

PREFACE

I wish to say at the outset that there is frequent repetition in the pages that follow. This, however, is somewhat deliberate. This little book and its earlier companion volume* have been written in order to satisfy to some extent the curiosity of our Party members and sympathisers about the beginnings of the Communist Party of India. That being so, repetition is not to be cavilled at. At any rate, that has been my feeling.

The reader should bear in mind that I have not been commissioned by the Communist Party of India to write its history. When this is remembered, this book will be considered one of factual reminiscence, which indeed it is. My effort, as far as possible, has been to place facts which are incontestable.

That the Communist Party of India was first formed abroad is a historical fact. It is also a fact that as early as 1921 it was affiliated to the Communist International. When the history of the Communist Party of India is written in the future, the compilers will have to start from this point.

In that same year, 1921, efforts to build a Communist Party were also undertaken inside India. The first Communist Conspiracy Case against members of the Communist Party of India set up abroad was staged inside India, at Peshawar (1922-23). Again, in 1924, the Kanpur Communist Conspiracy Case had

*"Communist Party of India: Years of Formation (1921-1933)", National Book Agency (Private) Ltd., Cal-12.

among those accused in it Communist organisers working inside the country and the Party's *emigre'* members (like Manabendranath Roy and Shaukat Usmani). From this one should see the unbreakable link between the Party formed abroad and the Party inside India.

"The Story of Rafiq Ahmad's Travels" has been reprinted from the well-known Bengali monthly *Parichaya*. The article was published in *Parichaya* with the title "An Unforgettable Journey."

The first three essays refer to the formation abroad of the Communist Party of India. I make a particular request to members and friends of the Party to read "Dr. Datta and Co.'s 'Moscow Journey'" with especial care. The fourth essay herein, "Saumyendranath Tagore's 'Illegal Booklet'" has not much to do with the formation of the Party abroad. But it includes matters of interest to the Party in India and outside.

If I have even slightly satisfied the curiosity of those for whom this book is intended, I shall be most gratified.

Calcutta,
8th September, 1961.

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