

ried out seemed to the people to indicate that the energies of the Government were turning principally to internal reforms. The wishes of the people were studied, not only in broad principles, but in details. "For the purpose of enabling the workers to hold free meetings the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic offers to the working class and the poorest peasantry furnished halls, and takes care of their heating and lighting appliances." (Constitution—article 2, chapter 5, paragraph 15.) Libraries were opened in the villages and theatres in all the towns and were maintained at the public expense.

The popularity which the Bolsheviki Government earned by its measures was not seriously tested till the spring of 1918, because it had no serious rivals who could call for the allegiance of the people on the strength of their programme for internal reforms. In the early summer, when civil war was financed from abroad and supported at home by large sections of the upper classes, the first real test came. Districts which had tried both the Bolshevik regime and that set up under the Czechs when free to do so reverted to Bolshevism. The Czechs were forced to retire from the Volga to the Urals because of uprisings among the people. The Soviet of Vladivostok was returned at the July election though the "Reds" were in prison. From the Urals to the eastern coast the people were discontented with the directorate and the dictatorship and preferred a return to the Soviets.

No body of people I met feared the Bolshevik Government except the rich merchant and landowning classes, and among them I noticed a phenomenon not uncommonly seen in the last few years, that supreme sacrifices are easier to ask for and easier to make in many cases than smaller ones. When all rich people were losing their property it was not in accordance with the temperament of the better Russian to display great grief at an irreparable loss. I think there was hardly more grumbling than occurred in England over the Budgets and the Insurance Act of a recent Government. Through their losses some perceived, often with mixed feelings, the increasing sense of equality, and many contrasted the smallness of their loss with the great sacrifice of the war.

The Bolsheviks, in the opinion of the writer, used the repudiation of the foreign debts as a measure of internal politics, when the country was loath to assume any obligations contracted by the Tsar, but would in time have persuaded the people willingly to pay interest on the foreign loans because they realized that no further money would be lent to them unless they did.

Bearing in mind the exhausted condition of Russia due to the war, the lack of commodities due to the isolation caused by Allied blockade after November, 1917, and the disturbance in industry which accompanies civil war (especially if financed from abroad), I believe that the condition of finances under the Bolsheviks may compare favorably with that of any administration in the last sixty years in Russia except under Ministers of Finance Kankrin and Reiter, or with the present administration in Siberia before it re-introduced vodka distilling as a source of revenue. It is possible that new criteria may have to be formed before it is wise to come to definite and final judgments regarding the financial condition of a community that hopes "to establish a Socialist society" and eliminate the use as far as possible of currency."

Russian peasants and Russian workmen are accustomed to starvation. That is perhaps the best heritage the revolution received from the regime of the Tsar. For it has enabled them to endure, with the stolid patience and the hopefulness that is part of the Russian nature, the misery that the Allied blockade has caused. But even hunger and want under Communism assume a different aspect. There are no shop-windows, resplendent with luxuries that only the more fortunate can buy. The flimsy rags of the working woman are not made still shabbier by the flaunting of silks and satins on the back of a wealthier neighbor. Herein lies an object lesson that even the simplest can understand. Its appeal has not a little to do with the firmness with which the new government has established its influence among the poor and the downtrodden in Russia.

Although Russia is the most illiterate among the large nations of the world, its people are characterized by an intense craving for education. This natural tendency was fed and nurtured during the days of the darkest counter-revolution that followed the first revolutionary movement in 1905. During those years thousands of young, enthusiastic students traveled across the country, disguised as common laborers, living in the poverty-stricken farmhouses in the dreariest villages, and in the lonesome huts of the woodcutters, deep in the forests, teaching the men, the women and the children to read and to write, instilling in their minds at the same time the message of a better life when the workingman should become his own master. To this side of the Russian people the Bolshevik government has directed its chief appeal. In the short two years of its existence, in spite of almost insur-