

necessary to pay for all kinds of war manufacturies, all these the Czarist government attempted to cover by a promiscuous printing of paper money. This course was followed, naturally, by a steady depreciation in the value of paper money, until it was worth hardly 50 per cent. of its face value. This meant an unbearable increase in the cost of living. High prices, in Russia, during the war, were caused, therefore, not only by actual shortage of supplies, not only by monopoly speculations, but also, to no small degree, by the ruinous financial policy of the government.

At the same time the collapse of the whole transportation augmented the general calamity by bringing about a complete disorganization of the home market. For lack of means of transportation the sale of products was limited to countless small markets in the immediate locality in which they were produced.

Increased taxes were another consequence of the war; all attempts to tax the wealthier classes as well were pushed back upon the shoulders of the proletariat and the peasantry by means of increased prices, intensified labor and the overthrow of the miserable Russian "labor laws."

Upon this "economic foundation" was built up a corresponding "political superstructure."

The central administration, civil as well as military, was in the hands of Rasputin, the Czar, and their followers, the clique of slovenly, religious, superstitious, degenerate idiots and court thieves, who had always looked upon the Russian nation as their family property. The local administration was everywhere in the hands of autocratic governors who ruled their territories like the Satraps of the ancient Orient.

The story of a session of the magistracy of Moscow, in which a serious discussion as to the size of the bribe necessary to persuade the railroad officials of Russia to secure the transportation of Siberian meat to Moscow was the order of business, shows to what lengths corruption had gone.

"Civil peace" in Russia, as in all other countries, was rather peculiar. It meant, in effect, a system of gagging and oppres-

sion such as Russia had not known since the failure of the first Revolution. The labor press was suspended, labor unions dissolved, striking workers were sent to the front, were thrown into prison or summarily shot. In Iranovo-Wosnesensk alone more than 100 workers were killed. Proletariat and the peasantry were segregated on the battlefields and mechanically slaughtered. That Russia has been able to hold out against the Central Powers so long is due alone to its almost inexhaustible reservoir of cannon fodder.

These circumstances, which proved that the Czarist regime was unable to realize even its own plans of usurpation, not to mention those of its liberal supporters, called forth the opposition of the liberal imperialists. The downtrodden and suffering proletariat cast its lot under the banner of civil war, assisted by large groups among the peasantry.

The liberal bourgeoisie (the Cadettes and the Octobrists) and with them the social-patriots, who are but their subservient vassals, were organized mainly in Semstwo and in municipal units. They flirted with Grand Duke Nikolai, with their democratic allies, with the ruling circles within the army. In the Duma the so-called "progressive block" was formed, as the parliamentary expression of the imperialistic bourgeoisie.

Their opposition was, as a matter of fact, rather innocent. They stood by the maxim, "No infraction of the law." In the words of Mr. Miljukoff, "If victory means revolution, I want no victory."

Not so the proletarian masses. In spite of the "pacifying" manifesto of a few social patriotic traitors, the proletarian "Avantgarde" developed an intense revolutionary activity. Street demonstrations, strikes, the general strike and revolts of workers and military groups that fraternized with them were the methods used in the struggle. These mass actions paved the way for the final overthrow of the Czarist regime. The first wave of the second revolution shattered the Russian throne.

The first step in the Revolution has been taken; the social structure of the state machine has been changed, a new class has