

Ramgarh

FORWARD BLOC

A POLITICAL WEEKLY

Editor :—SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

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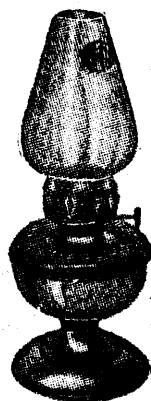
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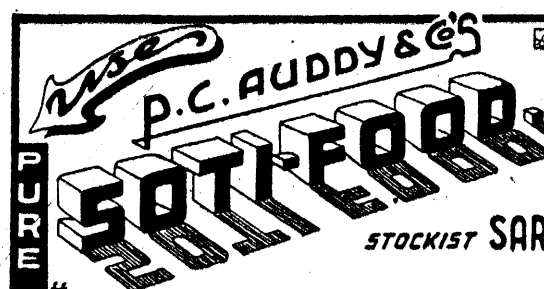
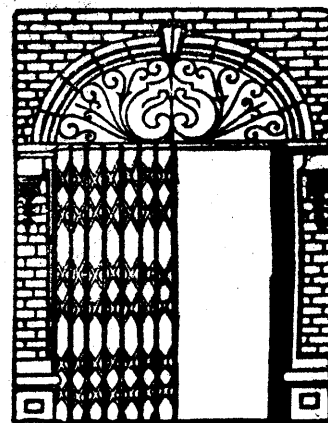
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FORWARD BLOC

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13

Ramgarh

The darkest hour is ahead of the Forward Bloc. It has from its inception been fighting on a double front viz. alien Imperialism and Indian Counter-revolution. The path it had selected was not an easy one, but it is doubtful if anybody had expected Indian Counter-revolution to be so determined, ruthless and vindictive as it has in fact proved to be. We all know from personal experience that very often it is more difficult to combat reaction at home than Imperialism imposed from without. We have seen in recent months how so many comrades who would have fought foreign Imperialism bravely have succumbed to the onslaught from the Right.

Looking at the scene quite dispassionately for a moment, as a student of History would, one cannot but admire the Rightists who with all their lip-homage to Non-Violence and Toleration are fighting a political game in a most down-right manner. This is 'Real-Politik' as History knows it and the game is bound to thrill all political fighters—even those who are being subjected to persecution at present.

One of the immediate objectives of the Forward Bloc was the consolidation of all the Leftist elements in the Congress and in the country. Since this could not be achieved on the platform of the Bloc, the Left Consolidation Committee was brought into existence. The Committee has had a chequered career. The moment it showed its strength at the meeting of the All India Congress Committee held in Bombay in June 1939, the onslaught from the Right began—the first occasion being the 9th July demonstrations. Since then some of the Leftist elements have been steadily dropping off from the Left Consolidation Committee. The astute Rightist leaders have been pursuing

a dual policy in their handling of the Leftists. Some of the compromising and 'reasonable' elements are being systematically wooed. But the harder nuts are being dealt with ruthlessly. The result has been a gradual thinning of the ranks of the Leftists. To make matters more difficult for the latter, governmental persecution has been steadily going on in several provinces and it was first resorted to under the Congress regime. Today doubts are being raised as to whether Left-Consolidation is at all possible any longer.

Left-Consolidation can be achieved in either of two ways. The first method is the one already adopted by us viz. rallying the Leftist elements on a common platform and on the basis of a common minimum programme. If this method fails, then another method is still open to us. The events of the last few months have put Leftists to a severe test—they have had to pass through a fiery ordeal. Some have succumbed in the process, but not all. Those who have stood the test bravely have proved to be genuine Leftists and Left-Consolidation will now mean their consolidation. In nature, floods are often preceded by a drying up of the rivers. A thinning of the ranks is often a prelude to a dynamic expansion. This will happen to the Left-movement in this country. Those who have not lost faith during the course of the past struggle, will agree with us that the darkest hour that is ahead of us will be followed by the rosy dawn.

The role of the Forward Bloc in Indian History is not that of His Majesty's opposition. We have seen remarks to the effect that the aim of the Forward Bloc is merely to ginger up the present policy and programme of the Congress. There could be no greater misunderstanding than this. The Bloc stands for something positive and dynamic. The role of the antithesis in the Dialectic of History is not a negative one. It is something positive and dynamic which has to carry us swiftly along the path of progress.

It is not outside the domain of possibility that as we approach the

darkest hour, some of the elements in the Forward Bloc may quail before the ordeal. But there can be no going back for us—nor any marking-time. Forward Bloc has to move forward without a pause, without a break. That is its historical role. Determination has to be met with greater determination and persecution with unflinching heroism. Only then shall we survive the ordeal—only then shall we succeed in our fight on a double front. Our cause is just and our role historic. Let us not therefore lose faith and courage, even if unrelieved darkness overcomes us for a while.

There are moments when reason fails to rend the veil of the future and on such occasions men who are weak in faith sometimes lose courage and self-confidence. But where reason fails, intuition steps in. Intuitive insight can pierce through impenetrable darkness and give us a glimpse of what is to come. Today, intuition tells us that no power on earth can vanquish us and our cause. The tremendous mass-response that greets us everywhere has but one meaning. Despite persecution on a double front, people realise that we are moving with the times—that we are thinking their thoughts and acting in consonance with them.

The air is thick with rumours of a compromise with the Government. Some fancy that the endeavour to conclude a settlement will be made before the annual session of the Congress meets at Ramgarh in March next. Others opine that the Ramgarh Congress will vest plenary powers in the Congress Executive and that the final attempt at a compromise will be made after March. So-called English friends of India have been advising the Rightist leaders to mark time till March next, when an agreement will become possible. There is not the least doubt that in the Rightist plan, Ramgarh Congress occupies an important place. How else can you explain the determined and ruthless attempt that is being made to exclude Bengal, real Bengal, from the Ramgarh Congress? The Rightist plan has to be put through at Ramgarh and Bengal with her contingent of 544

delegates may prove inconvenient to the Congress High Command. Therefore Bengal has to be eliminated by hook or by crook.

But this is not so easy. You can exclude Bengal from the Ramgarh Congress, but you cannot exclude her from the public life of India.

For the Leftists, Ramgarh may not have much importance—but the month of March will be important in the history of India. Leftists should therefore gather together during this month and prepare to meet the counter-revolutionary and compromising tactics of the Rightist leaders. In this connection it may be necessary to hold an All-India Conference somewhere in Bihar at about the same time as the Ramgarh Congress. Among others, Leftists who have been expelled from the Congress or subjected to disciplinary action for their political convictions should attend this conference and make a success of it. Such a Conference will have a salutary effect on both the Congress Right-Wing and on the British Government and will tone up the militant Leftists in the country. Members of the Forward Bloc need not be so anxious about attending the Ramgarh Congress. With so many Leftist leaders under disciplinary action and with real Bengal out of the Ramgarh Congress, there will be little chance of influencing the decisions of that Congress. Members of the Bloc should rather concentrate all their energies on the task of winning Purna Swaraj as soon as possible.

Sukhan Chandra Sen

Independence Pledge

The new Independence Pledge drawn up by the Congress Working Committee has evoked a chorus of protest from various quarters. It may be said that generally the Leftists have raised their voice against it. Shortly after it had been adopted by the Working Committee, Mr. Jai Prakash Narain, on behalf of the Congress Socialist Party, vented his disagreement with

it; now Mr. Sampuranand has added his voice to his. It will be wrong to say that only these two socialist leaders have protested against the new Pledge. The last few days, papers have carried disapproval of it from various other leaders and workers of standing. More protests have gradually been pouring in and we have received a number of them which we shall publish, if necessary. On the other hand, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramia, in a recent statement, has given the authorised Gandhian interpretation of the Pledge; and Pandit Jawaharlal, from his characteristic middle position, has attempted to strike the *via media*. The strange part of the story is that though both of them belong to the Working Committee, they have agreed to differ on this vital issue and are yet complacently herding together.

Let us put the Pledge to an acid rational test. For the moment let us deflect our attention from the other items of the Pledge and rivet on spinning which has given rise to greatest flutter in different circles. It is well known that charkha has continued to occupy the foremost place in the constructive programme of the Congress since Mahatma Gandhi assumed its leadership about twenty years ago. The country has taken to it and has spun and spun but has not found its way to Swaraj as yet. The Mahatma argues that it has not spun as much or with as much gusto as he would like. There comes the crux of the matter. Spinning certainly occupies some place in the national economy; it will continue to do so even after national freedom is won. But there can be no denying the fact that the country in general has refused to be stirred to its depths by Gandhiji's pathetic faith in charkha; it has failed to hear in its whirl any divine music; it has failed, further, to understand how charkha can spin out besides ordinary yarn, the golden thread that will bind the entire nation into a solid sense of unity. The Leftist protestants of the new Pledge will fling back with appropriate scorn the insinuation that by refusing to admit the mystic efficacy of charkha, they are only betraying a lack of sympathy for

the masses. It is an untruth verging almost on the point of sacrilege. Their work among the masses and for the masses will give the lie direct to the base insinuation.

We must, however, get over all sentimental considerations and go direct to the root of the matter. The question is, is charkha an indispensable weapon for attaining independence or Swaraj? To this the better mind of the country is bound to return an emphatic no. Pandit Jawaharlal has opined that the charkha clause has been included in the new Pledge "to create that psychological and moral atmosphere in which alone genuine Satyagraha was possible." We are told that he has now taken to spinning with all the zeal of a new convert. Sardar Patel, true to his tradition, has gone a step further and said, "there was nothing except charkha which could consolidate and strengthen the country and those who had no faith in it must sit still and allow others to work." But we must make it absolutely clear that neither the spectacular feat of the Pandit nor the bullying tactics of the Sardar will induce the country to fall in with the new Pledge and swear allegiance to it. It has got to be scrapped, the atmosphere has got to be purged of all mist, so that the country may look straight and clear and forge onward to its goal without any delay. It must refuse most emphatically to cast all commonsense to the winds, and submit to a sort of metaphysical cant with its resultant passivity or shilly-shallying, so far as attainment of national independence is concerned.

Dr. Pattabhi's interpretation of the Pledge has brought up a larger and a deeper issue before the country. "Machinery and Khaddar" the Doctor has said, naturally stand at diametrically opposite poles..... India must stand arrayed four-square against the cult of machinery which is the visible embodiment of violence." Charkha, as the precursor of the Tolstoyan brand of civilisation to which a free India must adapt itself, had been held up before the country by Gandhiji before. The cult was then severely lashed and battered and consequently driven under-

ground. A true disciple of the Mahatma is again seeking to revive it and even today it has evidently behind it the whole weight of the Gandhian School.

India must once again examine its implications and give out her verdict on this immeasurably significant issue. It is obviously useless to convince the Gandhians by saying that violence does not inhere in machineries but in their present vicious uses; that an overhaul of the present social and economic system will not only rid them of their evils but usher in prosperity and joy to the teeming millions of the country; that turning away from the ever widening benefits of modern science would be nothing short of national suicide. The Gandhians have their own ethics and philosophy which they seek to foist upon the country. But the country, we repeat, shall have to choose and pronounce its verdict. What has Pundit Jawaharlal to say in regard to the Doctor's interpretation of the new Pledge? Should the National Planning Committee be liquidated? Or should it be re-constituted on Gandhian ideals? We wait for his answer.

CURRENT COMMENTS

The Real War

"The real war has not yet begun," said Mr. Chamberlain in his Mansion House speech on December 9, last. But then it is only "the calm before the storm." Where then is the storm brewing? If indications are truly read, the storm-centre may be either somewhere in the Baltic or in the Balkans. Slowly the war-area is shifting—it is today on the borders of Finland. And the Finns have served the useful purpose of bringing out the issues which were being obscured. What Spain failed to do and Austria and Czecho-Slovakia could not shake off as they were butchered, Finland has succeeded to accomplish. The League roused itself to expel for the first time a moral delinquent. Britain and France ranged themselves with Italy in sympathy with the democracy in

danger; and, even America was ready to sacrifice good money for the good old creditor country. This is no less than a miracle. But the miracle was scheduled to come, as students of world affairs told us, when the real issues involved in the present world crisis were clarified—and imperialism in its threatened disintegration must try to save itself by an onslaught on the rival order—socialistic system. Once the real issues are brought out, the real war would start. And Finland may only be the prelude to that mighty drama. Meanwhile, in the world of unreality in which we are condemned to live we can know little of the real conditions that brought about the conflict in Finland, of the contending forces acting behind the scene, of the actual state that prevails in that land of frozen lakes and snow-clad forests and Arctic winter. We can only hope that the Finnish people will emerge out of the darkness into a new and better life after the real—or unreal?—war has rolled back.

Balkan Spring-board

While Finland has created a diversion for her sympathisers, Italy has not been slow to give the lead that she claims for herself in the Balkans. The first instalment of Italian aeroplanes reached Finland to keep Russia busy—the second, the former partner of the "Axis" is holding up in Berlin to keep Russia free to help Germany—and Count Ciano of Italy met Count Czaky of Hungary in Venice "to work for Balkan peace." A defensive military alliance between the powers is reported from New York, and, Hungary can now count on assistance from Italy in case of attack from Germany or Russia. Of course none of these countries has any aggressive intention towards U.S.S.R.—none in the world has it, we should remember—and Yugoslavia, which looks askance at the neighbours, has been told that they have nothing but friendly sentiments for her as for Germany. Suggestions have moreover gone to Rumania, the would be victim of German or Russian aggression, to come into the fold, shepherded by Italy. The Balkan was in danger of being

Bolshevised when Britain and France won over Turkey to bar the door against the Bolshevik bear in the Mediterranean and the Near East. Italy resented this—hers was the role of fighting the Anti-Christ in South Eastern Europe and, the Balkans were her special care. So, Finland has to be kept on her legs with generous contributions to save the Balkans from the Muscovite menace. "An anti-Bolshevik bulwark in the Balkans"—readily as it is supported by the Allies from Turkey and beyond is likely to make of the Balkans the anti-Bolshevik spring-board.

Changing Paint

People in Northern India are being slowly persuaded, it is said, by an unseen agency that the Anti-Christ is come to bring desolation into their homes and destruction into the world around. That Evil is not Hitler, but Stalin—the man without God, the man without morals, the man without humanity. In him, of course, the cherished qualities of man are defeated, and, the dearest virtues that blossom in the Indian soil, her soulful spiritual expansiveness and rich cultural inheritance, run the danger of being defeated equally. So, the campaign goes on against the Soviet, and, Russia is painted blood-red. The master-artists of the imperialist propaganda know their work. But our publicists should by this time know something of their game. Only a few days ago our people were warned by the would-be Saviours of Polish liberty that Russia was on the side of God and His Allied Church in so far as she kept off the pagan hordes from Eastern Europe. Our press was them to paint Russia pink. But now they are asked to believe that Russia was the Enemy. So they must paint Russia blood-red.

Fighting the Reds in India.

The Annual Police Report of Bengal has come out with the story of the ex-detenus and ex-political prisoners turning into flaming Bolsheviks, and Left movement that expresses itself through the 'workers, kisans and students' awakening, is sought to

be slandered as the Bolshevik efforts. We now realize why all this "Bolshevik bogey" is created. These movements by themselves are far from being communistic, as is known. In so far as they look forward to an order based on social justice and scientific organisation, they evidently consider the Soviet experiment as a serious and successful solution of the many muddles. But this very breadth of vision of the movements, the dynamism of the men whom the prison bars could not crush, and, above all the deep, moving truth that these movements stand for, mean no easy life for the Imperialist and his henchmen. So, they are on the watch to kill the movements; out to give it a bad name; determined to pervert human judgment by a creation of prejudices. The Communist Party is illegal in India. Individual communists lead a precarious existence. In Bengal the Police have the satisfaction of having the political-prisoners in jail and civil liberties destroyed by one single executive fiat. The recently published Police Report is meant to be a justification for all these.

Fight for Civil Liberty

Civil Liberties are a sore question. Britain is at war—probably no less earnestly than India. Necessarily, therefore, Britain must be ready to put up with certain restrictions on the normal civil liberties enjoyed by her people. Those restrictions came. But 'the little ant-hills of restrictions' would not be so easily

tolerated by the Britisher even though he is fighting Germany, and the German bombers rain death, mines destroy trade, and the enemy secretly attempts to undermine British military organisation. The result of the British discontent was the modification of these war time restrictions, called Emergency (Defence) Regulations. Detention, without trial, against Sir John Anderson's arguments, is now much limited in its scope; publicity laws are relaxed so as to make punitive only 'conscious endeavours' on a known 'false statement, false document or false report'; attempts only at 'seducing from their His Majesty's forces duty' are punishable. So, the modifications are duly introduced. Here in India—which is at war, we are told,—the war is continued on the liberties of the people, and, the powers that be, respond to our demands with double-dose of repressions. Revision here is out of the question. Reaction can see reason only when made to do so. We have to know it, and, prepare for saving ourselves and our cherished rights from the blind forces of reaction by our own sufferings and sacrifices. In this respect too the Congress Working Committee has put the brake on the people too rigidly and long. The BPCC, has requested for a relaxation of this restriction, and, if the Working Committee, for one reason or another, now refrain from giving their decision on the matter, the Committee will only strengthen reaction in the country.

EUROPE AT THE CROSS-ROADS

By Amiya Nath Bose

Europe stands today at one of the cross-roads of history. Will this war between rival imperialisms be transformed into an international class-conflict? Will the Finnish episode mark the beginning of a new epoch in world history? Who can tell? The immediate future is undoubtedly uncertain. But a correct appreciation of the present international situation and of the conflicting social forces can give us an indication of future developments.

There are, in the world today, two basic causes of conflict,—(1) rival imperialisms and (2) rival social systems. A war between rival imperialisms raises acutely the problem of social conflict within the countries involved. This social conflict is strengthened and encouraged by the existence of a state with a challenging social order. Suppression of that order, therefore, becomes vital for an effective action against internal challenge. A desire to switch on the war against the Soviet Union arises directly out of the existing objective conditions.

One is apt to forget that the popular movement in Finland was suppressed in 1918 by Mannerheim and his gang with the help of German arms. A counter-revolution was thus imposed on the Finnish people. An internal social crisis was inevitable in Finland. It must, however, be admitted that the Russian action has precipitated that crisis. But this is not the whole story. Finland is, after all, a mere pawn in the chess-board of world politics. The Finnish tragedy can be understood only in the context of the present international situation. The *Times* has assured Germany that there is still time for her to join the ranks of 'civilised' powers to stem the tide of Red menace. Will Hitler play the game? If he does, Finland is the obvious jumping-off ground for an attack against the Soviet Union. The strategic importance of Finland is therefore clear. If he does not, he will have to give in to progressive Bolshevisation of Germany, which will, in turn, change the character of the present conflict. In that event also, Finland will play a significant part.

The next stage of the war depends, to a large extent, on Hitler. Will he join the ranks of 'civilised' powers or will he unwillingly or should we say unwittingly, extend the Red frontier to the heart of Europe?

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HOW LONG, O LORD, HOW LONG ?

When Adam spins, and Eve spins,
Hind Swaraj struggle begins !

(With apologies to the old ditty)

Mahatma Gandhi has recently declared that, to him, the *Charkha* is the yardstick for gauging the nation's preparedness for struggle, that only to the extent its cult is propagated in Indian homes can he see in the nation its fitness for giving battle to British Imperialism and that without a universal and living faith in *Charkha* and *Khadi* Satyagraha is impossible. He even goes to the length of saying, in effect, that the rotating wheel will iron out communal differences. It is the visible symbol of non-violence and a panacea for all the major ills that affect our body politic today. That is the sole weapon with which we can successfully wage a fight against the British Government. With the magical *Charkha* in hand India will vanquish her enemy, even as Shri Krishna with his 'Sudarshan Chakra' annihilated his foes in the distant past. No less a person than Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is reported to have said at Lahore that the *Charkha* will lead us to the goal of National Independence.

The *Charkha* has thus reappeared on the Indian scene in all its sanctity and mysterious power. Arguments galore have been advanced to make every Congressman *charkha*-minded. Mahatmaji has recommended it as an excellent nervous sedative and advised Congress workers to spin daily until they are tired. He has logically demonstrated that faith in non-violence leads one to rural uplift which, in turn, means the propagation and popularisation of the spinning wheel. No wonder then that the miraculous wheel has found its way into the Independence Pledge, 1940 model, which has thus undergone a veritable Gandhian metamorphosis. Mahatmaji has, since September 1938, been insisting on the spinning franchise as a remedy for Congress impunity and corruption and so here we have it, reintroduced by the back door. The Neo-Independence Pledge, with its emphasis on the *Charkha* and regular spinning, relegates the political struggle for national freedom to the back ground. "Every Congressman," says

Gandhiji, "has to become a master spinner and master weaver. He has to be a *Khadi* technician. He has to spin for the sake of the country." "Spin your way to Swaraj," "Swaraj through Women" are the new slogans in fashion. It is amusing, however, to see how the fiat of Gandhiji is translated into practice. In Khandwa, in the Central Provinces, the District Congress Committee has called upon every "Mandaladhyaaksh" to send monthly to the District Office 1000 yards of yarn, spun either by himself or some one else in the mandal. Can hypocrisy go further ? Will not Mahatmaji denounce such false adherents masquerading in the mantle of truth ?

We are however grateful to the Congress Working Committee that in the matter of taking the new Independence Pledge, freedom has been granted to individual Congressmen. Will those Congressmen and Congresswomen who are prepared to fight for freedom with all their heart and all their mind and all their might but who believe that preparation for freedom's battle lies in other ways than plying the *Charkha* will they have the courage of their conviction and reiterate the old pledge in preference to the new ?

We are not against the *Charkha* as such. But when we are seriously told that unswerving devotion to it will take us to our goal, we are bewildered. The futility of the wheel as a weapon of struggle for political freedom is obvious from the fact that we were enslaved at a time when perhaps every Indian was an expert spinner and weaver. *Charkha* and *Khadi* may augment the meagre income of the Indian Kisan but then it is far from being a solution for our economic ills, grinding poverty and unemployment, in the modern age. If we mean to survive the fierce international competition of today, we have no other alternative than to utilise machinery to the fullest extent but mitigate its evils by running it on socialist lines which will assure decent wages and conditions of living to every worker. Look at Russia for a living example ! So also will agriculture have to be scientifically revolutionized. This does not mean that *Charkha* and *Khadi* will have

no place in the national economy. Certainly it will rank among other important cottage industries. But to make it a cardinal industry in the economic life of the nation is preposterous. In the meantime too, during our struggle for freedom, we will accept *Khadi* as a political and party symbol. But to impose the *Charkha* and regular spinning on every Congressman as a supreme duty is to sidetrack the issue of national struggle which confronts him to-day. Moreover, if Congress accepts in truth the *Charkha* cult to the extent and with all the implications that Gandhiji desires, it ought to call upon Pandit Nehru and other Congressmen to resign from the National Planning Committee and, following a liquidation of the entire body should constitute a new one with Shri Kumarappa as Chairman. The Marxian socialist Pandit, who not so very long ago dubbed spinning and rural uplift as an old woman's job, is today, with the proverbial zeal of a neophyte, busy in inaugurating "*Charkha Clubs*" and preaching salvation through the wheel !

So then, as long as we do not spin we cannot fight. What are the other obstacles and objections to a nation-wide struggle against the British Government ? Gandhiji says that while the Viceroy in all sincerity is trying hard for a settlement we should not create difficulties in his way. Our fight for freedom is thus dependent upon the Viceroy's whims and caprices. Pandit Nehru has declared at Muttra that there is no longer any hope of a settlement. Why then this delay in launching a struggle ? We should not embarrass Britain, says Gandhiji. What is our goal, I ask, Britain's welfare or India's independence ? This straight political issue is sought to be clouded by pseudo-ethical considerations. If it was proper to embarrass the petty Ruler of Rajkot by a fast unto death, why this scrupulous and righteous propriety where British Imperialism, our century-old enemy, is concerned ?

Then there is the argument that Satyagraha will lead to communal rioting. Why Muslims, who are as much slaves as anybody else in this unfortunate land,

should oppose a fight for freedom, passes one's comprehension. Are not the Ahrars and the members of the Jamiat-ul-ulema true Mussalmans? Even as regards the Muslim League, the President of the Bihar Provincial Committee has recently declared that Bihar Muslims will in no way resist the struggle for freedom. Besides, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel only the other day addressing the Bombay Congress legislators emphatically stated that Congressmen were not frightened by the bogey of a civil war. If the bogey, when raised by others, does not frighten us why should it when done by one in our midst, yea even by Mahatma Gandhi?

The Congress Working Committee recognizes that Britain is waging an Imperialist War and that the British Government has banged the door in the face of the Congress. Nevertheless, like a true Satyagrahi, Congress will explore all avenues for an honourable settlement with British Imperialism! What about active and open resistance to recognized evil which is the corner-stone of Satyagraha? The same Satyagrahic spirit of settlement does not operate so far as the Congress Left Wing is concerned. Subhas Babu could not be permitted to have even two or three men of his choice in his Cabinet; and when he and other Leftists appealed to the nation and the Working Committee to maintain the basic principles and the militant spirit of Congress alive, they were branded as unspeakable rebels and "disciplined," in the name of unity in the midst of a life-and-death struggle! Where was then the spirit of the Satyagrahi? The drive against the Left Wing continues unabated today and the Congress Working Committee is full of Satyagrahic benevolence only towards British Imperialism but not towards their own comrades in freedom's battle whose only crime consists in calling upon the nation to launch a struggle against the British Government. Verily, verily the Working Committee is prepared to come to terms with British Imperialism but not with Indian Leftism. The Leftists were and are dragooned on the specious plea of discipline necessary for conducting a life-and-death struggle, but when the opportunity for launching such a struggle presents itself Mahatmaji from his sublime Satyagrahic attitude asserts that inaction is at times more effective than action!

When will Congress, the revolutionary mass organization of the Indian people, shake off the inertia that has taken hold of it? The Haripura resolution of relentless resistance to Imperialist war and the Tripuri resolution on National Demand and nation-wide struggle have been quietly but deliberately shelved, and the *Charkha* and Constituent Assembly substituted. The "Harijan" of today is fast becoming a treatise on the science of *Charkha* and presents a sad contrast to the "Young India" of old which used to fire the heart of Indian Youth. We are being taught to fight the British Government with the *Charkha* in one hand and the "Harijan" in the other! And as regards the Constituent Assembly Rajaji has told us that Gandhiji is willing to consider "acceptable equivalents" to the grand Assembly! Well then, that is how the National Demand is being watered down before our very eyes and the country prepared for a struggle! Cannot we see

the pitfalls and save our mighty organization, before it is too late?

The last World War saw many nations crushed and prostrate. But those nations have once again become puissant and virile. A second World War is upon us but India is still dragged behind the chariot-wheels of British Imperialism. In face of a grave national calamity our national leadership offers us nothing but the Mahamantra of "spin, spin, spin," while the sands of life are running out. How long will India take to get ready for the final onslaught on British Imperialism and emerge from the gloom of slavery into the sunlight of freedom? How long O Lord, how long, will she sit and spin at the sacred wheel while golden opportunities slip by?

"There is a tide in the affairs of men, which Taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and miseries."
As of men, so of nations—

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NUMEROUS letters are being received daily in this office enquiring about the closing and the drawing dates, the price of lottery tickets, number of tickets and free tickets in a book, and the winner of the First Prize of the last session. It would not be possible to attend to these letters individually.

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Sj. Naresh Chandra Ghosh, Asst. Station Master, Sonatola (Bogra), E. B. Ry. won the First Prize—amounting to Rs. 41,125/- of the last session.

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A LETTER FROM A MUSLIM WORKER TO MR. JINNAH

[The writer of this letter is a retired Muslim I. E. S. For obvious reasons, we are unable to disclose his name. Two more letters of the series will be published hereafter. We hope those two, like the present one, will prove immensely interesting to our readers—Ed. F.B.]

Dear Mr. Leader,

I address you as "Mister" because you have always been to me an immaculate Indian specimen of western civilisation, and therefore, a Mister by right, and not by mere courtesy. And as "Leader" because you are a leader by sheer merit, a leader *sui-generis*. In the present mushroom growth of leaders who are mostly the brood of that otherwise sterile Dame, Provincial Autonomy, you are a genuine, so to speak, God-made leader. I, for one, sincerely admire you as a great leader, for unlike the other leaders who are still busy in building up their fortunes, you are the only Muslim leader who in the waning years of your life, after having made your honest or rather honourable pile (for the profession is proverbially more honourable than honest), and having established your rightful claim to leadership, have made the welfare of your community the sole, unadulterated and undiluted concern of your old age.

Mr. Leader, I admire your great astuteness and consummate manoeuvring that has led the Congress into one of its worst tactical blunders, viz, the virtual recognition of your goodself and the handful of Nawabs, Nawabzadas, Knights, Khanbahadurs and other well-to-do idlers who form the Muslim League, as the only accredited representatives of the eight crore's impecunious starving Muslims.

I sometimes wonder at these so-called representative assemblies of men. Amongst the lower animals the hunters and the robbers are clearly demarcated from the hunted and the robbed, and therefore there can be no mistaking of the former for the latter, or *vice versa*. Thus the vulture or the kite cannot pretend to represent the interests of the sparrow or the pigeon, nor would the tiger or the wolf, outside a fable, claim a relationship with the lamb or the fawn. But among men, with their divine intelligence, the usurper and the exploiter upto this day claim, and their claim is universally recognised and accepted, to represent the interests of the deluded victims of their usurpation and exploitation.

Please excuse this rambling. To return to my subject, I think the Raja of Pirpur's enquiry into the more or less mythical atrocities of the Congress governments against their Muslim subjects, followed up with vigorous propaganda, was indeed a master-stroke of political strategy. This is truly the age of propaganda. The most atrocious and palpable lie, repeated twice, becomes absolute gospel truth. The impious even suggest that gospel truth, and for that matter all divine truth, has acquired its unimpeachable character largely from frequent repetition. Please do not think that I doubt the authenticity of the Raja of Pirpur's discoveries. I am Muslim enough not to disbelieve the word of another Muslim. And then who could question the irrefutable fact that in at least one Congress province a shamelessly non-muslim educational scheme called "Vidya Mandir" was going to be imposed upon the innocent Muslims?

And the contention that the scheme has nothing of Hinduism about it, and that there is after all nothing in a name, is pure casuistry which cannot deceive a Muslim. If there were nothing in a name there would not be so many different creeds, nor would the pages of history have been tarnished with so much discord and bloodshed. Gibbon gives a very interesting example of man's devotion to words. He says: "The orthodox doctrine of the Trinity was expressed by the word *Homooouision* the doctrine of the semi-Aryans by the word *Homoioouision*." The resemblance of the words is in itself a mere coincidence, the resemblance of the doctrines is very close. Yet for several centuries hundreds of thousands of men sacrificed their lives in wars waged between the two factions of the church, which respectively professed partiality for either of the two words.

And then, after all what is the difference between the Congress and the Muslim League, but that of a name? For both profess the same political doctrine, namely the attainment of complete or full independence for their country. So the

main dispute between these two organisations appears to be over a name, though among the leaders it is perhaps over the distribution of the loot, that is the right of exploitation after the freedom has been won. Here again, the beasts of the jungle show their superiority over men, for they never fight over a quarry before it is killed.

To return to ourselves, it must be said to your credit that you have made a masterly use of this powerful weapon of propaganda; in fact, so masterly, that even the most sober and otherwise judicious-minded Muslim twitches his ears and rolls up his eyes when he speaks of the horrors committed by the Congress government upon the helpless Muslims. He verily believes that Nadir Shah's whole-sale massacre of Delhi and, in our own times, the Jalian-Wala-Bagh tragedy, were but tame affairs as compared with the Congress atrocities.

So far all your moves were very clever, such as would have put even Machiavelli to shame. And you scored another great point when the Congress leaders began to take the whole thing very seriously and offered that a joint enquiry, or one by an impartial commission, may be held into your accusations.

Now my humble workman's opinion is that you should have accepted the challenge and then followed the well-known Fabian tactics. And if, in the meantime, the Congress had failed to recognise and accept your claim as the only rightful leader and your League as the sole representative of the eight crore Muslims—which by the way, is going to be the *Magna Charta* of Muslim India—you could have broken up the negotiations on some pretext or another. "Reasons" as Robert Louis Stevenson has said, "grow like blackberries." Or as Hegel has said, "In our reflecting and reasoning age a man is not worth much who cannot give a good reason for every thing, no matter how bad or crazy. Every thing in the world that has been done wrong has been done for the best of reasons."

But, for once, I am afraid you became a bit too clever and overshot the mark. The demand for a Royal Commission of enquiry was a tactical blunder. It looked like requisitioning a steam-hammer for driving a nail. It bordered on the ludicrous. Apart from this, it is unbelievable that there is not one man among the forty crore population of India, not even an Englishman, whom the Muslims could safely trust with this enquiry. I appreciate and share your nervousness lest the real truth should be found out. But I think you over-rated the danger. In your own professional experience you must have come across innumerable cases in which evidence—all concocted—has overwhelmed truth and absolutely blinded the Argus eyes of justice. And here every thing was in our favour. In the first place we could have produced thousands, nay hundreds of thousands of witnesses whose imagination, stimulated by religious frenzy, could have conjured up images before which the realities of a Chinese prison would have appeared as pale shadows. Then, I am sure, there is still a large number of people in India, Indians as-well-as non-Indians, both officials and non-officials, whose attachment to the Empire still retains its pristine purity and who—justice or no justice—could not have let down a whole community which (I mean its leadership; the masses or the people in the Eastern communities have always been regarded and treated as cattle) has been, still is, and God-willing, shall always be one of the pillars, though at times a very shaky pillar, of empires and kingdoms, and which even today, in this age of democracy, can boast of being one of the main props of at least four non-Muslim empires, viz. England, France, Italy and Spain.

But this Deliverance Day Celebration was indeed a Himalayan blunder. Apart from the fact that it turned out to be a tame affair and, as such, has cast a shadow of doubt upon your claim that the entire Muslim India, from the Punjab and Bengal Premiers down to your cook—I hope he is a Muslim and not a Goanise—is solidly behind you, it has created a split—let us hope it will be a temporary one—among your followers. It seems that some of these gentlemen, I mean your worthy followers, played cricket in their school-days and have therefore

imbibed most fanciful notions about sportsmanship, fair play, square deal, and what not, as would be regarded even by an Etonian or an Oxford blue as utopian and extravagant. These gentlemen protest with a school-boyish vehemence that an attempt to convert a great moral victory of an adversary into a political triumph for oneself is not cricket. They also assert it to be un-Islamic. This term "un-Islamic" like the word "un-Christian" has in recent years acquired a vast, all-comprehensive connotation. It has come to mean every thing that is wrong, bad or disagreeable. For instance, the other day, at the races, a horse while jumping over a hurdle toppled over, and a Muslim friend exclaimed how "unislamic." Now that is what I call a senseless use of a good word. Anyhow I, for one, fail to see what earthly connection there can be between religion or ethics and the modern political warfare.

I, of course, have no patience with such infantile lackadaisical sentimentalists, and when I tell them so, they turn round and ask me where is the deliverance? And deliverance from what? We want deliverance from poverty and from unemployment. It is true that the Congress governments could not deliver us from these two scourges, but then the Non-Congress governments have not either. In fact, no government except a truly democratic government, that is a government of the people, of the poor people themselves, can ever attempt to cure the evils from which they suffer. And assuming that it is a deliverance, then deliverance for how long? For those who have gone out by their own

free will, can again come in by their own free will. These insufferable sentimentalists also contend that this move has lost us the sympathies of all the fair-minded non-muslims. The fools, they lay store by sympathies which in recent years have lost so many nations their invaluable freedom.

Be that as it may, by this one false step, I fear you have lost much of the ground you had gained. I of course do not agree that this is going to be the Waterloo of your political career. I think the game is not altogether lost. The congress leaders, whatever they might say to the contrary, are sure to approach you again, for they believe that all they have now to do in order to obtain Sawraj, (they always look upon it as something to be obtained not to be won) is that they must make a pact with you. They are suffering from the chronic illusion that no sooner is such a pact made—which pact, by the way, may not be even as lasting or binding as the modern international treaties and agreements—and a joint demand is presented to the British Government, then the ripe rosy apple of Sawraj will drop into their laps.

This is, however, what they call higher politics, and a worker like me perhaps should not dabble in them. And in fact, I sat down to write this letter only with the object of telling you, my great Leader, how I and other workers like me have been affected by your sonorous hymn of communal hate. This, with your permission and with the indulgence of the kind editor, I will do in my next letter.

Yours admiringly
A MUSLIM WORKER

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CONGRESS AND THE LEFTISTS

By SWAMI SAHAJANAND SARASWATI

[We publish this illuminating and interesting letter of Swami Sahajanand Saraswati as it contains not only a comprehensive survey of the present Congress politics, but also his opinion regarding the duties of the Leftists in the crisis through which the country is passing today. Being a private letter, not originally intended for publication, it gives us an intimate glimpse of the present workings of the Kisan leader's mind.—Ed. F. B.]

Private

To INDULAL YAGNIK

Bihta

Patna, 7.11.39

Dear Comrade,

For the last fortnight or more, I have been feeling very acutely over the political problems and the future of the country, more particularly over the national struggle for freedom. Engaged as I have been for years with the work of the Left unity with much zeal and confidence, inspite of a rude and fatal shock I have received of late in this respect, the state of my mind has become peculiar and this has much to account for the recent acuteness of my feelings and attitude about the struggle and consequent salvation of the nation and especially of the toilers. Although finality in politics is an absurd thing and hence no opinion regarding it can be final, in particular one formed under the stress of events and shocks, yet I may say safely that the ideas expressed here are neither hasty nor formed under the mere stress of passing events. I have made it a rule that no hasty or premature conclusions and opinions should be arrived at. Therefore, these ideas are a result of continued thinking and mature deliberation for years together, the recent happenings only assisting in their concrete formation by bringing to an abrupt end that process of pondering and deliberation.

Fortunately or unfortunately, the idea has seized me that the Congress, constituted as it is today, will never give a serious fight to our masters and the so-called Left is so awfully divided and busy more with the theories of abstract politics and consequently of the resultant leadership of particular groups, that it never thinks in terms of a real struggle. Some of these groups are mortally afraid of being eclipsed by others. Really speaking, it is therefore in these circumstances incapable of thinking in terms of a struggle. It has not even begun to take any initiative. At every step, it seems, it is unduly and baselessly obsessed with the fear of the

Congress being weakened because of independent political initiative taken without the consent of the Congress. It has got, it looks, immense confidence in the present leadership of the Congress—in the present Congress. Accordingly, to some of the foremost leaders of this Left, at least some of the prominent leaders of the Congress are revolutionaries and anti-imperialists of the first rank. But to me it seems that herein lies the cause of their failure. Anyhow, I do not now agree with this analysis of our comrades of the Left. It cannot enter my mind, to be frank.

In the 'Harijan' of 28.10.39 Gandhiji says that unless we are compelled there is no necessity of civil resistance. "There need be none unless we are goaded into it by the authorities." Then again, in the same issue he says clearly, "There is no question of civil disobedience, for there is no atmosphere for it—at any rate, there is no question of civil disobedience in the aggressive sense as we launched in 1930 and 1932. We might have to offer it if all constructive work was made impossible, that is to say, if grave provocation was given by the government. I fear no such thing." Recent utterances of Nehru also are tuned to the same key; he says that the next step will be taken after mature consideration and therefore, he discountenances hasty action. The patient is at the point of death, but the experts are busy with the diagnosis work and mature consideration and mutual consultation. The Sardar said on the 5.11.39 at Ahmedabad that "The next move of the Congress would depend on the action of the government. The Congress would resist if its ordinary activities were interfered with. There was no intention on the part of the Congress to harass the British Government in its present plight. All that the Congress had done was to withhold cooperation." There is no sense in inter-

fering with the Congress's ordinary activities. Hence no fight.

Gandhiji admits, "though nothing is said in the resolution, the control and management of civil disobedience is left in my hands at the will of the Committee" (Harijan 28.10.29). "I have undertaken to guide the Working Committee" (Harijan 4.11.39). Then he says "I am in no hurry to precipitate civil disobedience." (Harijan 4.11.39). He and Rashtrapati both enjoin upon all Congressmen to give up the idea of embarrassing the government. "The Congress must not embarrass them (Government) in its (war's) prosecution. I do not desire anarchy in the country" he has written in the "Harijan" of 4.11.39 and the recent circular of the Rashtrapati has made it all the more clear. Gandhiji again says, "the offensive will have to be taken by the British Government." (4.11.39.) His latest ideas are to be found in the article under the caption 'The Congressmen', wherein he says clearly, 'strange as it may appear to Congressmen, I make bold to suggest that the one way to disarm communal suspicion is not to offer civil disobedience in terms of Swaraj. The position that the country is about to face is that the British Government in alliance with the so-called minorities are arrayed against the Congress single-handed. Civil disobedience against this combination is a contradiction in terms. It would not be even civil war, it would be criminal war.' Lastly he says "I cannot identify with any civil disobedience unless I am convinced that Congressmen believe in non-violence with all its implications." (4.11.39.) And those implications are to be found in forms of charkha, Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability. He also repeats his old idea in the latest article, 'The Congressmen' in these words, "the cause that accounts for the weakness within the Congress ranks is also the cause that

accounts for the Congress failure to draw all communities to its rank. That cause is an absence of a living faith in non-violence in thought, word and deed."

These conditions are simply impossible of fulfilment. Hence satyagraha under the Gandhian leadership and therefore, that of the Congress High Command is unthinkable, and unless entire India consists of only saints or miniature Gandhis, even a talk of the struggle under the present leadership is futile. The British Government is not so foolish to stop all activities of the Congress regarding charkha, etc. It does not matter even if some of these are stopped by the government, as Gandhiji says. He might have to offer it *if all constructive work was made impossible.*" It may well be prophesied that that eventuality will never arise. Then again some are at a loss to understand the consistency of the positions taken up by Gandhiji. According to him, there is no atmosphere for civil disobedience now and for this there are lots of reasons. But the moment the government goads him into it he promises to start it, it seems. Suppose the government stops all constructive activities. Then he will start a struggle. But now? All those reasons making satyagraha impossible at present will not surely disappear all at once simply because the government goads us into it. So the position of Gandhiji is a dilemma for those who expect some serious fight from or rather through him. But for me, it is nothing of the kind. I believe that in no case he is for a serious fight. Nay, while returning from Delhi on 5.11.39 he at Nagpur went so far as to declare, "I will resist civil disobedience unless I find the country prepared for it".

Then again he and Rashtrapati both order us to obey the prohibitory orders issued anywhere by the government against Congressmen engaged even in normal activities and further we should not criticise the British Government. Is this the way even to prepare the country for a struggle worth the name? We cannot fight even for the civil liberties! At Bombay one could offer satyagraha with the permission of the P. C. C. Now that right too, has been in a way snatched away.

I am amazed to read Gandhiji's arguments in the "Harijan" of 28.10.39 regarding communal unity and his conclu-

sion that unity had been achieved before. He easily forgets that it was not so because we made that unity part of our constructive programme and also expected to achieve that. It was simply because of the Khilafat peril that the Muslim world had been moved to its depths and that very factor forced both the communities to unite for the time being. But nothing of the kind is to be found today. Rather our rulers have learnt from that foolishness of theirs and they will never commit such a blunder again.

Now judging strictly from the Leftist point of view, I cannot resist the conclusion that Gandhiji, as the sole leader of the fight, considers all the Leftist organisations as so many evils in the Congress, as they do not subscribe to his peculiar idea of non-violence in thought, word and deed. In the article 'The Congressman' after referring to these Leftist groups in detail he puts some ironical queries regarding their character etc. and opines, "I am afraid that these groups contain in themselves the seeds of the decay of the Congress." Not only this. In the "Harijan" of the 28.10.39 under the caption 'Causes' he criticises the form of non-violence accepted in particular by the Leftists and says, "whilst we have fairly observed physical non-violence, our breasts have harboured violence, hence, our non-violence in respect of the government is a result of incapacity for effective violence." It is a well known fact that the Congress has always accepted non-violence as its policy and not as its creed and it means clearly the only possible thing on a mass basis—physical non-violence. But Gandhiji is not satisfied now with this. Hence this criticism. Therefore, so far as the Leftists are concerned, they cannot and should not expect any fight worthy of the cause under the leadership of Gandhiji and therefore of the Congress High Command, as they are incapable of thinking in terms of any such fight if Gandhiji is not ready to lead.

The Left can do it no doubt, but only if it is united and if there is a united command for the struggle if and when started by it. But my experience tells me clearly that this unity and united command is simply an impossibility. There had been some hope of it in the L. C. C. which was brought into being

inspite of some of the Left leaders and with the forced and really speaking, unwilling cooperation of some others, but which did never actually function or rather was not allowed to function because of these very peculiar circumstances it was born under. Therefore, these latter leaders will be glad or in any case, will not feel sorry if it dies its natural death. At least, this is my conviction and I am free to arrive at it. It is after a painful but protracted experience that I have come to this final conclusion and it is almost impossible to revise it. I am not going to apportion the blame for it just now, for various reasons, but the time will demonstrate without doubt as to who are to blame. Hence so far as I am concerned, this L. C. C. is a thing solely of the past. Therefore, fight under the leadership of the Left is an impossibility, at least at present. Here I am forcibly reminded of one thing. While reading the life of the revolutionaries of early this century in Bengal and elsewhere, I found it said repeatedly that there were scores of groups of these who could not unite to make joint and concerted action possible and this exposed every one of them to greater dangers. Oft-repeated reason for it is that owing to egoism of their leaders and their fear lest their leadership would vanish, they were in no mood to combine and come together. I cannot say whether the history is repeating itself. But Gandhiji perhaps thought in some such terms while putting questions like the following, "Are they not bidding for power? Do they not distrust one another"—in the article 'The Congressmen'.

There is one more point worth mention here. The leadership of political struggle based on religious and moral codes is most risky and must be avoided, if possible, at all costs, or it will spell disaster at every step. Gandhian leadership being of this type is fraught with dangers. His test of a successful fight or otherwise as also the process of the same and the conduct of its soldiers are curious and out-of-date, have in common eyes no bearing on the subject and are beyond the reach of common people and at times even of himself and he is apt to cry halt at any stage of the fight even just before the decisive stage, thus spoiling the whole game. It is a well known fact that he is out for a compromise with the British Imperialism and he is an incorrigible optimist in this

respect. He feelingly writes "I had nursed the hope that there would be an honourable peace and partnership between Britain and India." 28.10.30. As he realises clearly that we cannot do without him, he is demanding blind obedience to his ideas of non-violence etc. as a prerequisite to his lead being assured and for this he must have his pound of flesh which is an impossibility, pure and simple. As a shrewd politician he visualises the future of struggle if once started and he is not a fool to forget easily the experiences of 1932 when the fight almost totally passed into the hands of masses or those linked more with them and hence went underground which is always the ultimate fate of every struggle for effective political power for the masses. Unlike 1932, this time the masses are far more awakened, restive, desperate, resentful and apt to throw themselves in the fight no sooner than it is launched. Because of the threatened repression of the severest type, the fight this time is destined to go instantaneously underground, carrying with it totally its leadership from the hand of the present stalwarts of the Congress to the toiling masses and their actual leaders, as the mass-organs for fight are comparatively well developed now. And our Gandhian leaders will be the last to invite this risk with their eyes wide open. But it is bound to occur if and when they take any serious forward step and this is the real key to their over-emphasis on curious non-violence, rigid discipline and perilous caution. This is the true and inner meaning of the disciplinary action taken against some of the foremost Leftist leaders just on the eve of threatened and much talked of struggle, with no idea perhaps of taking them back formally even if the fight is actually started. For a successful compromise with imperialism the ground must be prepared and paved by our leaders and there must be some positive proof coming from them that they can rule and are out to rule with iron hands and in so doing they are ready to purge the Congress of the so-called undesirables even at the risk of being misunderstood, because of the critical stage of the fight ahead. That is why they are busy giving proof of their holy zeal for the victory of the Allies, in the War, in spite of the most shocking national insults being heaped upon them one after the other. Imperialism requires simply to

be convinced that the Congress leaders will neither yield to the Left pressure nor will they retire from politics before their furious onslaught. But rather they will rule with iron rods. This was the sum and substance of the speech of the leader of the European group in the Assembly last year at Calcutta. I am driven to this interpretation of the disciplinary action because of the remarks of the *Statesman* sometime in the middle of September last after the disciplinary action by the Behar P. C. C. that the Kisan Sabha of Swami Sahajanand had been condemned at Wardha. What relation has Wardha with the decision of Patna, if it is not interpreted in the way mentioned above?

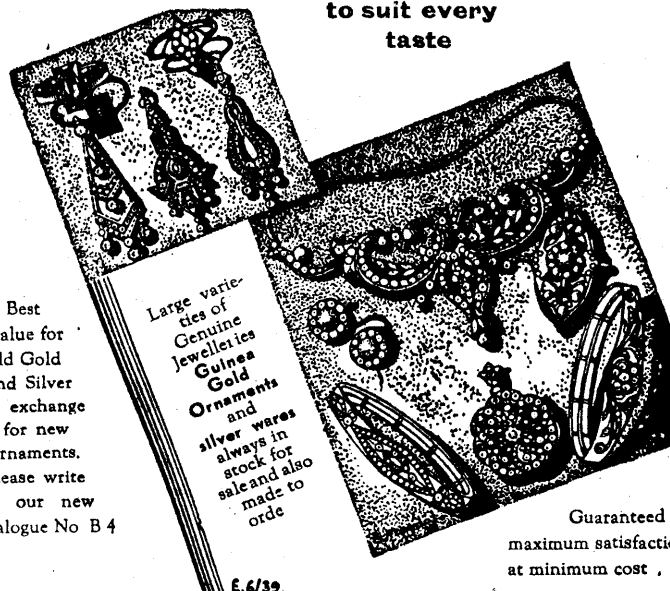
On the one side, it is repeated *ad nauseum* that the country is not prepared for fight; on the other hand, there is no effort to prepare it. Rather there is hankering everywhere for loaves and fishes and membership of boards and legislatures and jobs under the government and semi-government departments as also in various firms, mills, companies etc. These, it seems, have become the *summum bonum* of lives of almost all the

active Congressmen. There is a mad race for these and this is the *raison detre* for the all-round corruption in the Congress organisation, as all these job-hunters combine always first of all to capture the Congress machinery as a sure passport to these jobs and positions. These are surely not the signs of a revolutionary fighting organisation which means business and it is inconceivable that Gandhiji or for the matter of that, our leaders do not know it all. Rather the assertion, that they or most of them directly or indirectly are themselves involved in these devices and jobberies, is not, if at all, far removed from the truth. Even during these critical days all these things are going on uninterrupted and Congressmen are trying seriously to ignore the crisis. There is no direction for any serious work, it appears, from the Centre. Hence barring the U. P. nowhere else even the ordinary routine work of the Congress has generally been disturbed. It is a hard fact nonetheless. Although the ministries have resigned, there is universal mourning, every where. These are known to our masters. Hence the

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tall talks of our leaders cannot deceive them and they feel secure because of their sure knowledge of the terrible weakness in our body politic which they have seen through quite well.

In the circumstances, I am constrained to admit that the time has arrived when every revolutionary and real and tried servant of the toilers and the producing masses should think seriously whether the national Congress, as it is today, is worth his remaining in or whether we should not retire from it. He should ponder over the fact again and again whether he is not in a way wasting his time by not seceding from it in order to devote his entire time and energy in the serious class work and organisation of the masses. I had been feeling for a long time that remaining in the Congress with all its implications and serious work among the masses on class basis both ill go together and now I am convinced of it. Along with it arises the question whether any serious and effective mass work is even possible through the active politicians and the workers attached to them. Now I am definitely of the opinion that any serious work to prepare the classes and the masses for the capture of real political power is simply beyond the capacity of these active politicians. It is only those who, enough well-versed in the upto-date politics, are actually aloof from it, that can perform this uphill task with the help of well-tried bands of such workers whose mind and heart are only in this work and who mean business. It is our duty to prepare such bands. We must be ready to give up the current trend of politics if we are to achieve it. The journey is an unusually long and tiresome one and we must prepare for it. There is no *via media*. All talks of fight must be given up for the time being and no blunder of involving or even thinking to involve in it the class organisations of the toilers must ever be committed, at least for sometime.

Of course it does not imply that we must remain averse to the fight if and when it is launched. Far from it. What I in fact mean is that such a fight is impossible in the present circumstances, howsoever we may burn for it and however ready we may be to plunge headlong into it at the first possible moment of its inception. And if it is thought that unforeseen things may happen sometimes and the Congress may be goaded into fight,

even then it is sure that that fight is bound to be merely one in name and not worth the name, in view of the existing background of it. An unwilling nation represented by an unwilling organisation is not capable of giving a serious fight simply because its unwilling leaders are goaded into it. It is given no doubt as a result of the inner urge and longing of an impatient nation, and such an organisation and its leadership are sadly, albeit unfortunately wanting just now. Such a fight is never superimposed, but is always self-urged and that urge is simply lacking. Gandhiji can never be expected to bid the go-by to his life-long ideas and principles simply for this goading and the callous contempt with which the Congress ministers, even on the eve of their forced resignations, dismissed the idea of setting free thousands of the Kisan and labour prisoners, and under-trials, is an excellent commentary on the fighting mentality of our leaders and it also lends colour to my interpretation of the disciplinary action.

History does not produce a solitary example of the survival of a revolutionary party after its office acceptance before the capture of the real political power and surely the Congress cannot be an exception to it. The argument that our withdrawal from the Congress will rather expedite the attempt for compromise on the part of the leadership, rises simply because we are inapt, excuse me, to take a detached view. Outside the Congress we are bound to be a problem for all concerned. Rather remaining inside it and being hunted out gradually, we unconsciously help that process of surrender. Divided allegiance will not do now and our affiliation to both the national and the class organisation will be nothing but almost nominal with the latter. This must be avoided if we mean and mind our business.

You will please excuse me for my frank and free expression of opinion. I request you only to carefully consider it before coming to any conclusion.

Just out ! *Just out !!*

A Prisoner

= মুখর বন্দী =

BY

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Determinism ?

In his eternal quest after knowledge man has made sortie after sortie to break into the inner workings of nature. When he believed he had carried the last fortress in her frontier, a stronger fortress took him by surprise from out of the deep, as it were. He has observed natural phenomena, guessed the hidden meaning thereof, and approached nature again for her approval to this meaning. In this way picking up a word here and syllable there throughout the centuries man has tried to retell, as it were, the whole story of nature. But nature in her richness and profundity never fails to bring out yet other characters, which must again be accommodated in order to give this great story any real meaning.

In his chase after this baffling mystery man has often been constrained to hurl very bitter questions at 'poor' nature : Is nature consistent at all ? Has she really any story scrolled in her bosom to unfold to us ? Or, is she an everchanging creature having no preconceived pattern of her own ?...

Man in his impatience with dumb nature has passed many irresponsible remarks and has often, in his vanity, posed to have found the end of it all ! But, again, in a fresh reading of the irresistible charms of ever persistent nature, so revealing while she yet seems to conceal, man found enough attraction and strength to start anew his unquenchable searching — inner as well as external.

Towards a solution of the great problem, *Determinism* or *Indeterminism*, physical world has but a few lively hints to the structure of the systematic thought of man.

Physical science proposed to confine its investigations within the bounds of the 'observable' external world.

(1) To observe phenomena ; (2) to classify them according to the empirical laws governing them ; and finally, (3) to unify them all in a single theory or world-view (*Weltauschaung*) are in short the moot points of the physicists of all times.

Leaving aside the less palpable and not the least important stages of development of physical science we would rather reckon with its outstanding landmarks for the present.

Happy centuries of 'childhood' of 'Mechanics' in the cradles of Ptolemy and Copernicus gave way to 'adolescence' at the hand of exacting Galileo, which, in turn, terminated abruptly, at beaming 'youth' at the hand of the greatest of 'Empire-builders', Newton. Fostered by Newton, 'mechanics' rose, from a hesitant little arbiter in the impacts of small particles and their motions at snail's pace, as it were, to be the absolute monarch over the whole of the physical universe governing the farthest, the largest, or the swiftest of the heavenly bodies and beyond, as well as the tiniest particle of sand in its immediate vicinity and within, in terms of the letter of its law.

Mortal Newton passed away leaving behind a very sharp weapon of the 'calculus' in the hands of 'Inertia' and 'gravitation' to uphold the dignity of his immutable *Laus-of-motion*.

By JYOTISH JOARDAR

In the empire of Mechanics, General 'Inertia' and General 'Gravitation' refused to countenance any program ; and revolts would be ruthlessly suppressed. Laplace called-in a 'Demon' to take a census of all beings of the physical Universe so that none may escape the eye of the Law and its supreme direction. He believed : every effect must have its cause pre-determined by the dispositions of Mechanics ; there can be no loose tongue of freedom or sweet will assignable to any 'subject' however great. But the seed of revolt was not long in being sown. 'Sound', 'Heat', 'Light' had each found it too hard to be denied even a semblance of a regional independence and each fought for freedom ; and had all in turn had to surrender to the sovereignty of Mechanics. But "Light" though silenced temporarily with the device of a 'corpuscular theory' proved refractory again. Huygen's 'wave theory' of Light got the better of the corpuscular theory. The phenomena of interference and defraction, though logical consequences of the former, prove irreconcilable to the latter theory. And this was only the beginning of the trouble in the reign of 'Mechanics.' Electricity and

Magnetism ushered in a system of mysterious forces into play, unusual to the realm of Mechanics. Here 'action-at-a-distance' repels things without impact as easily as attracts them unlike 'gravity' which acts only one way.

Without recalling the night-mares of the mad architects of 'Mechanics' to carve enough rooms for their little out-laws it may be said that their sands had been running very quick at that time. The atomic character of matter as envisaged by the laws of chemical combinations etc., and the atomicity of the electricity had been warning : Horatio, there are more things in Heaven and Earth than are reported in your newspaper.

Maxwell's 'electromagnetic theory' of Light sounded the death-knell of the paramountcy of mechanics. Under its shadow visible light, by degrees, happened to be only a portion of the Electromagnetic Radiation-range with 'Heat' and Radio-waves on the side of the longer waves and ultra-violet rays, x-rays, α -, β -, γ -rays, etc., on the

side of the shorter wave-lengths. With the discovery of electrical structure of matter, Mechanics had to be relegated to a back seat and Electricity came to reign over the physical world.

The Viennese physicist, Boltzmann, in the words of Faust, hailed the mathematical equations of the Electro-magnetic theory :

Was it a God these characters designed
The tumult in my bosom stilling
And my poor heart with gladness filling,
With mystic impulse of the mind
The powers of nature all around revealing ?

Mechanics surrendered its priority to Electricity ; but its doctrine of *Determinism* got ample accommodation in the condescending vanity of the new successor. And so the breaking point was yet to come.

In its march from the macroscopic to the microscopic field human ingenuity devised a host of delicate appliances to defy man's limits of perception. These appliances opened a world of phenomena hither-to undreamt of by the physicist ; and did more : Their greater penetrability into the depths of the secrets of nature moved hand-in-hand with a caustic

'Fault-finder'. At the hand of *Spectroscopy* many dark recesses of the atomic structure were illumined, but many anomalies and discrepancies were also revealed, which stood in the way of the 'atom-model' of Rutherford and Bohr, based on the revolving of negative electrons round heavy nucleus of positive electric charge. Almost all the anomalies in the formation of the spectral lines of different atoms, especially the fine structure of the 'Hydrogen lines', could be satisfactorily accounted for by a new theory, revolutionary in character.

When the great experimenters like Michelson and Morley had been striving feverishly to devise instruments delicate enough to fathom the depths of 'ether', the hypothetical medium of light disturbance, Einstein called a halt to their mad march and induced the physicists to accept the *fait accompli* — the Theory of Relativity, special (1905) and general (1915). Discrepancies in the motions of heavenly bodies irreconcilable to the Newtonian mechanics which had for a time been ascribed to the error of observation became all the more puzzling at the advent of the highly sensitive instruments of modern physics. Here too 'Relativity' comes to the rescue. Most of its postulates and predictions have been verified by experiments; and the few left behind are also expecting verification.

It may now be followed with interest how many concrete blocks have been sapped away from beneath the mechanical superstructure of the physical world by the artisan of Relativity, who refuses to countenance the determination of the absolute character of Time and Space. In his opinion, when the sands of an 'Inertial System' have run their course for a thousand million years, the time for another may not yet have begun — this makes the 'Heat-Death' of the physical Universe in conformity with the second Law of thermodynamics almost meaningless. Finite and unbound space of Relativity has replaced the 'illusive' infinite space of the Newtonian school.

Einstein's theory of Relativity dispensed with the familiar notions of absolute static space and the uniform flow of absolute time — the prop and pillar of classical physics. Newtonian mechanics proved to be only a gross approximation to the Relativity mechanics. Newtonian mechanics answered the requirements of the

gross macroscopic world; but it could not stand the finer analysis of the microscopic world. Gravitation was set down by Relativity as a myth. Differentiation between matter and energy became only apparent. Conservation of Mass + Energy takes the place of conservation of Mass and Energy considered separately. The idea of infinite velocity was replaced by an ultimate velocity i.e., the velocity of Light. Space and Time lost their individual meaning. Only a Space-Time *continuum* carried any sense. The three-dimensional space and one-dimensional time have been blended together to form the four-dimensional manifold of the physical world.

According to 'Relativity theory' mass of a body in motion increases with velocity. For ordinary velocities (say, for 1000 miles per hour even) the 'mass-effect' remains, though calculable mathematically, inappreciable for ordinary purposes but from above 30,000 kilometres per second, it becomes increasingly palpable in so far as at the neighbourhood of the velocity of light the mass increases 100,000 fold and more. At the velocity of Light proper it would be infinite, and that is why nothing would ever reach that stage. Happily, entities moving with such tremendous velocities, e.g., α , β , γ -rays are at present commanded by the resources of the physical laboratory. And these all go to agree with the stipulations of the theory of Relativity uniquely. In Relativity, simultaneity of 'occurrences' separated by space and time have only a relative meaning — a particular motion holding good for a particular 'Inertial System' alone. As a consequence, physical phenomena and 'Events', localised in Space and Time, have lost much of their persistence of meaning.

As Weyl puts it, 'events', of the physical world, 'do not happen; we simply come across them.' Or, as Plato puts it twenty three centuries earlier in the *Timaeus* :

'The past and future are created species of time which we unconsciously but wrongly transfer to the eternal essence. We say 'was' 'is' 'will be,' but the truth is that 'is' can alone be properly used.'

All our much-boasted determinations are thus no more meaningful than a drunken man comprehending a devil's dance in the public street, and his dropping into a real drain while trying to avoid the 'two other drains,' which he, in the extravagance of

his deranged brain finds by the two sides of the real one.

If, now, in course of the winding of our story so far we at times feel a bit uncanny about the 'unassailable' records of our scientific instruments of observation, the shipwreck is awaiting us from yet another direction. It was from 'Quantum-mechanics' or 'Wave-mechanics' of Debroglie, Schrodinger and others after the Quantum theory of Max Planck, that the fatal blow came.

The Quantum theory stipulates that energy can be communicated between bodies only in discrete 'quanta' (6.55×10^{-27} ergs per second) usually denoted by the letter 'h'. Discontinuous and not continuous-transference of energy between bodies is the order of the nature. Radiation of frequency, η (say), can never appear short of Energy, ($h\eta$). Depending on the intensity of the radiation, it may be $h\eta$, $2h\eta$, $3h\eta$, and so on, but never a fractional multiple of the above. The fundamental difference between a radiation and another is of frequency (or wave-length) alone; or, rather of discrete units of energy (e.g., $h\eta_1$, $h\eta_2$, $h\eta_3$, etc.). This distribution in frequency and energy determines the colour of the light. Intensity of Radiation is a mere effect of crowding of the same colour or a group of colours, and as such not so fundamental as the colour itself. As an immediate consequence of the Quantum theory, the orbits of the outer electrons of an atom are quantised (i.e., they must occupy one or the other of a selected set of orbits out of all geometrically possible orbits in the space round the nucleus of the atom). The quantised orbits are rather levels of energy which are integral multiples of the quantum of energy — the outer the orbit the more energetic should be the electron to remain in circulation there. The electron radiates or absorbs the requisite amount of energy as it moves down or up from certain level to the other. Like quantised transference of energy the movement between orbits is also sudden. The electron may move round and round the same stationary orbit for all time to come without radiating or absorbing energy; but any step outside this orbit must conform strictly to the quantum of action. According to the Quantum theory, energy-transference of all types — mechanical, electric, optical, thermal etc. — is governed by this law uniquely in the microscopic world.

(To be Continued)

BOOK REVIEWS

The Smaller Democracies. By Sir. E. D. Simon. Victor Gollancz Ltd., London. 6s.

The books in English on the politics of the Scandinavian countries are most in adequate and the author has rendered an immense service by giving a fair description of the social and political conditions of these smaller nations, which are gradually gaining importance today. The social and political history of Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland would surely help us to a great extent in finding out the clues to the intricacies of European politics.

The historical studies are on the whole fair. The author is a liberal democrat and so he finds a glorious achievement of democracy in some fascinating aspects of Swiss Government, in the house and town planning of Stockholm, in the co-operative common wealth of Denmark and in Finland's democracy in the making. Undoubtedly there are causes to speak highly of these smaller nations, specially in social sphere, and they can really challenge the Bigger Democracies of Europe in their social-democratic achievements. But some glaring defects of the political systems prevalent in these countries have escaped the eye of the author. They have not exactly escaped his eye, but he has misinterpreted the facts he has so laboriously gathered.

The democratic standpoint taken in the book is wrong and vitiated with the author's liberalism. Nevertheless, the intelligent readers can find a really valuable wealth of informations here, which can well serve their purpose by careful pruning and pasting here and there.

The National Front, 64E, Girgaon Bombay. Annual subscription Rs 4/-

The *National Front* had to retire to Allahabad almost immediately after the war ordinances came. It has had there an irregular but vigorous life. It is, therefore, a pleasure to find that the *National Front* is back to Bombay and has renewed its old regular existence. The weekly has commended itself to the political public with its able, well informed and vigorous campaign on behalf of socialism and Indian national independence. Its "Poland number" offers perhaps the best material for a study

of the Polish problem *vis-a-vis* the Soviet occupation of Poland. We congratulate the National Front on its success and useful career.

BENGALI.

Antahsila, Abarta—By Dhurjati Prosad Mukhopadhyay Bharati Bhawan. Price Rs. 2 each. 11, College Square, Calcutta.

Not love, nor lust, but a keen desire for self-fulfillment is the central theme of these two novels, or rather one novel in two parts. The hero chooses the guidance of reason, innocent of its limitation. Experiences gather; ideals based on reason clash with the realities of life and the hero shrinks into himself. But there is no escape. Human nature asserts itself; it comes up against a social environment, uncongenial to its efflorescence. The

hero's life is in a whirl, so also his consciousness.

There are very few psychological novels in Bengali and these two are undoubtedly a notable contribution to our literature. The characters have been tackled in these books with the skill of a master artist, acting and reacting in accordance with the urge of the circumstances. Dhurjatiprosad has ably shown that arid intellectualism can artistically be softened with the magic touch of Aesthetics. Khagen Babu, Ramala Devi, Sujan and other characters in the books are really unique creations and they will occupy a definite place in our literary hierarchy. The books can legitimately claim the attention of our reader.

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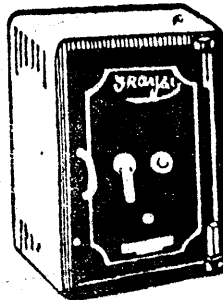
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FORWARD BLOC NEWS

U. P. PROVINCIAL FORWARD BLOC

Important Resolutions at Working Committee Meeting.

At a recent meeting of the Working Committee of the U. P. Provincial Forward Bloc held at Lucknow under the Presidentship of Pandit Jata Sankar Shukla, M. L. A., a number of very important resolutions were passed. In one resolution the Committee sent their hearty congratulations to Com. Bishambhar Dayal Tripathy, President U. P. Forward Bloc, comrades Manmatba Nath Gupta, Jata Shankar Shukla, M. L. A., and Ramdulari Trivedi, Members of the Executive Committee U. P. Forward Bloc and several other prominent Congress as well as Kisan and Labour Workers of the province on their arrest and incarceration. The Committee also deplored the Congress Working Committee's apathy to leading a struggle and entered an emphatic protest against the writings and utterances of responsible Congress leaders interpreting Complete Independence Goal of the Congress to mean Dominion Status.

Another resolution enjoined on the members to take steps to make the Independence Day Celebrations as militant as possible and declared that it was incumbent on all Congressmen to raise their loud voice for the slogan of immediate struggle. Another resolution called upon Congressmen and Forward Bloc members to be enrolled in as large numbers as possible and to start central camps for them. The Committee protested against the obligatory Charkha clause of the revised Independence Pledge. In view of the incarceration of S. Bishambhar Dayal Tripathy, President of the U. P. Forward Bloc, S. Jata Sankar Shukla, M. L. A. was appointed the Acting President. The following members were co-opted as members of the Executive committee:— (1) S. Ramgati Ganguly, Benares (2) Bal Gangadhar Tripathy, Unao (3) Surendra Das Balupuri, Lucknow. The Committee has also deplored the sanctioning of country-wide Congress Elections as it is a step bound to affect adversely the maintenance of a fighting atmosphere, so essential in the Congress at this juncture.

ANDHRA FORWARD BLOC Provincial Committee Formed

A meeting of the representatives of the Forward Bloc from all the Districts in Andhra Desa was held in the Forward Bloc Office at Bezwada on the 2nd January last.

Mr. M. Annapurnayya, member, All India Forward Bloc Working Committee, explained the decisions of the Forward Bloc Working Committee and exhorted the members to get ready for an intensive National Struggle in the immediate future.

Representatives from the different districts presented reports of the activities of the Bloc which were generally considered to be satisfactory.

Mr. M. Annapurnayya was elected President, and Messrs. P. Bapayya, and D. S. Vallabha Rao as Secretaries unanimously and a strong and representative Executive Committee consisting of 19 members was elected. A National Struggle Committee of 5 members was also formed.

THE ANDHRA LEFTIST CONFERENCE Province Ready for Marching Orders.

A Conference of the Leftists in Andhra Desa, organised by the Andhra Forward Bloc was held yesterday at Bezwada under the presidentship of Prof. N. G. Ranga, M. L. A., (Central). Members of the Forward Bloc, Socialists, and Kisan Sabhites numbering about a hundred were present.

Mr. M. Annapurnayya explained the objective of the conference and pleaded for unity in the ranks of the Leftists.

The President spoke on the present situation and made a passionate plea for working out on an agreed basis.

The Socialists were represented by Mr. Alluri Satyanarayana and C. Rajeswara Rao and others and Mr. D. S. Vallabha Rao and Mr. Annapurnayya spoke on behalf of the Forward Bloc.

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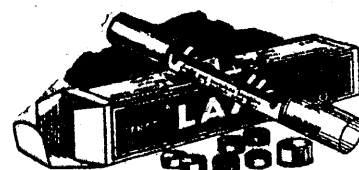
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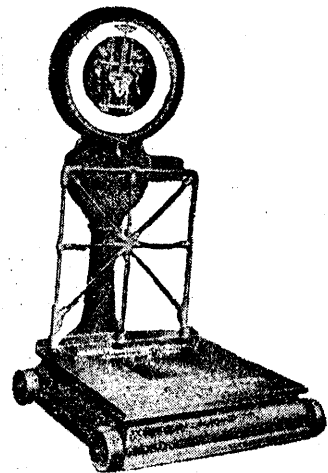
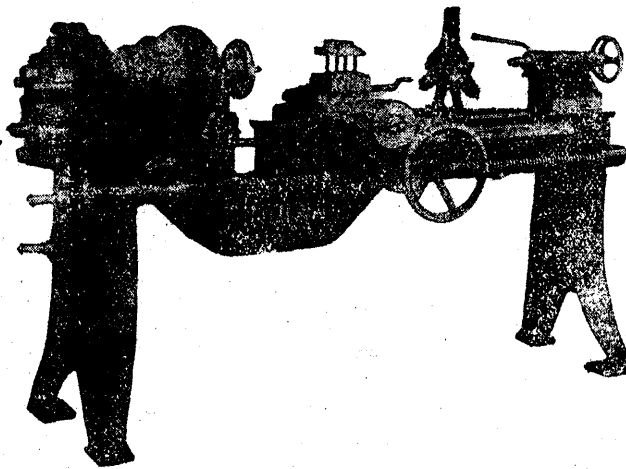
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