that Art and Science can flourish only in a soil watered by the fertilising stream of prosperity.

Not that anyone hasn't told them about it. Here is one:

"... the extensive unemployment of University graduates in India

is well known." (Report of the Indian Statutory Commission)

Here is another:

"... the Universities and Colleges of India are at the present moment turning out large numbers of graduates who cannot find employment is well known." (Hartog Committee's Report)

Well known indeed! Too bitterly and poignantly known! And so the remedy is to multiply more Colleges and more Universities and jog on the same old rut!

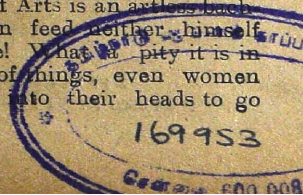
No wonder the Indian Graduate has become the butt of ridicule. Not very long ago a distinguished Educationist said that a Madrasee Graduate does not fare half so well as a Vaishnavite cook. And this is what Sir Thomas Gibbons is reported to have said:

"There is a University in Calcutta. I forget the name of it. The lord only knows what they teach there, if anything. But the Indians simply swarm there, for the simple reason that a University Graduate commands an excellent dowry and wife."

Another distinguished individual Sir D. Hamilton, according to a report in the *Mahratta*, is said to have expressed:-

"Graduates turned out in large numbers every year seem to be as if cast adrift in stormy oceans like ships cast without a rudder. When they are faced with the realities of life and the problem of bread stares in the face they are as nonplussed as an invalid is when discharged from a convalescent Home he finds himself in the midst of the hubbub of the crowded street. Sir D. Hamilton humorously said that a Master of Arts is a young man who has mastered the art of starving at a cost of say Rs. 1000 to his parents. A Bachelor of Arts is an artless bachelor who can feed neither himself nor his wife! What a pity it is in such a state of things, even women should take into their heads to go

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in for degrees. A new degree should be established, suggests Sir Hamilton, the Food Clothing Housing F. C. H. degree."

Beneath the playful humour of these works there lurks the anguished voice of truth and the fervid spirit of reform. Will the voice of bruised truth find listeners? Will the spirit of impassioned reform find vibrant echoes in other minds?

Statistics, the tantalising jade, are not available to show the exact number of the unemployed graduates and under-graduates in India. But the dismal fact remains that when a vacancy for Rupees twenty is advertised, there are hundreds of graduate applicants running a race to

get at it. According to a Press Report recently graduates have been entertained as police constables in a Native State on an initial salary of Rupees eleven or so!

What of the Future? Even in a rich country like America it is said on high authority that collegiate education acts adversely on the earning capacity of the individual. But how long is India going to stand this present kind of education that has succeeded in turning out only clerks?

India's graduates must be "men of the smiddies and the plough, the loom and the bothies" as they are students of arts and sciences. Only then they will be the pride and glory of the new India that is to come.

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THE GOLDEN JUBILEE

The President of the Indian National Congress has issued an appeal to the nation to celebrate in a fitting manner the Golden Jubilee of that great national organisation. The exact manner in which it has to be celebrated has not been given publicity to. Perhaps a concrete plan has not yet been evolved. The following is an attempt at briefly sketching a programme for the occasion which, it is hoped, will give a practical concrete aspect of the national struggle, besides demonstrating in the most unequivocal way the national solidarity in the matter of our Anti-imperialist struggle.

The vital question that should arrest the attention of any national organisation worth the name is that of the coming Reforms. The Congress has unequivocally rejected the White Paper. But it is not in a spirit of irresponsible criticism that one says that the influence of the great organisation has not been wielded to its maximum extent in carrying on a nation-wide campaign of throwing out that unwanted scheme. The resolution about rejection has not been followed by the spirit of stout resistance that the Congress had shown on identical occasions in the past. Any unwillingness to fight on this issue with the maximum energy is sure to undermine the prestige that the Congress has got in Indian politics as the one active militant political body. One wonders whether that will be the fitting way in which the Golden Jubilee of the Congress is to be celebrated!

The Congress leaders should remember that there are other bodies which are as vitally interested in the issue as the Congress, if not more. For instance,

there is the All-India Trade Union Congress which has shown an uncompromising spirit of resistance to the scheme. Though not a political body in the narrow sense of the term, that organisation has not lagged behind in declaring for the rejection of "reforms" scheme. It is not necessary here to catalogue all the bodies which have endorsed the idea of rejection. It is enough if it is stated that this is an issue on which the Moderates and the Communists have some common ground. It is the clear duty of the Indian National Congress, as the premier national organisation in the country, to evolve a common programme of action for all these Anti-imperialist elements.

It is not my purpose to suggest that the Congress with the alliance of the T. U. C. should observe an "India Bill" Day or Week, and pass stereotyped resolutions at various places. What is needed is a classification of the reasons why it is to be rejected and how to be resisted. With this idea in mind, the President should carry on talks with the authorised representatives of these organisations and take the Working Committee into its confidence on the points from time to time. When the negotiations have come to something like final form, the A. I. C. C. should be summoned to which the whole scheme of rejection should be submitted. When the approval of the A. I. C. C. is secured to such a programme, the Congress will be practically committed to it, and the final approval of the Congress session is a certainty. Lucknow which was the place of negotiation between the Moderates and the extremists and

By

E. M. Sankaran Nambudripad



between the Hindus and the Muslims, will once again see the unification of all progressive elements on a common plan of action. If the evolution of such a plan could be proclaimed from the platform of the Lucknow Congress, that would be the most fitting way by which the Golden Jubilee can be celebrated. I would go further and add that, unless the Congress takes such a step, thereby taking the practical leadership of the Anti-imperialist struggle, it will be committing suicide on an auspicious occasion. The non-Congress Anti-imperialist elements in the country are stronger and more dynamic than some Congress leaders unfortunately seem to think.

It is a happy sign that the Congress President is carrying on negotiations with the President of the All-India T. U. C. Will it be too much to hope that he will free himself from the re-actionary elements which unfortunately seem to have surrounded him, and give a lead to the country by coming to an alliance, not only with the T. U. C. but other such progressive bodies also, to develop and intensify the national struggle? One is even tempted to tell him that that is the only way of strengthening the Congress, resuscitating the villages and blotting out the spirit of terrorism.

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CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLIES

II

"Very strange Assemblages, Sanhedrims, Amphictyonics, Trades-Unions, Ecumenic Councils, Parliaments, and Congresses have met together on this Planet, and dispersed again; but a stranger Assemblage than this august Constituent or with a stranger mission perhaps never met there. Twelve hundred human individuals, with the Gospel of Jean Jacques Rousseau in their pocket, congregating in the name of twenty-five millions, with full assurance of faith to "make the constitution, such sight,—the acme and main product of the eighteenth century our world can witness only once"—. Thomas Carlyle.

In Jan. 1789, the states-general, an assembly composed of the representatives of the nobles, the clergy, and the Commons, was summoned by King Louis XVI of France. The last time this body had met was in 1614. Over hundred and seventy-five years of absolute rule since then, had landed the country in bankruptcy; and as a matter of mere necessity, Louis XVI called on the people to elect their nominees to the States General. The franchise, for the Commons, was very liberally conceived—every male of twenty-five years and over had a vote, but election was by the indirect method. The States-General, when it met, was faced with serious difficulties. There were six hundred and twenty-one commoners, two hundred and eighty-five nobles, and three hundred and eight clergymen. If the voting should take place by classes, the popular representatives will be a minority of one. The latter would not agree to it, and the

By

N. S. Srinivasan

king declared the States General dissolved. He reckoned, however, without understanding the character of the forces which the pent up democracy of France had roused. The Deputies, ignored the order of dissolution, met at a tennis court, and resolved not to disperse without framing a constitution for France. On the 17th June, they formed themselves into a National Assembly, discarding the rights which the nobles and the clergy had claimed, as the first two Estates of the realm.

The French Constituent Assembly had an extraordinarily onerous task before it. Enemies within and without, were ready to destroy its work. The king had no love for it, and the queen, (Marie Antoinette) was secretly plotting against it. The Nobles were hostile, while the clergy threw in their lot with the reactionary forces. Its procedure was hardly calculated to bring about speedy results: Twelve hundred members, form too large a number, for an elected Assembly to function successfully. Carlyle sneers at it as a body "fit for destroying. Which indeed is but a more decided exercise of its natural talent for Doing Nothing.....It took the name Constituent, as if its mission and function had been to construct or build; which also with its whole soul it endeavoured to do, yet in the gates, in the nature of things, there lay for it precisely of all functions the most opposite to that."

Despite this hostile verdict, the work of the French Constituent Assembly is of a solid character. Side by side with prolonged discussions of abstract rights, and solemn affirmations regarding the Rights of Man, it attended to the work

of devising a new social and political fabric. In one sitting, it abolished the feudal system itself, and all its incidents—tithes, seignorial dues, tax exemptions, and special privileges. In place of feudal courts, it established new courts of justice. It made drastic changes in the penal law, making it more humane. It introduced revolutionary, and useful changes in the Church system, by bringing its property under state control, and weeding out the idle elements. It made the army democratic. The country was divided into eighty departments, and the administration thereof placed on a simple, smooth basis. It took away the authority of the Pope, by introducing the system of election of priests. Much of what it did was possibly unwise, but a body of inexperienced representatives, into whose control the work of Government had fallen, is bound to make mistakes. An undoubtedly erroneous, decision was the ban on its members, from the holding of executive posts. This is said to have been done in imitation of the U.S.A. constitution, which had only very recently been devised, but the results were, nevertheless, disastrous.

In its task of evolving a stable constitution, the Assembly was far less successful. The failure was largely due to the attitude of Louis XVI, whose blazing indiscretions brought about his own undoing. At the moment, however, it looked as if the constitutional edifice was complete. The king was

given a limited power, but subject to it, the popular will was supreme. The constitution was duly presented to and accepted by Louis XVI. The event was celebrated by fire works and illuminations, throughout Paris; and President Thouret declared that as the National Constituent Assembly had finished its work, it stood over dissolved. "Incorruptible Robespierre, virtuous Petion are borne home on the shoulders of the people; with vivats heaven-high. The rest glide quietly to their respective places of abode. It is the last after noon of september 1791; On the morrow morning the new Legislature will begin." By a self-denying resolution, members of the Constituent Assembly had excluded themselves from the new legislature.

In eleven months, the constitution carefully devised by the Assembly was smashed into pieces, by the inexorable logic of events, and the actions of Louis XVI who swept himself from one disaster to another. This story however belongs to the province of History and has little place, in a note on the Constituent Assembly. No fairminded historian will deny that despite errors, the great Assembly, in an age beset by powerful destructive forces, rescued France from attrition, by the adoption of emergent measures to save the body politic, and the attempt to lay the foundations of a stable, harmonious and enduring order.

(To be continued)

OUR POLITICAL TIN GODS

The following article written by a "critical Congressman" is published in the "People", a weekly journal of Bombay.

We, nationalists, are accustomed to worship a number of gods in addition to the 33 crores of inhabitants of the Hindu Pantheon. Traditional 'Murti pujaks' that we are, we are naturally not discerning about the divinity of the new objects of our worship. We believe in them blindly, and adore them with fanaticism, born of ignorance. The shastras teach that the vedic and puranic deities have supernatural powers. It has never occurred to us to ascertain if they really possess such powers. There is, of course, no question of even doubting the existence of the gods themselves. Similarly, we take the efficacy of the new objects of our devotion for granted, and adore them with the zeal of Murthi pujaks.

Having been contaminated by the contagion of scepticism, I had the impious audacity to look at our new gods somewhat closely; and the result was the discovery of their clay feet. Let others have the benefit of the discovery unless they have made it by themselves. Believe me, it is easily done, very easily.

Swadeshi

The oldest of our political gods is swadeshi. It is also the one generally worshipped by all the nationalists. For more than thirty years, nationalist India has implicitly believed that to use articles made in the country is the token of patriotism. It requires us to make sacrifice because often swadeshi goods are worse and more expensive than foreign articles. When one pays higher price for inferior goods, he sacrifices for national welfare which will result from the development of

home industries promoted by the swadeshi movement. This is the faith. But what is the fact? *Swadeshi movement places premium upon inefficiency and business dishonesty.* How? That is very easily seen. When the Indian manufacturers know that their produce will sell even at a higher price notwithstanding their inferiority to foreign articles, they do not bother about improving the quality of their articles. Patriotism of the deluded people guarantees them the market. They are not obliged to introduce efficiency in production. Industry develops under the pressure of competition. Protect industry against competition and you deprive it of the impetus to greater efficiency. Swadeshi movement is, therefore, injurious to the nascent industries of the country. The improvement in the quality of Indian manufactures has been due not to the swadeshi movement but to its failure. The vast bulk of the Indian people are not able to make the sacrifice required of steady member of the swadeshi movement. This, therefore, could not guarantee home products a sufficiently large market. They had to face competition of foreign goods, and improve themselves for the purpose.

Twin Brother

The god of swadeshi has a twin brother. It is boycott. Usually, the two are worshipped together like Ram and Laksman, Krishna, and Balaram. It is believed that boycott of foreign goods will contribute to the growth of home industry. It will, just as protective tariff may serve the same pur-

pose. *Boycott is non-official protection, and, in the given conditions of India, is more harmful than beneficial to nationalist welfare as protectionism is.* Boycott, if effectively enforced, inflates the price of the home-made commodity. The purchasing power of the Indian masses being strictly limited, any general rise in price results in a contraction of the market. Consequently, industrial activity must slack down. There will be "Over-production" when the country will be hungry for the elementary necessities of life.

Such an anomalous situation was created by the boycott of British cloth in 1930. The Indian mill-industry enjoyed a short-lived boom which was followed by a depression. The stock could not be cleared. Indian textile industry suffered from "over-production." Mills were closed down throwing tens of thousands out of employment. Wages, already miserably low, were further reduced. Yet, at the same time millions and millions of people were going practically naked in the country. The few hundred thousand bales of cloth accumulated in godowns would disappear in a day, if they were sold at a price within the reach of the slender purse of the needy. But boycott has inflated the price; and the mill owners wanted to make hay while the sun shone. They did make their piles, thanks to the boycott; but the god did not favour the nation as a whole. On the contrary, by creating an opportunity for the mill-owners to make easy money, it placed obstacles in the road to a general industrial development of the country. The basic condition for such development is progressive expansion of the home market, that is, a rise of the purchasing power of the masses. Boycott, operating as non-official protection, causes a contraction of the market, and thereby blocks general industrial development.

Owing to political flavour, boycott does not command general nationalist devotion. It is a sectarian god. The

patriots of the liberal school, for example, are fervent worshippers of swadeshi, but could not worship at the temple of twin-god. They transferred their devotion to *protectionism which is legalised boycott*. The miraculous powers to cure the economic evils of India is no more real than that of boycott. Though worshipped by patriots who claim to be free of the virtue of blind faith, it is none the less a god with clay feet.

Charka.

What about our *Devraj*, the king of our gods, the central pivot of our political faith in the miraculous—I mean, of course, the charkha? Its power to work economic miracles is altogether imaginary; our faith in it is based upon economic ignorance of the deucist variety. Let not the statistics of the All-India Spinners' Association convince you that a large number of Indians are worshipping this god with the benefit to themselves. Those statistics should be subjected to critical analysis. Besides, the test is not that some people are worshipping the holy wheel and are producing a considerable amount of yarn. We want to be sure about its miraculous powers to cure the economic evils of the country. It is very easy to make this acid test. Only you must test an economic god by the standards of economy. In order to spin on the charkha all the yarn necessary for the cloth to supply the minimum demand of the people, such a large amount of the labour-power of the country would have to be sacrificed on the altar of this exacting god as would leave very little for other branches of production.

One need not be a professor of economics to realise what a disastrous effect that devotion to charka would have on national economy. National wealth is created by labour. There is no other source. Employ labour wastefully, and national economy is sure to stagnate. The proposition of spinning in spare time suffers from the same ignorance of the elementary laws of economics. In any

case that would hardly solve the economic problems of India. The miraculous power of the holy wheel is a myth. The charka is the god of economic ignorance—it is the emblem of social stagnation.

Simple Living.

Now let us have a look at our moral gods by worshipping whom we believe to have spiritualised politics. Simple living is an enticing goddess. Her devotees are so sublimely arrogant. But what does she represent? *She places a decisive check upon the economic development of the country.* Worshipping at the temple of the goddess of penury, the masses remain satisfied with the low standard of living. Their power of consumption does not grow. Market does not expand. Trade and industry remain without impetus. As long as the cult of simple life is preached and practised, not as a virtue but obligatorily by the mass of the people, all the doors of economic progress will remain closed. Neither protectionism nor boycott will help. The goddess of simplicity is unfaithful. She favours those who violate her, at the cost of her devotees. As long as the masses keep worshipping at her dreary shrine, the upper classes can appropriate practically the whole of the new value produced by social labour. But this form of parasitic exploitation, supported by the cult of simple living, is antagonistic to modern economic development. Simplicity is the goddess of medievalism. The worshippers in her misty temple must stand with their backs turned against economic progress. Is it not curious that a movement for securing the progress and prosperity of the people should be fascinated by the deceitful goddess of feudal economy?

The ideal of simple life, sincerely pursued, must take beyond feudal backwardness—just imagine, to the primitive nakedness of our arbourial ancestors. Once you make an ideal of simplicity, you cannot logically draw a line setting limit to the backwardness

of your choice. To be consistent you must be whole-hogger. There is absolutely no reason why a certain degree of simplicity should be preferable—should be idealised. An ideal, in order to be ideal, must be perfect. And perfect simplicity of life, commensurate with the most minimum necessities of human (biologically speaking, not socially) existence to the simplicity of savage life. In that atmosphere of pristine purity, even the langota can be discarded as an article of demoralising luxury. Then man lives happily on the lap of mother nature. Find God to worship! Isn't it?

Voluntary poverty is a propaganda agent of the goddess of simplicity who prostitutes herself so that the parasitic classes can live in luxury, even in barbarous splendour. Human development is not towards simplicity, but in the direction of greater and greater complexity. To discourage the biological impulse towards fuller life, a virtue is made out of poverty. Place poverty as a noble ideal before the masses and you protect the privileged position of the upper classes against encroachments that are likely to result from a less iniquitable distribution of the new value produced recurrently. But then you forego all possible economic progress. *Idealisation of poverty is tantamount to economic suicide.* The pernicious ideal kills all incentive for material betterment. The virtue of voluntary poverty is extolled by those who thrive on the poverty of the masses. It must be condemned as a dangerous camouflage by all advocates of progress, national well-being and economic improvement of the masses. *The preachers of voluntary poverty are the defenders of obligatory poverty.* By idealising the curse upon human existence, these peddlers of fraudulent spiritual commodities discourage revolt against poverty and thus serve not god but Mammon.

Poverty breeds ignorance, ignorance is the mother of superstition, and

superstitious beliefs stand in the way of all intellectual and moral progress. Idealise poverty and you condemn a whole nation not only to economic backwardness; you sink them to the depths of ignorance, moral degradation, spiritual barrenness.

Another moral god commanding our devotion is non-violence. We proudly repeat the motto "Non-violence is our sheet-anchor." But we don't stop to think what we are anchored to. Thinking does not go with devotion. If we only thought a little we might be less trusting, and correspondingly less deluded by shibboleths. The preachers of the cult of non-violence, condone violence in practice; they are defenders of the established order based upon violence and protected by violence.

Socially we are zealous crusaders against untouchability. But all our reforming zeal evaporates into thin air because we are full-blooded Hindus at the same time. We want to remove this symptom without touching the disease. Untouchability together with other vile and vulgar customs and institutions goes into the constitution of Hinduism. Pure Hinduism is an abstraction. Hinduism is the sum total of the superstitions, customs, habits and practices that constitute the spiritual life of the people. If you want to pre-

serve Hinduism you must keep the whole outfit, untouchability including. The authority of the Brahmin is the rock-bottom of Hinduism. The Brahmins have scuttled the Mahatma's campaign against untouchability. There was a choice to be made—between the authority of the medium of the sacred message and removal of the curse of untouchability. The brahmins have won the day. They were bound to. There can be no Hinduism without them. If you really want to remove untouchability, Hinduism itself must be discarded. But our nationalism is more religious than political. It is not for nothing that we have been misguided, tyrannised, deceived by a holy man. He is the greatest of our gods—also with clay feet. Blind faith in him has driven us from the pillar to the post; made us dream dreary dreams; lured us to run after fantastic ideals; compelled us to forego independent judgment. It is time we learnt to reason; to scrutinise the object of our devotion. The clay feet of our cherished gods are exposed to be seen by all who wish to see. Keep your eyes shut and forfeit your claim for freedom. Freedom of thought must precede national freedom. You cannot think freely so long as you pay homage to a whole tribe of tin gods who demand blind faith.

Q. "Who is a politician?"

A. "The man who lies the most and that too successfully."

Q. Who is a diplomat?"

A. A political cheat who will stoop to anything to win his cause."

Q. What is profit?"

A. A legalised robbery by which you take money from another without his knowledge."

A REPLY TO THE "SCIENTIFIC SOCIALIST."

Dear Comrade,

Read your article "Socialism as we see it". It bristles with cris-crosses, remarks and other paraphernalia of ill-equipped school-masters striving for profundity effect. For instance your objection to my saying "Socialism is the voice of humanity hungering for work, bread and peace", and the insertion of your definition. What is wrong with it? Do you deny that the heavy laden look to socialism as the panacea for their troubles, aspire and agitate for it? Right or wrong, you should strike off and say grand something. If you have a mind to note, you could have noted the very idea you inserted, in some other place in the article.

One correction, requires an answer for the light it throws upon things. You wrote about personal property under Socialism, commenting on the sentence "Socialism does away with ownership of private property". If you don't claim greater authority on Marx, we will present before you a quotation from Engels. He says, "The phrase abolition of private property is the most succinct and characteristic way of formulating the change in the social

order which has been rendered necessary by the development of large-scale Industry." In light of this may we expect you to correct it and withdraw the lecture read to us.

Lastly, you say, "We have no right to look at socialism from our individual stand points." I quite agree with you. There is nothing in the article said upon my authority. The goal and the *raison d'être* of socialism is the same thing that is told time and again, retold for propaganda. It may differ in the setting. Unless it be in tactics and programme, it allows little scope for individuality. I find no meaning in "as I see it" or "as we see it". The former substituted by the Editor for "why socialism" of mine has the ring of a claim for originality. The Editor should enlighten why he preferred that heading. I am at no fault in not drawing his attention to it. But for you, even now, I would have put off doing so.

Thanks for the call for alertness and study you sent round to our Party friends. There is no dearth of it here. However that is good: none can have too much of it.

B. S. Rangasayi.

Letter to the Editor

GUNTUR CONGRESS ELECTIONS

Sir,

I was present at the polling station when the Guntur Congress Elections were held on the 29th June. Labourers were brought in motor lorries to the polling station. Some of the lorries used

were Guntur Municipal lorries. Labourers were sitting in the thatched sheds. Just before the election, the members of the Guntur Labour Protection League made their appearance there and distributed the leaflets of the

league. I saw the leaflets of the league. I saw some members explaining to the labourers the anti-labour policy of the Congress. They also exhorted the labourers to have their own unions for the protection of their rights and have nothing to do with the Congress. With the shouting of labour slogans, the labourers stood up and began to sing the labour song along with the members of the Labour Protection League. It seemed as if the labourers were out to depart from that place. There was uproar and confusion when the election officer came on the scene and asked the members of the Labour Protection League to quit the place. Immediately the election agents, many of whom were well-known agents in the previous Guntur Municipal election,

began to hurry the members of Labour protection League to leave the place. Thereupon those members came to the gate singing labour songs. At the gate they continued singing labour songs and also asked the labourers that were still being brought in not to fall into the trap of the Congress. After the elections were over, a meeting of labourers was held when Mr. J. Ramalingayya of the Labour Protection League delivered a speech explaining the anti-labour policy of the people in the Congress. I also saw one member of the league being roughly handled by a merchant when the members were announcing that a meeting of labourers would be held.

An-Eye-witness.

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WORLD DAY BY DAY

INLAND

June 1, Nagpur: Satyagraha by 300 operatives of the spinning department of the Empress Mills as a protest against the introduction of the double loom system.

June 2, Guntur:—Mass procession with Red flags by the labourers of Guntur to wait on the Municipal Chairman for redressal of their grievances.

Trichinopoly.—Annual conference of the S. I. R. Worker's Union under the presidency of Mr. K. R. Avadhani.

June 3, Calicut.—Formation of a branch of the A. I. V. I. A. for Kerala by Sankaral Banker.

June 4, Pondicherry.—Demand by the textile workers for liberal labour legislation to safeguard their interests.

Hoshangabad.—Editor of the "Riyasat" convicted to 9 months R. I. on a charge under the Princes' Protection Act.

Nagpur.—1700 operatives of the Empress Mills out of work owing to their closure.

June 5, Guntur.—Formation of the Guntur Press Workers' Union.

June 6 Nagpur.—7000 textile operatives thrown out of employment due to lock-out in 3 more mills.

June 7.—Dronachellam.—Arrest of 16 persons for alleged preparation for dacoity.

Bombay.—Deportation of Messrs. Ghate and Deshpande, prominent labour leaders, to Satara and Ahmadnagar respectively.

Alleppey.—Arrest of Mr. C. Kesavan, Vice-President All-Travancore Joint Political Conference, on a charge of sedition.

Bombay.—Raid and seizure of 17 copies of a pamphlet entitled, "The view point of the Communist Opposition."

June 1, to June 7.—39 cases of dacoity in the various districts of Bengal.

June 8, Bombay.—Arrest of G. L. Kandalkar, labour leader.

June 11, Hardoi (U. P.)—Armed dacoity by 25 desperados in Barra a village near Hardoi.

June 12, Cochín.—Conviction of Messrs Manapat Kunza Mahomed Haji and Muhammad to sentences of 1½ yrs.

and 1 year respectively on a charge of sedition against the State Govt.

Calcutta.—Jyotirmay Nandy convicted to 2 years. R. I. on a charge of sedition.

Calcutta.—Demand of Rs. 6000 security from the editor and the printer of "Bandemataram."

June 13.—A village in Kharpur State.—Armed looting of Rs. 500 from the house of a rich merchant.

Allahabad.—Police search at the A. I. C. C. office and seizure of prescribed books.

June 15, Madras.—Election of President and office bearers of the Madras Press Workers' Union.

June 16, Delhi.—Theft of ornaments worth about Rs. 10000 in the house of a merchant of Chotabazar.

Nagpur.—Arrest of R. S. Ruiker on a charge of sedition.

Karachi.—Strike of 380 mill workers in the Bone Mill.

Ellore.—Attack by dacoits on a bandyman and looting of 2 bags of dry fish, in a village 5 miles from Ellore.

Madras.—Celebration of C. R. Das Day.

Rajahmundry.—Demand by the 8th Andhra Provincial Depressed Classes Conference for depriving the landlords of their excess of lands for distribution among the depressed classes.

June 18, Bombay.—Arrest of Tayeb Sheikh, labour leader, on a charge of sedition.

June 20, Bombay.—Simultaneous raids at the Lal Bawta Press Kamgar Union Office, the G. I. P. Labour Union and the Vikram Press, and seizure of several copies of "M. N. Roy" and "Manifesto of the All-India Trade Union Congress to the Indian workers."

The above two leaflets declared forfeited by the Govt. of Bombay.

June 20, Bombay.—Forfeiture of "Free Press" security of Rs. 20,000 as a sequel to articles on Quetta earthquake.

June 21, Nellore.—Village agricultural workers' strike at Pudivarti.

June 22, Calcutta.—Unemployment suicide.

June 23, Peshawar.—Loss of nearly 2000 houses due to fire.

Calcutta.—Escape of Tayeb Sheikh, a Communist prisoner, from police custody.

Poona.—Condemnation by the States People's Conference of the Congress attitude towards the States Subjects as stated by Balubhai Desai.

Ahmedabad—1st Gujerat Provincial Socialist Conference.

June 24.—Masulipatam.—Demand of Rs. 2000, security from "Prabha" a Telugu Socialist Fortnightly.

Bombay June 26.—Forfeiture of a security of Rs. 1000 from the Publisher of "Bombay Standard" for an article on the Quetta earthquake.

Quilon, June 27.—Mr. C. Kesavan, prosecuted by the Travancore Govt. on a charge of sedition, was committed to Sessions.

Calcutta July 1.—Death of 16 miners as a result of an explosion in a Dhanbad colliery.

Calcutta July 1.—Demand of Rs. 1000 security by the Bengal Govt. from the keeper of Sridhar Press where "Mazdur Dunia" a labour organ, is being printed.

Madras July 1.—Election of Madras Andhra Congress Committee.

July 2, Guntur.—Strike of 3000 cart-pullers for higher wages.

FOREIGN.

June 3, Broken Hills.—(Rhodesia). Death of 14 miners as a result of riotings during strike season.

Hague.—Resignation of the Dutch Minister of Economics.

Rome—Italo-Abyssinian fighting in Somaliland resulting in several casualties.

June 4, London.—Anglo-German Naval talks begin.

Paris.—Resignation of the Bouisson Government.

June 5, Madrid.—30 years' imprisonment for 7 members of the Catalan Government for participation in the recent Spanish revolt.

London.—Passing of the third reading of the India Bill in the House of Commons.

June 7, Paris.—Formation of the new French Cabinet with M. Laval as Premier.

London.—Formation of new British Cabinet with Baldwin as the Premier.

Peiping.—Doubling of Japanese forces in N. China.

June 7, Tokio.—Japanese reiteration of the demand for naval parity with Britain.

Paris.—Suspension by the Bank of France of advances on gold, as a measure of defending the franc.

June 12, Peiping.—Sensational demands by Japan for reducing N. China to a state of vassalage.

London.—Conclusion of the Anglo-German Naval talks, Britain agreeing to concede to Germany a navy equal to 35 per cent of hers by categories.

June 13, Wittenberg.—Death of over 100 persons in an explosion in a big explosive works near Wittenberg.

Berlin.—Release of Herr Torglar the German Communist leader.

Washington.—Extension of the N. R. A. approved in the House of Representatives.

June 15, Peiping.—Japanese demands for the evacuation of N. China asceded to.

June 18, Sanfransisco.—Issue of Habeas Corpus to produce in court Thomas Mooney, the famous U. S. labour leader who has been in prison since 1916.

Paris.—Anglo-German naval agreement resented by France.

June 20, Geneva.—Adoption of the 40 hour week by the International Labour Conference.

June 25, Paris.—French navy to be strengthened as a sequel to the Anglo-German pact.

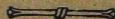
June 26, Berlin.—Adoption by the German Cabinet of a law providing for the recruitment of all males for a period of compulsory service in labour corps.

June 27, Peking.—The Nanking Government have met all Japanese demands.

June 28, Berlin.—Herr Wilhelm Kasper, the German Communist leader, who was arrested immediately after the Reichstag fire, has been sentenced to 3 years penal servitude.

June 29, Berlin.—Anniversary of the Nazi "purge."

July 1, London.—Description by Eden in the Commons of the British offer to Italy regarding Abyssinia which Italy had turned down.



NOTES AND COMMENTS

Mac is Sacked

Ramsay Macdonald's retirement from the British Premiership is a surprise only to those who expect surprises. Baldwin, the Conservative leader, who has now succeeded Macdonald, had been the virtual head of the Government, dictating Conservative policy to it and using Macdonald as a pawn. The 'National Government' has been a phrase created to hoodwink the world, and our Macdonald did not mind Baldwin dictating the policy of the Govt. so long as he was allowed to be the Premier. When Baldwin found that Ramsay could be conveniently sacked, he did so and assumed power openly.

Macdonald began his career in the I. L. P., a party well-known for its high idealism. He vehemently fought for India's cause, and mercilessly criticised the then Govt. for our high land-revenue and the much-hated salt-tax. The extravagant military expenditure in India was intolerable to him. Socialism was, to the Macdonald of those good old days, the only panacea for the ills of the world.

But soon the Socialist Macdonald metamorphosised himself into a sundried bureaucrat of the worst type. As leader of the British Labour Party in Office, he revoked all his former promises and broke all sacred pledges, one by one. He changed coats more often than a chameleon does its colours, for satisfying the wishes of the Conservative diehards. Every lathi blow administered to the children of our soil, every bullet that robbed the Indian of his life had the ungrudging sanction of the head of the British cabinet. His countless betrayals of the cause of Indian freedom, including his treacherous attitude towards the recent India Bill, are too green in our memory to

be forgotten. The policy which he pursued with regard to India has been, to say the least of it, unpardonable. His unparalleled hypocrisy has earned for him bitter hatred from his friends and supreme contempt from his enemies.

But the Indian policy of Macdonald is a part of the broad policy of tightening the grip of British Capitalism throughout the British Empire, including the British working class. His attempts at solving the unemployment problem in Great Britain was a huge failure, resulting in mass discontent, street demonstrations and very many revolts. The Sedition Bill introduced by him was an attempt at crushing the class-conscious working-class movement of Great Britain. It brought on his head ignominy and shame which he richly deserved.

The fall of Macdonald will go down in History as an inevitable event in the life of an adventurer who has very little regard for principles and who is always willing to subordinate the wider interests of society to his own personal interests. His political end will remain unwept, unhonoured or unsung.

India Bill Passed in the Commons :—

At last the House of Commons with a large majority has passed the India Bill. There is no doubt the House of Lords will do the same. The King will then give his formal consent and the Bill becomes law. Sir Samuel Hoare, in his concluding peroration, has called Indian opposition to the Bill as cant, and challenged the Indians to produce a workable alternative to the present measure. He has referred also to the representation of agricultural and labour interests in the

Federal Legislature, and has finally appealed to the Indians to work the Constitution in an atmosphere of goodwill and toleration.

We firmly hold that the India Bill is a measure intended to stem the tide of mass discontent in the country, to suppress the radical elements which are gaining strength and influence day by day.

In addition to the agrarian and industrial discontent, the Indian upper classes are also continually clamouring for more share in the exploitation of the masses. The India Bill gives a dominant place for our feudal classes, namely the Zamindars, princes and money-lenders in the new Federal Legislature. The adoption of such a step has a double purpose. Firstly, for stemming the rising tide of mass discontent these feudal and semi-feudal elements will be useful to the bureaucracy. Secondly, these forces will guarantee Imperialism permanency in India, for their interests are served by this Constitution and they are satisfied. The starving millions of peasants and workers will not rest content with paltry concessions and occasional remission of taxes given by these masters. They will struggle on till they succeed in establishing a new social order where their interests will be permanently safeguarded.

The Capitalist class in the country, on the other hand, has been making a ceaseless agitation for a predominant share in the exploitation of natural and human forces. Imperialism is forced to grant concessions to this class, now and then. But under the new constitution, the Zamindar and landlord interests will always predominate, and will not allow even these minor concessions. The India Bill is nothing short of a retrograde move, intended to keep India permanently under serfdom. The very safeguards with which the Bill is overloaded will help to break the Constitution to pieces.

Unprovoked Slander :—

An Anglo-Indian contemporary, in its issue dated the 12th. ultimo, took offence against our suggestion that the rich people have to part with much of their unearned income for giving relief to the 'quake-stricken Quetta, and characterised this spirit of ours as "ungenerous," being prompted by "Communist" prejudices! "Political prejudices (in this case Communist) are dragged in even when an appeal is made to the charity of all—rich or poor—who sympathise with the sufferers in an appalling calamity." We shall appreciate this "generous" sense of equality, if the paper has not ignored the most elementary facts of human life. Is it not absurd to expect of our poor have-nots, who are equally in need of relief on account of their dire poverty, to contribute to the earthquake relief fund, especially at a time when urgent and very liberal succour is needed? We are amazed at the profound ignorance displayed by our critic regarding this simple truth. We believe our contemporary will agree with us when we say that a large portion of the Viceroy's Quetta relief fund—which has now exceeded about Rs, 25 lakhs—has been contributed by those who have surplus money at their command and who can afford to pay liberally.

But what is detestable about the comment is the mischievous attempt at vilification indulged in by the old dame of Mount Road, by way of suggesting that our opinion has been prompted by "Communist" prejudices. This is nothing short of a wilful campaign of unprovoked slander, for a Communist does never appeal for charity on critical occasions like the present calamity at Quetta. Our comment is perfectly justified, and we are sure that our view is shared and appreciated by all the victims of the present order—the common masses—who are rendered poor by an unjust economic system

where the rich are enabled to become richer and the poor doomed to perpetual poverty. We are not surprised to find our contemporary smelling Communism in every free view expressed, contrary to the hum-drum sing-song indulged in by the vile propagandists of Imperialism.

The Outrage on China.

Japanese Imperialism, the most menacing of modern Imperialisms, has acquired one more feudatory State called Chahan or Northern China to its fold. The whole administrative system of Northern China has been replaced either by Japanese officials or native officials friendly to Japan. The Governor of Chahan has been forced to withdraw from the region with his troops. The Peiping Political Council and the Peiping Military Council have been abolished, yielding place to minor officials under the direct supervision of Japan, who are virtual administrators of the province.

This step is consistent with the Japanese forward policy of aggression, which originated in the Secret Memorandum submitted by the Prime Minister of Japan to the Emperor in the year 1928, wherein a detailed and systematic plan was drawn for the establishment of Japanese suzerainty over the whole of Asia. Japanese Imperialism has to come to grips with British Imperialism and American Imperialism in her struggle for markets. She has to extend her boundaries and search for new regions wherein to dump her goods. Owing to the necessity of finding additional supplies of oil and mineral products, Japan created the puppet Kingdom of Manchukuo. Now it is the turn of Chahan, the Mongolian province, to be turned into a feudatory State with Japan as her virtual dictator.

So far as Japan is concerned, her nefarious game is cent per cent successful. Her aggressive policy is a triumph of Japanese militarism over her two

rivals, the U.S.A. and Great Britain. Both of them are deprived of their share of exploitation in Northern China.

Japan has been able to succeed in subduing this province, probably by extending false offers of friendship as against the Chinese Nationalist Government which had all along been resented by the people of Chahan. By accepting Japanese domination the people of Chahan have only fallen from the frying pan to the fire. We do not know where this Japanese menace will stop.

The Grand Rejuvenation.

We are constantly reminded of the renewed attempts of the Justice Party to strengthen its hold on the country. King Robert Bruce of Scotland seems their only parallel in perseverance. After sustaining overwhelming defeats in the Assembly Elections, the city by-election and other by-elections for the Legislative Council in the Province, the wise-ones of the Justice Party are busily engaged in a grand scheme of rejuvenating their party and giving it fresh lease of life.

The origin and growth of the Party has been associated with hankering after Government jobs by a section of economically well-off classes in the Presidency. That the Party kept aloof from the bold and courageous fights of the Indian people for freedom and even actively joined hands with the bureaucracy as against the people is green in public memory. Everybody knows that to carry out their programme no trouble or sacrifice is needed. As such their so-called programme of carrying on a campaign of counter-propaganda against the Congress is sure to meet with a catastrophic failure. Among the few leaders of the Justice Party, we do not find a single element inspiring confidence. As a Party it is degenerate. There is no wonder in this because the programme and ideals of the Party do not demand sacrifices, but only favour from officials.

THE NEW AGE

The problem of unemployment is stalking all over the land like a hideous spectre. It has no distinction between a Brahmin and non-Brahmin, or a Hindu and a Muslim. It is an organic feature of the present order of society. The job-hunting activities of the Justice Party can not always meet with success because even jobs are limited. Therefore the party can only go into voluntary liquidation or the people will force it to go the way in which the Liberal Federation has gone. A few wealthy liveried flunkies, zamindars and landlords will keep up the show for sometime and even when they are turned out in elections by their own constituencies, the debacle will be complete and the death-knell of the party will have been sounded. Till that time, we will have to allow ourselves to be treated by their occasional antics and pyrotechnics.

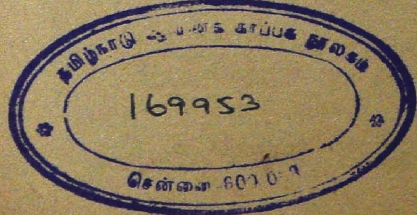
Muzzling of Journals.

We are not surprised at the news that the Free Press Journal has lost its Rs. 20,000 deposit by an order of the Government of Bombay for having commented on the Quetta relief measures. This is not the first occasion when the Free Press has become a victim of the bureaucratic wrath, for, including this amount it has paid the penalty of Rs. 46,000 so far for its courageous comments against the Government and its policy. Till now the occasions were different as there was a Civil Disobedience movement in the country which helped the Government to arm with extra-ordinary powers to check it, and one of its powers was to muzzle the press. Free Press Journal was a unique victim in those days but from what has happened now it seems that the hangman's noose is still active

and that the Executive can behave in whatever way it likes. We whole-heartedly sympathise with the Free-Press Journal in its present trouble and hope that it will tide over this fresh calamity and will hold aloft the banner of free expression of views and the freedom of the Press.

The Bombay Government has not stopped with the Free Press. It has confiscated the deposit of Rs. 1000 given by the weekly journal the "Bombay Standard" for a similar offence. The "Bombay Standard" is a paper edited by Mr. K. Srinivasan, one of the veteran journalists of India. His courage and frankness have been the envy of many. His bold championing of the cause of our country has won for him the esteem of one and all. "The Bombay Standard" was doing useful service and it has now incurred the displeasure for its comment on Quetta and has lost its deposit. Rs. 3000 have been demanded from it when a fresh declaration was made to continue it. We do not know whether the paper will live, but we are sure that so long as it lived, it did its job courageously and well.

The Local Government has taken a leaf out of the Bombay Government and has asked for a deposit of Rs. 2000 from a Telugu journal called "Prabha". It has hardly made five or six appearances so far, and has now incurred the displeasure of the powers that be. This kind of muzzling of journals can hardly reflect to the credit of an enlightened administration and will only increase the bitterness and widen the gulf between active public opinion and sullen and touchy administration. But in a slave country, this seems to be inevitable.



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N35