

THE SIEGE OF WARSAW.

BY WILLIAM ENGLISH WALLING.



THE war the Russian Government has declared against the people is assuming an importance as stupendous as the war it has conducted against Japan. Both conflicts have engaged approximately half a million soldiers, and if a hundred thousand Russians have been captured by the Japanese since the outbreak of the war, an even larger number of Russian citizens, of a much higher average standard, better educated and better trained in industry or the professions, are rotting in Russian prisons or languishing in Siberia or the Arctic Sea for political opinions and political activity—"crimes against the Czar."

Dalny was captured and Vladivostok was blockaded by the Japanese. The hundredfold more important ports of Odessa and Batum, of Riga, Libau and Reval, are "paralyzed" by the revolution. The lost Manchurian market was undeveloped and insignificant. The home market and industries, which are everything in a country that exports little and that little consisting of raw products, are in a state of disintegration because of the internal war. The chief centres of commerce and industry are either in a state of siege or under a form of "administrative law," supported and largely enforced by the troops. For several months literally hundreds of persons have been "captured" every day and exiled or imprisoned for participation or suspected participation in this conflict which fails to become a

civil war only because the people are lacking the arms.

When Nicholas II. ascended the throne in 1894, political prosecutions were scarcely fifteen hundred a year. When the present troubles began in 1902 they had reached five thousand. In 1903 they rose to nearly twelve thousand by the official figures. Under the present military regime all pretence of regular prosecution is abandoned, but no less than one hundred thousand political arrests have already been chronicled by the press this year in the cities alone. Nobility, landlords, zemstvo members, professors, workmen and peasants, no class has been excepted. But all to no purpose. Every arrest has been followed by the bitter indignation of relatives and friends, every execution by the set purpose of revenge.

The open revolution beginning in its present form of general violence with the *jaquerie* of the peasants and the political strikes of the workers of South Russia in 1902—several provinces and all the large cities of the South were already affected in that year—has spread from class to class until all but the immediate beneficiaries of the government are in open or secret revolt. The savage and arbitrary prosecutions of the government since the January massacre have turned the universal political and economic discontent into a fierce personal and class conflict. The wholesale arrests mean just this: Every day new families, new localities and new social classes are giving hostages for the continuance and increasing bitterness of the struggle. Already among the working people of Odessa,