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ance of the practice of financing public utility enterprises out of the State coffers. This is undoubtedly true, but the Fascisti are convinced that this effect will be purely a temporary one, and that the general effect of their reforms will be to put the finance and industry of the country on a sound basis, giving such an impulse to industry that in a comparatively short

time all the people who are temporarily thrown out of employment will find useful and remunerative work.

The whole set of reforms the Fascisti advocate are nothing more than an experiment. They may be successful, but they may also fail; and on the success or failure of the reforms depends also the success or failure of the Fascista Party.

BENITO MUSSOLINI—ITALY'S MAN OF DESTINY

By LOUIS D. KORNFIELD

The personality and career of Italy's new Premier—A Socialist and Revolutionist hissed out of the Socialist Party because of his advocacy of Italy's entering the war, he became Revolution's bitterest foe—Why and how he formed his Fascist army, which swept him into power overnight

ITALY has entered upon a new era of its history: the era of Gabriele d'Annunzio in spirit and Benito Mussolini in body. In their revolutionary clamor and seizure of power the Fascisti promised many miracles, most of which, being miracles, will never be achieved. But one or two miracles they already have to their credit. By whatever methods, legal or illegal, it may have been brought about, in Italy today there is order and peace, and in Rome there is a Government of force, discipline and action, dominated by a man whose exalted conception of Italy's destiny renders him a new and not easily resolvable factor in the tangle of European problems.

Benito Mussolini, now virtually Dictator in Italy, is not yet 40. He is a man of powerful physique, half bald, with thick, sullen lips, with eyes downcast, yet grimly observant. His is a face of rude, brooding strength, the face of a man brooding over a great cause or a great ambition; a martyr or a tyrant, a Gracchus or a Caligula. He belongs more to the Rome of the Caesars than to the Rome of the Giolittis. One can imagine him in toga, a Roman consul

who harangues the forum one day and plots a skillful conspiracy the next; always irrepressibly and shrewdly busy. He can be the salvation of Italy or its ruin. However the die may fall, whatever he does will be done on a magnificent scale; in action there is nothing self-conscious or trivial about him. "Either they give us the Government," he cried to the Fascisti at Naples on Oct. 24, "or else we fall upon Rome and take it!" They fell upon Rome and took it.

Mussolini appeared before the King to accept the surrender of the Government, the lower half of him clad in the tailored trousers and spats of a boulevardier and the upper half in the black shirt of a Fascista combatant, with a revolver on the hip. His declaration to the King was brief and epigrammatic: "I beg your Majesty's pardon for coming before you still wearing a black shirt; I've just returned from a battle, fortunately bloodless, which had to be fought. I bring you the Italy of victorious Veneto, consecrated in a new victory, and I am your faithful servant."

The history of Mussolini's sensational rise to power reveals a man who had the courage of his ever-changing convictions. He embarked as a Marxian Socialist, an apostle of revolution, his sails filled with the wind of proletariat doctrine. He became editor of the *Avanti*, a Director of the Italian Socialist Party, a leader of the proletariat movement in Europe. Within party walls he oscillates restlessly between several brands of socialism: those fathered by Marx, Proudhon, Blanqui, Sterner. Like many Socialists, it was only his own particular brand of socialism that he really believed in, but party discipline throttled its expression. In party counsels he manifested a disconcerting affection for his country, an inability to omit Italy, as Italy, from any of his calculations. They perceived at the core of his socialism the germ of patriotism which was destined to destroy him as a Socialist.

Early in 1914 came an ill-fated revolutionary movement in Romagna, which resulted in much sacking, burning and destruction and finally ended in defeat. Mussolini was one of the leaders of the Romagna uprising. The brutality and futility of this movement produced in Mussolini a revulsion against the directors of his party. He became more truculent, more reckless, more uncontrollable.

The outbreak of the European war precipitated the inevitable clash between him and his party. He perceived the apparent causes of the war to be Germany's territorial avarice and the conflict of German and English capitalistic interests. Beneath the apparent causes, however, he perceived the war as a historical necessity, determined by events beyond the control of peoples: a fatality involving the life and future of civilization. In such a conflict Italy could not remain neutral. Mussolini became for his party a traitor to Socialist doctrine, an object of derision and exhortation. In November, 1914, at the Socialist Congress in Milan, he cried defiantly: "I tell you that from this moment I shall never forgive or pity any one who, in this tragic hour, lacks the courage to say what he thinks for fear of being hissed and hooted down." On that day he was hissed and hooted out of the Socialist Party.

Immediately after his expulsion he founded the *Popolo d'Italia*, a journal which at first called itself a "Socialist daily." From the initial issue Mussolini furiously assailed the doctrine of neutrality and advocated immediate intervention in the war. Against him the Socialist and radical press launched a campaign of odium and vilification without parallel in the history of Italian journalism. They were determined to destroy the man both morally and politically. The attention of the country was drawn to his isolation—and to his journal. New friends gathered around him, sympathizing, at first, not so much with his doctrines as with his lone fight against an avalanche of enemies. His battle for intervention against public indifference and Government indecision gained ground every day.

"We must act, move, fight, and, if necessary, die!" he declared, dynamically. "Neutrals have never dominated events; events have always dominated neutrals. Blood alone moves the wheels of history."

THE BAPTISM OF FIRE

The declaration of war found him eager to join the ranks of combatants. The War Office, however, still timorous of his history as a Socialist, was reluctant to admit him to any special category under which he might have gone to the front with the rank of commissioned officer. He was ordered to await the call of his class. He remained at his desk. He consecrated his journal to the army and its cause; his columns flamed each day with the glorification of national sacrifice, strengthening and stimulating the faith of the people in the justice and necessity of the carnage that was going on at the front. His class was finally called. He went to the front as a corporal in the infantry. He passed through fire, was seriously wounded, and decorated by the King. There was no longer any doubt in the sincerity of Mussolini's patriotism.

Discharged from the army for disability, he returned to his editorial task. Then came the Caporetto disaster, precipitated by Socialist propaganda from the rear, and the loss to Italian arms of everything that had been won with an enormous sacri-

fice of life. In his rage against the perpetrators of that calamity, Mussolini flung into the ashes of his past the remaining fragments of his Socialistic creed. His Socialist daily became the *Journal of Combatants and Producers*; an intensely nationalistic organ, a bitterly relentless enemy of any movement, party, or principle subversive of national aims and national ideals.

From that position, after the victorious conclusion of the war, Mussolini insisted upon a rigorous, uncompromising peace, a peace that would place Italy in full possession of everything she had entered the war to acquire. He was the only publicist in Italy to sustain d'Annunzio in the poet's attack upon President Wilson's "Fourteen Points." Against the entire influence of Wilsonian liberalism Mussolini fought relentlessly. He saw in the Wilsonian doctrine a pernicious sentimentality of which the Italian people could drink only to their own everlasting misfortune; a doctrine conceived in the clouds, based on no tangible conception of European realities, woefully blind to Italy's most vital aims and the sacrifice she had endured to realize those aims. For the submission of his Government to the dictates of the Versailles diplomats he had nothing but loathing and contempt.

THE RISE OF THE RED TIDE

The Wilsonian liberalism, however, was succeeded by a more dangerous infection, the spread of the new disease being facilitated by the enforced idleness and misery of the Italian working classes after the close of the war. Russia became the new ideal. Just as it had responded to Wilson, with uncritical enthusiasm and aspiration, so the undisciplined, volatile, idealistic Italian soul now responded to Lenin. The revolutionary mania raged in the people and in the press. Even the liberal and democratic press saw visions of a millennium in the doctrine of internationalism. "On with the revolution!" was the cry in the masses. The monarchy, the Pope, nationalism, had all served their time. There would be no more wars; hence, down with the navy, down with the army, and away with Trentino, Fiume and all the colonies! Army officers could not

appear on the streets without being hissed, hooted and assailed. They were advised by the Government to render themselves less conspicuous by concealing their identity under civilian dress. This decree has never been forgotten, and lies at the root of many an army officer's secret conversion and affiliation with Fascismo.

Across this nightmare of anti-patriotism Gabriele d'Annunzio called out to the youth of the country in passionate and imploring protest. Mussolini took action. With a handful of young patriots, awakened by the poet's appeal, Mussolini, in Milan, March, 1919, organized the first local Fascio. At that time the Fascista program sounded bombastic and seemed utterly impossible of achievement. The Fascio was to be a revolutionary army, consecrated to the resurrection of national ideas, and to the destruction of all those forces that were draining the Italian people of their vitality and strength as a people. The press of Italy took no notice of the new revolutionary infant. Only in the *Popolo d'Italia* was there to be found any reference to it, Mussolini harping prophetically on the tune: "Some day you'll talk about Fascismo; oh, you'll talk about it."

D'Annunzio followed with his sensational adventure at Fiume; an enterprise which Mussolini hailed and supported to the bitter end, as the revolt of the spirit against the brutalization and degeneration of national ideals. But the Bolshevik tide was rising ever higher. To give political reality to his counter-revolution, Mussolini decided to enter the November elections. He prepared a Fascista ballot. He and his fellow-Fascisti were hopelessly swamped in the socialistic landslide of that year.

In the days that followed his defeat at the polls Mussolini sat in his editorial office with the Reds passing in cheering, menacing columns under his window, shouting: "A morte la borghesia!" "A morte Mussolini!" "Viva la Russia!" ("Death to the bourgeoisie! Death to Mussolini! Long live Russia!") A disciple writes of having one day come upon Mussolini in the following attitude:

He sat before his desk in a modestly furnished room, of which the major piece of decoration was

a wall map of Italy, with a tiny Tricolor pinned on the spot marked Fiume. On his table stood a large glass of milk, which Mussolini stirred, now and then with a spoon; near by, creating a most extraordinary and interesting contrast, lay a large quartermaster's pistol of ancient make. The cries from the street became increasingly menacing; noise of police and the crisp loading of muskets. Mussolini, as he stirred and sipped his milk, remarked: "They are yelling and howling, turning the world upside down with their noise, but under their flags and their banners, they are a herd of imbeciles. And don't think for a moment, that they would dare come up here. They know that if they came after me, I'd get at least two of them with this pistol. And in Milan there are not two of them heroic enough to face danger. Hence * * * I drink milk."

THE FASCISTA ARMIES

Fortunately for Mussolini and his movement, d'Annunzio continued to hold the fort at Fiume. Fiume became a rallying pivot for Fascismo, a living symbol of its faith. In the name of Fiume, Fascisti organizations sprang into being in all parts of the country; the black shirt became the emblem of the new patriotism. Fiume fell, but Fascismo, strengthened by the inspiration of Fiume, pulled itself together for a mighty effort against the Bolshevik tide, which in 1920 was inundating the principal industrial centres of Italy, and Milan especially. Mussolini organized a military command composed of trained ex-army officers. Fascismo became in every sense of the term a government within a government, with Mussolini as dictator and commander, and chief of a militia armed, disciplined and ready for war. The proletariat finally carried out their threat. The workers seized the factories and proclaimed the triumph of the proletariat revolution in Italy. Their triumph, however, was of brief duration, for Mussolini gave Fascismo the order to attack.

The "Black Shirts" enveloped the Bolsheviks like a cyclone, drove the workers out of possession, burned and plundered their newspapers, destroyed their centres of organization and co-operation, waged relentless and furious warfare and restored the bourgeoisie to power. Under the violence of Mussolini's assault the whole proletariat movement rocked, cracked and collapsed. The quelling of the general strike in August, 1922, was the death blow to subversion. The bourgeoisie,

now cured of its easy tolerance of Bolshevism, swept to Mussolini's support, hailed him as Italy's saviour and Fascismo as the gospel of salvation. The streets that once rang with the cries of "Viva Wilson!" and later "Viva Lenin!" now exulted in a new idol: "Viva Mussolini!"

"FASCISMO'S NEW AIM"

With the crushing of the proletariat revolution, Fascismo had achieved its goal. But Mussolini did not disband his movement. Recognizing its potentiality as a political organization, he transferred its activity to the political field. He led Fascismo to the polls and established a Fascist phalanx in Parliament, with himself at the head. The new party became the party of a radical revolutionary right, that fought the radical revolutionary party of the left, eye for eye and tooth for tooth. Into the bourgeois press, Mussolini introduced a violence and ferocity of language which had heretofore characterized only the radical Socialist press; from the extreme right of Parliament, he sent forth such threats of destruction, reprisal and defiance of Government as had emerged before his advent only from the extreme left. Between the two forces, democratic Government became a trembling candle flame, blown and almost extinguished now by a gust of wind from the left and now by a gust of wind from the right.

In the country, Mussolini kept his movement alive by directing its appeal explicitly to the youth of the nation, and rendering Fascismo sensational and attractive by uniforms, bands, parades, and the prediction of imminent danger and eminent opportunity for action. Bolshevism no longer threatened, but Mussolini visualized a new peril in the body of the State itself — a State sick, corrupt, impotent, which needed to be transformed, revitalized, reanimated with the new and young blood of the nation.

His program at first was anti-Catholic and anti-monarchist; he advanced a "republican tendency" as part of the political ideology of Fascismo. But when the "republican tendency" threatened to alienate certain sections of bourgeois support, he

readily renounced his "republican tendency" and became pro-monarchist and pro-Catholic. This renunciation was in fact more in conformance with his true conviction, for he had come to loathe anything that flavored of too much democracy, as he loathed anything that flavored of too much socialism. With the "republican tendency" he whittled away all superfluous doctrine from his creed; simplified it unto a creed of pure, exalted patriotism, uncomplicated and easily assimilated.

Under this creed he continued to enroll the youth of the country into fighting squadrons. He planted his standards in the very ranks of labor, and by interpreting Fascismo as a new syndicalism, a new labor movement, he won an army of converts in the working classes; those not drawn to his banners by conviction were drawn by intimidation. On Oct. 24, when he declared war upon the Government, he had the country so organized behind

him that victory was certain. The events leading up to the dramatic seizure of the Government by Mussolini are known.

Mussolini's government will be marked by strength and firmness, though just where that strength and firmness will finally lead is a matter of lively speculation in Europe today. In an interview with the *Stampa* of Milan, on March 30, Mussolini declared: "At this moment the important thing is to announce clearly and emphatically that today in Italy there exists a State and that we shall see that it is respected with law if possible, and with cannon if necessary." His is a strength and firmness of which the world may well take heed. In the dark forces of history lurks an invisible gambler who trumped the European statesmen in 1917 at Moscow, and who may have trumped them again in 1922 at Rome. Time alone will tell whether Italy has found her Bismarck or her Napoleon in Benito Mussolini.

LAST SURVIVOR OF RIEL'S REBELLION

THE Red River Rebellion in Canada has been recalled by the death at Winnipeg recently of Ambrose D. Lepine, who is believed to have been the last survivor among Louis Riel's followers. Lepine, who was 94 years old when he died, was Riel's adjutant, and is said to have known the burial place of Thomas Scott, who was executed at Old Fort Garry in March, 1870, by Riel's order. Lepine was sentenced to death for his part in the killing of Scott, but was reprieved by the Canadian Government.

When, in 1869, it was arranged to transfer the control of the Hudson Bay Company's lands to the Dominion of Canada, Louis Riel, a half-breed, headed a revolt on the Red River. He and his half-breed followers, who were suspicious of the change of control, captured Fort Garry,

Winnipeg, and set up a "Provisional Government," of which Riel was proclaimed "President." Several times they defeated parties of English-speaking settlers who tried to regain the fort.

Among the prisoners captured by the rebels was a young man named Thomas Scott, who, on account of his defiance of the half-breed leader, was taken outside the fort and shot. The rebels eventually fled on the approach of a punitive force, and Riel later tried to take part in politics, but another attempt to lead a revolt led to his execution.

Riel and his associates never revealed the place where Scott was buried, but a skeleton unearthed by workmen near Winnipeg in February, 1921, was believed by local historians to be that of Scott.