

the pitiful state into which the Russian working class has fallen by following the "extremists."

At the same time the great victories at Riga, and particularly in Italy, have more than offset the semi-failure of the U-boat campaign and have re-established the prestige of the German military clique to such an extent that it can defy Mr. Scheidemann openly should he dare to again "assert his independence." So Mr. Scheidemann has been notified that if he does not accept Mr. Hertling gracefully there will be a military dictatorship. Whereupon Mr. Scheidemann obediently retired to a back seat.

Whether the German working class will accept this new affront with the same humility and meekness of spirit exhibited by Scheidemann & Co., or will be willing to take a chance on the Russian brand of "anarchy" rather than continue to live spiritlessly in their own kind of order remains to be seen. As also remains to be seen whether any kind of humility on the part of the German working class and its leaders will satisfy the German military and annexationis cliques, or whether they will not consider the time propitious for that coup d'etat for which many of them have been yearning for many years past. These hopes and desires have certainly never been voiced with such boldness and persistency as they are now.

In the meantime it is interesting to note that coincident with the appointment of Von Hertling to the Imperial German Chancellorship comes the report that the pretense of an "Independent Poland" is to be cast aside and that Poland is to be annexed to Austria-Hungary, while Lithuania and Courland are to be annexed to Germany. Thus go "Freedom of Poland" and "No Annexations" a-glimmering, while Mr. Scheidemann protests but promises to vote for the next war-credits.

All according to the old Prussian formula of Progress:

One step forward, two steps backward.

B.

The Situation in Italy

The news of the smashing Austro-German offensive against Italy reached this country simultaneously with the news of the flaming forth of a rebellious spirit among the Italian people. Correspondents and editors admit freely that discontent is seething, and that not the least dangerous aspect of the Italian defeats may be a revolutionary uprising, as in Russia.

This spirit of revolt has been gathering momentum for two years, and recent events are bringing it to a head.

The first impulse attending its disastrous defeats was the achievement of a semblance of national unity in Italy. But not alone is it merely a *semblance* of unity, it is in the nature of things purely temporary. Whether the Italian army succeeds in checking the invaders, or whether its defeats pile one upon the other, a reckoning will be demanded, and a situation created in which the forces of revolution will spring into action.

The social and economic situation in Italy is acute. Perhaps in no other belligerent nation are the necessities of life scarcer and their prices higher than in Italy. There is a menacing scarcity of food and of coal, as well as a scarcity of the things necessary for purposes of war. Industrial life has been terrifically disarranged, and Italy's proverbial industrial inefficiency has been emphasized by the war. Italians in this city receive heart-rending reports of the unbelievable sufferings and privations of the peasantry and proletariat in the old country.

During the summer strong food riots broke loose in Milan and other large cities of Italy, and smaller demonstrations are of regular occurrence. The riots during the summer were formidable, assuming the nature of mass uprisings, which were suppressed only after bloody clashes with police and soldiers, in which hundreds were killed and wounded.

The animating force that is directing and coalescing this discontent into active revolt is the splendid and intrepid stand of the Italian Socialist Party against the war.

Recent actions of the party indicate the character and force of its propaganda. Some months ago, Lazzari, the General Secretary, officially addressed a secret communication to munic-