

# The Reawakening of the National Liberation Movement in Egypt.

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After the expulsion of the Liberal-Constitutional Party, which although by no means revolutionary still had a little regard for the masses, the dictatorship of the Zivar Pasha ministry became unbearable. After a number of brutal measures which were intended to crush the opponents of this dictatorship along the whole line, he issued a coalition law, according to which only those parties confirmed by the king have a legal right to existence; all others are to be straight away dissolved. This law which, as the Zivar Ministers boasted, was to put an end to the Zaglulist movement, had the exact contrary result: Zaglulism, the national movement, which for over a year had given no sign of life whatever, began at once to become active and went over to the counter-attack. Zaglul Pasha's astonishingly spirited protest against the bombarding of Damascus met with an enthusiastic response throughout the whole country, and in the last few weeks not a day has passed in which the Egyptian press, and not only the Zaglulist press, has not made some allusion or other to approaching great actions against the Zivar Cabinet. On the 13th of November, the day of the national festival to be held in honour of Zaglul Pasha, there took place, against the express prohibition of the government, a Zaglulist meeting which ended with the arrest of prominent nationalist leaders. This act of violence on the part of the government increased the excitement of the population still more.

Formally, Egypt is a Constitutional Monarchy. The constitution was drawn up by the Zaglulist parliament and — at least outwardly — is still in force at the present moment. This constitution is on the one hand an excellent mask behind which the real rulers of the country, the English, remain hidden. But precisely for this reason it is a dangerous weapon against them: for if the constitution, the maintenance of which they themselves guarantee, is violated, then the mask is immediately torn from them and the rulers find themselves face to face with the masses whom they have deceived — a state of affairs which is bound to lead to severe collisions. Now the Zivar government, in response to "wishes from above", violated the constitution when, in March last, it dissolved the Egyptian parliament. Since then Zaglul Pasha has been able, under the perfectly loyal slogan of "for parliament", "for the constitution", to rally all sections of the Egyptian people against the Zivar government. The withdrawal of the Liberal-Constitutional

party from the Zivar Cabinet completed the isolation of the latter from the masses of the people.

According to the Egyptian Constitution, Parliament has to be summoned to meet on the 21st of November. As Zivar Pasha, after the dissolution of the former parliament, had quite sufficient time in which to prescribe new elections but has not yet done so, Zaglul declared a few days before the 21st of November: "The old parliament continues to exist. This parliament alone is empowered to determine the government of the country according to the constitution. And parliament will assemble on the 21st of November".

This declaration was an open challenge to the Zivar government. Zaglul felt strong enough to enter on a struggle, and he did so. The government concentrated all its troops in Cairo; all public buildings were placed under guard and Zivar Pasha assured the King that the parliamentary sitting would not take place.

It did take place, however, punctually at the time laid down and only in another place. Its imposing proceedings surprised even the most optimistic supporters of Zaglul. Before the assembled members the representatives of the Liberal-Constitutionals and also of the extremest "Nationalist Party", who for years had bitterly opposed Zaglul, declared their complete solidarity with the latter. The assembled members took an oath not to rest until the "anti-constitutional government" in Egypt is removed. The three great Egyptian parties stand behind Zaglul and against Zivar.

More important than the imposing sitting of parliament is the fact that the masses have again commenced to move. One sees again, as was not to be seen for many months, demonstrations attended by thousands raising the cry: "Long live the constitution!", which is always accompanied by a second cry: "Long live Zaglul Pasha", a further proof of the great popularity of this leader, in spite of the many mistakes he has made.

Zivar Pasha is, for the time being, ignoring parliament and the activity of Zaglul Pasha. He is continuing his policy of suppression, if possible with greater ruthlessness than before. The sufferings of the arrested Communists are terrible. One of them is seriously ill while the others have entered on a hunger strike. Their trial is being continually postponed. Zivar Pasha is relying solely upon the military and the policy forces on the one hand, and the authority of the king and the English on the other.

The last named are, it is true, not so confident as Zivar: the despatching of cruisers to Egyptian waters and the great nervousness which the English newspapers have shown since the 21st of November prove that they are better able to appreciate the real importance of recent events than is Zivar. Nor are the English misled by the calm which has followed Zaglul's action: the British troops are standing ready in expectation of the storm which is approaching.