

The Changes in the Egyptian Government.

By J. B. (Jerusalem).

The ten months of the government of Adly Pasha, which came into office in June 1926 as a result of the compromise between the Zaglulist majority in the Egyptian parliament and the British government, has not brought any benefit to Egypt. In the sphere of politics, not one of the questions vitally important for Egypt — evacuation of the British troops, union of Egypt with the Sudan, abolition of the capitulations — have been solved or brought nearer to a solution. In the economic sphere, the outbreak of the cotton crisis led to the impoverishment of broad sections of the population; and the government did not succeed in doing anything to reduce the high food prices. On the other hand there were a great number of inner political difficulties; disturbances in the religious university of El-Ashad, labour conflicts and unsuccessful attempts to carry out reforms.

The government was in a constant state of embarrassment: Parliament with its Zaglulist majority, which in general is much more radically inclined than the leaders of the Party, and in particular of those moderate elements who were sent as representatives of the party into the Adly Ministry, insisted in every question on definite decisions, and overwhelmed Adly and his Ministers with awkward questions, which the government in most cases answered evasively or were unable to answer at all. The reason for this humiliating position of the government is that the independence of Egypt is, in the last resort, only a fiction. Without the sanction of the British no Minister is able to carry out any measure. While, however, Adly Pasha and also the Zaglulists in his Cabinet always tacitly yielded to the desires of the British, the parliamentary deputies would hear nothing of this.

Conflicts between Parliament and the government became more and more frequent: The question of the discharge of British officials, which parliament demanded to be carried out thoroughly while the government, responding to British pressure, sabotaged; the question of the British Supreme Command in the Egyptian army, on the liquidation of which parliament insisted; the constitutional problem, whether local authorities shall be elected or appointed (Parliament demanded that they be elected, while the British adviser insisted on the retention of the system of appointment) — all these provided material for conflict which rendered the position of the government impossible.

Finally, it came about that the constant intervention of Parliament hindered the government in its work. The Liberal Constitutional Party, whose programme demanded that co-operation with Great Britain which the Prime Minister Adly Pasha carried out, wished to show the Zaglulists that they are

not to be regarded as a mere facade of the Cabinet, behind which the Zaglulists could proceed with their attacks in order to preserve their popularity as friends of the people and consistent nationalists, but that they are just as indispensable to the Zaglulists as the Zaglulists are to them.

Precisely at the moment when the British and a portion of the Egyptian press again published news regarding direct negotiations between **Zagful Pasha** and the representative of **Chamberlain** (the result of which would be to render the mediation of the Liberal Constitutionalists superfluous), and when the Zaglulist majority in Parliament again undertook an attack in order, if possible, to bring into power a purely Zaglulist government, **Adly Pasha** made a clever manoeuvre in order to render possible the resignation of the entire Cabinet: he used as a pretext the chance rejection of a vote of thanks to the government on the occasion of a financial transaction.

The fact that this action of **Adly Pasha** precipitated the crisis clearly shows that a Ministry formed by Zaglul or consisting only of Zaglulists would meet with just as much opposition on the part of the British as it would have ten months ago. There remained only the choice; open conflict with Great Britain, which would have immediately led to the dissolution of Parliament and to a new period of an "unconstitutional" Ministry (the "**Ittehad**" Party is only waiting for a "favourable moment" in order, with the aid of the British and of the king, to come to power again), or fresh compromise, acceptance of persons agreeable to the British.

Although the **Nationalist Party** and some radical **Wafd** organs recommended an open conflict (there were even hints that in view of the China adventure it would not be possible for the British Foreign Office to proceede drastically against Egypt), **Zagful Pasha**, with whom this time also the decision lay, again decided on a compromise: **Adly Pasha** was thrown overboard and his place taken by **Sarvat Pasha**, who was hitherto Foreign Minister in the **Adly Cabinet** and is even more closely connected with the British. In addition to this the Zaglulists had to give up the two most important posts in the Ministry, which were the cause of frequent conflicts with the British advisers on the one side and Parliament on the other, namely the Finance Ministry and the War Ministry, to Liberal Constitutional candidates. As a result the Liberal Constitutional Party, even though numerically unchanged, emerges politically strengthened out of this Cabinet crisis. The only compensation the Zaglulists received was the office of **Foreign Minister**, which is to render it possible for them to continue direct negotiations with Great Britain.

The changes in the Cabinet do not in any way alter the main problems of Egypt. The Cabinet was received very coldly by Parliament, and the vote of confidence was granted with considerable reluctance. It is clearly perceived that it is only a question of a temporary solution in order to give **Zagful Pasha** the opportunity of arriving at an agreement with England. Should **Zagful Pasha**, in view of the obdurate line of British policy, not succeed in this, then the government of **Sarvat Pasha** will result in a considerable strengthening of the forces of the Left wing of the Zaglul Party which are in favour of the Anglo-Egyptian differences, which are continually concealed and glossed over, being fought out in the open.