

before they consummated the Capitalist transformation. . . We should still be in the Stone Age if Hodge always had his way. . . Mr. Hyndman, steadily intellectual as a historian at long range, is (being human) prejudiced as a current politician. During the war he was what he still is, a vehemently patriotic 'Majority Socialist.' But he denounces the German Majority Socialists fiercely for voting the German war credits and not coming out as pro-Britons and Pacifists. Yet he has no words scathing enough for Lenin because he refused to vote the war credits, and for . . . the Bolsheviks for surrendering at Brest Litovsk when they were hopelessly beaten, instead of bleeding to death as England's auxiliaries. This is neither Socialism nor the philosophy of history; it is naive John Bullism. . . There are moments when he seems to be revolted by the institution of compulsory labor by the Soviet Government. . . For my part I cannot understand why anyone who has the most elementary comprehension of Socialism can doubt that compulsory labor and the treatment of parasitic idleness as the sin against the Holy Ghost must be fundamental in Socialist law and religion. If Lenin has abolished idleness in Russia, whilst we, up to our eyes in debt, are not only tolerating it, but heaping luxury upon luxury upon it in the midst of starvation, then I am much more inclined to cry 'Bravo, Lenin!' and 'More fools we!' than to share Mr. Hyndman's apparent horror." We commend the foregoing to Samuel Gompers when next he tries to divert attention from the horrors of compulsory unemployment here by crying out against compulsory employment in Russia.

"President Wilson was singularly ill-served by his agents in Russia," says an editorial in the N. Y. American. "They thought and he thought that the Czar's overthrow meant simply a new government by aristocrats, lawyers, financiers and ex-Czarist officers. The Root Commission entirely misgauged the purpose of the Russian people. Ambassador Francis was hopelessly at sea. Every one of Wilson's chosen advisers adopted a purely capitalistic view of Russia, failing entirely to see the economic significance of the revolution." In the great metropolis of New York the American is the only capitalist daily guilty of occasional lapses into editorial sanity. The above quotation is taken from an editorial describing the amazing lavishness of the Wilson Administration in paying out \$60,000,000 of the American people's money to the bogus "Russian Ambassador," Bakhmetieff, over a period of three years after his "government" had been cast into the ashcan. Long after this prodigality had become an international scandal, and was provoking derisive comments in the press in other countries, our own capitalist papers breathed not a whisper about it. Bakhmetieff and his wastrel crew squandered most of the money on high living here, but some of it went to the House of Morgan to pay the interest on Miliukov's Russian bonds, most of which had remained in the banker's hands. Hence the silence. The editorial writer in the American evidently anticipates a saner policy from Tweedledee Harding than from Tweedledum Wilson. Why so, we wonder? The Morgan firm still holds the bonds.

## Communist Russia

Communist Russia, the Russia of the common people, marks a new epoch in the world's history. It marks a basic change in the structure of human society. Up to this time society lived under the rule of the few, under the rule of the class which possessed the wealth of the country. The methods were different at different periods in the world's history, but the results were the same: riches and power for the few, a bare existence and endless toil for the many. The slaves, the serfs, or the wage workers of today, who compose the masses of the people, have ever been the hewers of wood and the carriers of water, the beasts of burden on whose backs sported and fattened kings and nobles, landlords and capitalists. They who possessed wealth had the power. And they passed laws to protect that power, to make the possession of wealth a social institution. Private property was enthroned and every striving of mankind was subjected to the rule of property. Thence grew the exploitation of man by man for private profit, and all abuses resulting therefrom; fear of loss of property, care of possession, dread of the future, fear of loss of employment, envy and greed. Human society was ruled by property grabbers; masters, kings, capitalists, providing toil, disease, war for the masses of mankind. That is the rule of capitalism, and cannot be otherwise.

But under communism, profit is abolished, and with it the exploitation of man by man; private property is no longer a factor in the life of man; property becomes universal, all natural and created wealth belong to society, to every member of the community, as secure a birth right as air and sunlight. Everybody's measured work provides a common fund of things to satisfy material needs, today, tomorrow and in years to come. There can be no fear of losing one's job, of seeing one's children starve, of the poorhouse in old age. As sure as the sun will rise on the morrow, man is secure of his bread, his shelter and clothing. Man is freed from animal cares, free to develop his human qualities, his intelligence, his brain and heart.

Russia points the way. Russia is now one huge corporation, every man, woman and child an equal shareholder. The state is administered as a business; the benefit of the stockholders being the object of the corporation. The individual contributes his labor, whatever it may be: manual, mental, artistic. This labor is applied to available materials: the soil of the farm, the natural resources, the mines, and mills and factories. The finished product is distributed through the agencies of the corporation, in the shape of food and clothes and shelter, of education and amusement, of protection to life and limb, of literature and art, of inventions and improvements; to every member of the corporation, which means every man, woman and child of the nation.

To be sure this ideal of a human brotherhood is not yet realized in Russia. No sane person would expect so tremendous a change to be consummated in three years, in the face of universal aggression,

(Continued on Page 4)

## The Commune: Half a Century of Struggle: 1871-1921

Half a century has passed since the days of the Paris Commune, one of the most stupendous tragedies in the struggle of labor to attain the heights of existence. That first uprising of the modern proletariat has since been followed by the great victorious revolution of one of the greatest peoples of our planet. But while the uprising of March 1871 was a desperate attempt on the part of the working-class of a single city to establish its dictatorship over a nation of peasants, today we are confronted by the united efforts of all the toilers of city and country alike to bring about the realization of socialism, after they had seized the organs of power and authority from the bourgeois state. The present upheaval is of such incomparably greater dimensions, its aims are so immeasurably wider, and the stakes are so enormous, that in view of these struggles we are witnessing it is almost difficult to appreciate sufficiently the heroes of the Commune and their desperate fight and to view their struggles in the proper perspective.

And yet the defenders of the Commune too had their important post in the battle of human progress. They too contributed to the building of the new future, in fact it was they who first opened the doors through which the social revolution of our day must pass if it is to attain its goal. Hence the Commune should appear to us as a teacher and counsellor, as a prophet and mentor, for although the Commune pointed out new roads, it committed old errors. The Commune appears to us as a pioneer, and yet it sometimes slipped into the pitfalls and errors of antiquated methods and forgotten times. The Commune was, in the words of its historian, Lissagaray, a barricade which was not given time to turn into a government. Karl Marx in his little book "Civil War in France" erected a monument to the Communards, a monument as enduring as the memory of the heroes of that great proletarian revolt. In his brief and simple review of the historical facts the founder of scientific socialism created an analysis of unparalleled depth and sureness, which at the present time more than ever should become the common possession of all those who understand the importance of learning from the struggles of the past the things that should guide us in the work of the future.

To Marx at that time the Franco-German war and the revolt of the Commune appeared as events of the first magnitude in determining the political developments of the immediate future. The establishment of a united Germany in the center of Europe necessarily made itself felt throughout the entire world. Just what its effects would be and what reactions it would call forth depended on the fundamental and permanent acts which would accompany the entry of this new state into the political system of the world. The Peace of Frankfurt in the year 1871 formed the turning-point, for it disregarded the principle of the formation of states according to nationality as no treaty had disregarded it in the last hundred years. It ended the period of national unification in Central Europe by

mutilating the national unity and dissecting the national territorial unit of the conquered French. But German militarism, in calling forth and feeding the French spirit of "Revanche", in striving continually to surpass the armaments of the neighboring countries, in making itself the pivot of the militarism of the Great Powers of Europe and hence of the militarism of the world, became at the same time the greatest hindrance to the national movement of Eastern Europe, which could liberate itself from this suppressing force only through a violent explosion. Thus the collapse of France brought forth the downfall of Germany, and now the prophecy of Marx's "Civil War" is fulfilled: "History will mete out its revenge not according to the territory in so many square miles wrested from France but in accordance with the greatness of the crime of reviving the old policy of conquest in the latter half of the 19th Century."

The Paris Commune stands out in contrast to the coincident founding of the German Empire. This German war of expansion coming at the close of the period of mediaeval unification shook to the very foundations the oldest and most strongly joined national state of the continent. The shock temporarily loosened the cornerstones of those foundations and amid the turmoil of such a tremendous impact the working-class succeeded by a daring charge in seizing the reins of government for the first time in history. But the rule of the workers was destined to be of short duration. It was choked in the blood of a massacre unequalled in the annals of civil war. Those of the socialist workers of the French capital who survived were imprisoned and deported. To destroy socialism in the heart of the empire, to exterminate it root and branch, to prevent a recurrence of socialistic activity in any part of the land, after the fall of the Commune, this was the object of the policy of the counter-revolution. While the German Empire, resplendent in its armaments, seemed built to outlast the ages, the Commune was looked upon by its contemporaries as a miserable little insignificant episode, as a caprice of history, worthy only of ridicule and scorn. And yet, how differently has it turned out! Unlike the episode of the German Empire and Bismark's policy of blood and iron, that bore in its core the canker of its own destruction, the Commune carried within itself the living seeds of the future. "This is the lesson of History," says Marx's "Civil War." "With nations it is as with individuals. To take from them the power of aggression it is necessary to deprive them of all means of defense. They must not only be seized by the gullet, they must be actually killed."

The Commune, in tearing apart for the first time the scaffolding of the national state from within, attacked its foundation, its very existence. It tore down in order to create a new type of state, a new social order. It disarmed and destroyed the original state,—the form of the bourgeois nation so that the people, liberated, may find room to live and that Humanity may be enthroned among the free peoples of the world.