

MISFIRE OF THE GERMAN MUSSOLINI

HITLER'S HIS NAME, and his aim in life is to parallel in Bavaria the Mussolini triumph in Italy by establishing a government of German Fascists, but the German republican press assure us that the Bavarian workers will have nothing to do with him or his followers. In the north of Bavaria, especially, writes a Munich correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, the laboring classes keep aloof and refuse to be mixed up with the "scheming and plotting in the south." What is more they are said to be ready to offer vigorous resistance to any attempts to overthrow the present order, for they are believers in the republic. To be sure the French occupation of the Ruhr roused Hitler's followers to a "frenzy of indignation," which was strongly tinged with anti-Semitism, and this informant goes on to say that:

"The atmosphere is laden with electricity, and minor disturbances are the order of the day. Jewish-looking persons have been maltreated in the streets, and troops of Nationalists have ransacked the hotels in quest of Belgians and Frenchmen (the hotel silver disappearing simultaneously). Backed by the Government of the Reich, Bavaria at last consented to resort to more effective measures. Minister Schweyer is said to have had a personal interview with Hitler and to have begged him to desist from organizing open-air meetings and demonstrations. Seeing that the Government was inclined to come to an understanding with him, Hitler concluded that weakness must be at the bottom of it, and forthwith proceeded to bluster in his very best style. He threatened, with his partizans, to sweep away the Government. Retaliation followed. A state of siege was proclaimed, six of Hitler's twelve meetings were forbidden, and processions were prohibited. A bold attitude was struck, but it didn't last long. Orders given were as speedily retracted, and the National Socialist program was not further interfered with."

In the pre-war days Munich was a town of wide-spread toleration, this correspondent tells us, and he speaks of its inhabitants as having been comfortable, well-to-do citizens with "an intelligent part in everything connected with art and science." The Jewish element in Munich had been assimilated in a far greater degree than in any other part of Germany, he avers, and adds:

"Jews were even admitted as officers in the reserve of the Army, a privilege denied them in Prussia. The world-war came, and life was shaken to its foundations. In Bavaria it

roused the brutal instincts that underlay the placid exterior. The spirits once called could not be banned again. At the outbreak of the revolution Bavaria fell an easy victim to the Communistic régime. A few Jewish scribes were the ringleaders—men who, with the exception of Landauer and Eisner, had failed to make their way in life, men who had nothing to lose and did not scruple to experiment with the heart's blood of a nation. Justified revolt against a terrorism exercised by a handful of Semitic literates called forth the first wave of anti-Semitism that swept the country.

"Kapp, Ludendorff, Ehrhard, and the assassins of the organization called 'Consul,' all congregated in Bavaria, which became the stronghold and headquarters of reaction. A war cry was needed and easily supplied. 'Anti-Semitism' was felt to meet the case. A simple formula was framed: 'The world's capital is Jewish; Marxism is Jewish; Marxism and capitalism are responsible for the desperate straits the world is in. Therefore, Down with the Jews! The world's salvation depends on the destruction of the Jews.'"

This war cry was taken up by the multitude, we are told, and as usually happens a leader presented himself in answer to the tumult, one Adolf Hitler, who is called the German Mussolini, but according to the *Guardian's* correspondent this comparison is not entirely fair to the Italian leader because—

"Mussolini is a reformed Socialist, primed with the doctrines of his former party, whereas Hitler, the excited and muddle-brained Bohemian, is devoid of solid convictions and incapable of a definite line of action. A certain similarity between Mussolini and Hitler, however, can not be denied. Both are addicted to opera effects attuned to the mentality of their different countries. Mussolini, black-shirted and toying with a red carnation (an attitude carefully copied by his A.D.C.'s), would appear disarmingly comic under a canopy less bright than the Italian sky and amongst a people less emotional than the Italians. Hitler's effects are obtained by different means. A decorative painter by trade, he has retained his talent for decorative display. The placards he has drawn are very effective, the staging always well chosen, and there is yet another advantage his early life has given him. Viennese by birth, surrounded by Bavarians, heavy of speech and movement, his vivacious personality and ready dialectic, the fruit of many a Vienna coffee-house discussion, carry double weight."