

# Zaghlul's Election Victory.

By J. B. (Jerusalem).

On November 21, 1924 the popular government of Zaghlul Pasha fell under the pressure of a British ultimatum. During the short period of his rule in Egypt Zaghlul, whose party represents the interests of the rising Egyptian bourgeoisie and which has the broad masses of the peasants behind it, continually vacillated between a compromise with Great Britain and the radical demands for independence represented by the national revolutionary movement. His final defeat was the result of this antagonism within the **Wafd** (Zaghlul Party).

Zaghlul's defeat in the Autumn of 1924 was so sudden and unexpected that many of those who are familiar with Egyptian politics considered that his influence was at an end. The English set up, under the mask of an Egyptian "non-parliamentary" Zivar Pasha government, a ruthless dictatorship with which they hoped to suppress the elementary national revolutionary movement. In addition to the usual methods of terror — wholesale arrests, death sentences etc, Zivar Pasha also wished to defeat Zaghlul on the political field. For this purpose there was set up, under the high protectorate of the puppet-king Fuad, who was thoroughly hated in Egypt, a government party, "Ittehad" (Unity), which everywhere established organisations and in the first place pursued the aim of breaking away the Right elements from the **Wafd**.

Yet already at the first trial of strength, when Zaghlul's star was still very low, in February 1925, this Anglophile Party proved itself incapable of getting in any way into contact with the masses of people. At the parliamentary elections which were held at that time, Zaghlul emerged as a victor, even if with a not very great majority, and Zivar Pasha was again compelled to resort to illegal means, to dissolve parliament, in order to secure his rule.

From this time on there is to be again observed a marked progress of the Zaghlulists. The Zivar government has become so unpopular by a long series of treacherous acts in the sphere of home and foreign policy, that the followers of Zaghlul Pasha who have become indifferent are streaming back to him wholesale. Measures of an inner political nature, such as repeated sensational trials, the rendering more stringent of the law regarding meetings, working out of an unconstitutional election law, attempt to drive the Zaghlul Party into illegality, fierce persecution of the workers' organisations and of others, and, as regards foreign policy, the continually repeated compliance with English demands, the recognition of the British rule over the Sudan (expressed by the dispatch of an official government representative to the formal opening of the Sennar-Dam in Sudan), the handing over of Dohagaboub to the Italians, the

recognition of the British mandate over Palestine — all this was water to the mill of the national revolutionary movement, at the head of which Zaghlul Pasha became more and more prominent.

In addition to this, in Autumn 1925, Egypt was visited by a severe economic crisis which considerably increased the bitterness of the population against Zivar. The 21st November 1925 was the great turning point in Egyptian politics. Zaghlul, in alliance with the two small Egyptian parties, the Nationalists and the Liberal Constitutionalists, convened the dissolved parliament and thereby declared open war on the government. The government was thereupon compelled to retreat. It had, in the first place, to prescribe new elections, afterwards to abandon its own mutilated election law in favour of the previously existing universal suffrage and finally, to allow officials, who against its orders, followed the instructions of Zaghlul, to return to their posts.

In March, immediately before the elections, Zivar Pasha attempted a final stroke. He instigated a monster trial against seven of the most prominent Zaghlulists, whom he charged with being in connection with terrorist organisations, and actually succeeded, immediately before the elections, in getting the court to accept the charge as proved and to have one of them condemned to death. But this last bloody sentence had the exact contrary effect. The Zaghlul Party triumphed at the elections of 21st of May. Out of the 200 seats it will receive about 150 (the counting is not yet over). The two parties allied with it receive a further 30 seats, whilst the Itchadists obtain in all ... 4 seats, although they had put forward their candidates in 150 constituencies.

The only thing that can now be said regarding the election victory of Zaghlul is that it represents an imposing manifestation of the Egyptian national revolutionary will. The Egyptian people has voted against Zivar Pasha and thereby against Great Britain, and thus again, as in the year 1918—19 and 1924, expressed its definite wish to gain real and complete independence.

The English newspapers have for some time been discussing the question whether Great Britain can enter into new negotiations with Zaghlul whom it so brutally overthrew two years ago. A constitutional government in Egypt without the participation of the Wafd is unthinkable. The continuation of unconstitutional conditions, however, is creating material for conflicts which, as the English are quite aware, must sooner or later lead to bloody outbreaks. On the other hand a great deal depends upon the attitude of the Wafd. The further political developments in Egypt will be determined to a great extent by whether within the great National Party, as the Wafd has again proved itself to be, the capitalist Right wing or the small peasant-radical Left wing retains the upper hand.