

In the 90's the former had become comparatively prosperous. To-day there is no labor organization by means of which the workers may resist the brutal exploitation of their master class. Obviously legal protection and favoritism from the government are of little value to the capitalist, unless coupled with the power and the freedom to exploit his workers. And to this end the Japanese government has zealously suppressed the socialist and labor movements from their very beginning.

The so-called factory laws that were passed in 1911, to go into effect in 1916, are, as a matter of fact, in no sense a protection for labor. Under their provisions women and children are permitted to work 12 hours out of 24. Furthermore, for a period of 15 years after the enactment of the law, the work-day may be extended, if necessary, to 14 hours. The family of a worker killed in a factory receives a sum equal to the wages of 170 days. If he is crippled for life while at work he may receive a compensation equal to the wages of from 30 to 170 days altogether. Yet this is the only labor protection law in Japan.

Since the beginning of the European war, Japanese capitalists have been making enormous profits. Factories are running to their utmost capacity. It has been called the Golden Age for Japanese labor. What this really signifies is rather doubtful. An investigation conducted by the Osaka Chamber of Commerce discloses clearly that this prosperity cry in Japan, as everywhere the world over, is a sham and a delusion of capitalist origin. Out of 75 industries investigated, wages increased, during the war, from $\frac{1}{2}$ c to 8c a day in 22 industries. In 53 industries wages decreased from 5c to 18c a day. Among the latter are included the iron workers in the Osaka government ammunition factories, the moulders, machinists and the employees of the government tobacco monopoly. Among the 25 representative industries, the ship-builder is most highly paid. He receives a remuneration of from 15 to 96c a day. The lowest average wage in these 25 trades is 17c, the highest $61\frac{1}{2}$ c per day. Prices of necessities are higher by 50 per cent. than before the war. As a result there have been numerous strikes, in spite of government oppression. Many were won, but more frequently they were put

down relentlessly by police force. Although the Japanese worker is a highly capable mechanic, has advanced rapidly in the sphere of technique, and is able to execute highly complicated work on modern machines, he is politically and economically utterly powerless to resist the oppressive bureaucratic ruling class. The frequent strikes and labor uprisings are desperate revolts of ill-treated workers against their oppressors, against unbearable conditions of labor and economic pressure under a steadily rising cost of the necessities of life.

For a number of reasons the Japanese workers cannot, at the present time, assume governmental power by mass revolt or collective organization. The Japanese government rests its power upon a powerful army of well organized bureaucratic followers, its officials numbering over 200,000 men. There are, in the very nature of things, staunch upholders of the bureaucracy, well organized for the work of exploiting the great masses. This almighty bureaucracy of Japan dominates and monopolizes the army and navy. In its capacity as the greatest buyer and contractor of every conceivable kind of merchandise, from shoes to superdreadnaughts, it controls the most powerful capitalist interests. The latter submit to the dictates of this bureaucracy willingly, because it lies in their interest to do so. Riding upon the growing capitalist forces, our bureaucratic government has, in recent years, become bolder and more determined in its attitude, and quite outspoken in matters of foreign policy. It is determined to advance its long cherished ideals of imperialism in the Far East. The past has taught Japanese imperialists the profits to be gained from territorial conquest, that extended influence and power will mean an increased officialdom, an expanding army and navy, creating a widening sphere of influence and activity for the governmental powers.

While the vast army of bureaucratic government supporters profits by every expansion of Japanese capitalist influence, the Japanese working class has done its burdens, the load of armament and national expenditures. The growing influence of the Japanese ruling class in the world means for them ever greater oppression, ever growing burdens.