

This failure in the orientation towards Finland, says the newspaper, is the explanation of "Esthonia's orientation towards Scandinavia".

Both attempts have ended in failure.

In the old comic operas the characters frequently opened the wrong door whilst looking for another, only to find that neither took them to where they wanted to go. The endeavours of Esthonian diplomacy cannot but give the impression, most disadvantageous for Esthonia, of a complete lack of stability in foreign policy.

IN THE COLONIES

The Programme of the Mahmud Dictatorship in Egypt.

By J. B. (Jerusalem).

It is yet less than three months since the coup of **Mohammed Mahmud at Cairo**. The main object of the Mahmud dictatorship, the destruction of the Wafd national party and of its influence, has naturally not yet been realised. But Mahmud has already succeeded in warding off the first counter-attack of the Wafd and is now himself proceeding to attack. For the sake of a clear understanding of the development of events in Egypt, it is necessary that we should enter into the question of the programme set up by the Mahmud dictatorship.

As depicted in a series of official and semi-official announcements and finally in the detailed discourse of Mahmud before the notables of Lantah, the said programme may be said to consist of three items, "moral reconstruction", reform plans, and foreign policy.

As regards the first-named item, Mahmud makes it appear as though he and his Government desired to save Egypt from a slough of unlimited corruption, favoritism, nepotism, and moral depravity, allegedly developed during the Wafd administration. In the place of a "Government in the interest of the governors", he professedly desires to install a "Government in the interest of the governed", and he is willing to have recourse to an "inexorable terrorism" for the purpose of crushing the Wafd clique, which differs from him in no question of political opinions but solely in its care for the public welfare. To this end he has prorogued Parliament and curtailed the freedom of the press and of assemblies. His "moral reconstruction" also entails the exclusion of the students from politics, on the grounds that it is only when they have been purged of "that worst of all passions, the political passion", that they can become useful members of society.

Until political morals have been restored in Egypt, Mahmud desires to devote himself entirely to the welfare of his people. In this connection he has unfolded his plan of reform.

1. Reforms on behalf of the small farmers. Mahmud starts from the admittedly correct presumption that the fellah constitutes the key to the problem of power in the Nile valley. Therefore he promises the fellahs the dividing-up of all the Government domains into small lots of two and a half feddans (one feddan equalling 4400 square metres), the terms being ten per cent. down and the balance in fifteen yearly instalments; provision of a supply of drinking-water for as many Egyptian villages as possible, the water-supply systems of the towns being extended to include all neighbouring villages, whereby about one million fellah families could be provided with drinking-water; improvement of irrigation by the erection of electric power stations; construction of 100 hospitals in the villages, to be effected in the course of five years; a loan of four millions for the fellahs with a view to rendering possible a postponement in the sale of the cotton crop.

2. Reforms in the interest of the workers, including the elaboration of labour legislation covering both workers' protection and the treatment of labour disputes; construction of 50 hospitals in the cities; establishment of vocational schools.

3. Irrigation works — in the first place the enlargement of the Assuan dam and the construction of a new reservoir on the Jebel-Aulia in Sudan. This is to entail the reclamation of no less than 700,000 additional feddans of ground capable of bearing cotton. The execution of this work, which is to cost several thousand pounds, has been envisaged for the coming winter.

The weakest point in Mahmud's programme appeared to be his foreign policy. The entire Wafd press declared he had sold himself to the British. Now, however, Mahmud has given an affirmative answer to the American invitation to Egypt to join the Kellogg Pact, at the same time declaring that Egypt would not be bound by the reservations of certain Governments under the said agreement, a statement which naturally referred to the British reservations in regard to Egypt. Mahmud therefore professes to be completely independent in his foreign policy too.

This programme, which is naturally garnished with all sorts of demagogic phrases, such as "the Government, the friend of the poor population", "the Government, superior to all class and caste differences", "the Government, in favour of independence", etc., etc., is in the hands of Mahmud a first-class weapon against the Wafd. It represents a clever deception of the people which does not, however, aim merely at "liberating" the fellahs and the urban petty-bourgeois from the influence of the Wafd, but also serves the purpose of guiding the labour movement, which has revived during the last few years, into reformist channels or else of destroying it altogether. Mahmud's position, meanwhile, is strengthened by the fact that the Wafd leaders are incapable of serious revolutionary enterprise. All their attacks on Mahmud have hitherto remained on paper, so that the dictator has even ventured to prohibit the publication of the main Wafd newspapers.

On the other hand, there is an unmistakable inclination on the part of certain Wafd circles to become reconciled to the dictator. The clever programme with which the Mahmud Government veils its alliance with the imperialists and its preparations for a yet more pronounced subjugation of the Egyptian people, cannot be effectively opposed by any of the petty-bourgeois parties existing in Egypt but only by the working class and its party.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

The Textile Workers' Strike in Northern France.

By J. Berlioz, Paris.

In Halluin, a town on the Belgian-French frontier with a Communist majority on its municipal council, more than 5000 textile workers have resolved to declare a strike. They demand a wage increase of 50 centimes per hour. The movement is extending from day to day to all the factories in the Valley of the Lys and in the industrial district round about Lille and will perhaps embrace the big woollen centre of Roubaix-Tourcoing. Within a week the strike may develop into a general strike and involve hundreds of thousands of workers, if the plan of the unitarian trade-union federation of the textile workers of the district succeeds.

It is a question of an extraordinarily important fight; chiefly because it brings up the question of wage increase in face of the best organised and most belligerent employers' association in the whole of France. The genius of this association is its secretary, a former dyer of the name of Ley, who entered the service of the employers' association and made it his chief object to combat Communism in Northern France.

In the second place, this fight is important, because in the whole of this district the reformist organisations are stronger than ours, especially when one takes into consideration the Christian trade unions, which were founded under the patronage of the employers, and because, thanks to a united front of all workers, the movement may become a general one. For months the revolutionary trade unions have been exerting all their strength upon the development of a united front in the factories.

If the movement is successful the slogan of the C. G. T. U. will be echoed throughout the French proletariat: General increase of wages. All the revolutionary fighters are turning their gaze in the direction of Halluin. The C. G. T. U. has issued the slogan: Back up the textile workers of the North!

Since the year 1920 the cost of living in the northern territory has, according to the official figures, risen by 91 per cent., while wages have gone up only 25 per cent. to 30 per cent. The campaign for an increase of wages began in the month of June and has been spread among the masses by the