

Revolutions : Political and Social

BY J. HARRINGTON

Article Twelve.

WITH reaction triumphant to the east and west of her, Germany's position was hopeless. The fall of Paris and Vienna encouraged the old regime to close in on the revolutionary movement, and with that offensive all the weaknesses of the German movement were disclosed.

The victory in Germany had little of the significant character which marked Vienna and Paris. In fact, Vienna and Paris might be conceived as something of a warning to Berlin of what might happen there. The army was therefore never put to the supreme test. During the March-April period regiments had refused to move against the revolution, and the monarchy had accepted the situation and had eaten crow as gracefully as the circumstances permitted.

The struggle which followed, between the Frankfurt Assembly and the monarchy, and between the various principalities and Frankfurt, coupled with the fight for leadership of the German people, centering on Prussia and Austria, served to cloud the revolutionary issue and developed a fruitful field for intrigue, which the monarchy used to advantage. The weak and vacillating policy of the parliamentarians at Frankfurt had incensed the working class, and the members of the Assembly on their part were enraged at the constant riots staged by the workers to emphasize their displeasure at the Assembly's proceeding.

While the storm was gathering around Vienna, Frederick William was collecting his forces at Potsdam, when a riot in Silesia offered him an opportunity which his advisors were keen enough to utilize. The Prussian parliament ordered an investigation of the killing occasioned by the riot, and ordered the Minister of War to demand that all officers not loyal to the constitutional government should resign. The Minister refused to admit their right to interfere with the army. The matter was again voted in the Assembly, and an immense demonstration in the streets forced the ministry to resign, Sept. 7th. A few weeks later came the surrender of the Schleswig Holstein Duchies to the tender mercy of the Dutch, and the raising of the barricades, in which the revolutionary assembly was saved by the reactionary Court.

The Treaty of Malvo, while bringing the Frankfurt parliament into contempt, also brought to Berlin an army of forty thousand men, tried and true, prepared to move and kill at the word of command. But the courage of the monarchy was not yet equal to placing its fate on the uncertain hazard of civil war in a world where soldiers often took sides with the people. And so the zeal of General Wrangel and Count Brandenburg was reserved for a more auspicious occasion. Tumults and riots continued, while parliaments ponderously debated the question of a unified Germany, over which we will pass, to the fatal October 31st and the fall of Vienna.

When news of the assault reached Berlin, the Assembly was surrounded by an immense crowd which demanded intervention; failing to move the Prussian Parliament it was decided to appeal to Frankfurt, and whatever might have been the answer of that body, the fortunes of war and the indecision of the Viennese decreed that this cup should pass away. **Two days later** Frederick William dismissed his ministers and called on Brandenburg, who, by the way, was his half brother (by the mode), to form a government. The Assembly realized this was a challenge, for the Count, though a bastard, had the reputation of longing to close the account which the King felt was owing to the German people. The Berlin Assembly, therefore, sent a deputation to protest against this Ministry. It was deliberately insulted, notwithstanding the wise utterance of Johann Jacoby who told the king to his face that "It was the misfortune of Kings that they would not

hear the truth." But like most wise sayings, it is not always true, and in this case the misfortune fell upon Jacoby and his friends, who received word a few days later that they must receive the ministry, or they would be dissolved, and upon their further expression of resentment they were informed that in the event of their further refusal they would be removed to Brandenburg, a small village remote from all revolutionary centres, by force. "Brandenburg in the Chamber, or the Chamber in Brandenburg," was the laconic message.

When it was read, the Count rose to speak, but the President of the Chamber ordered him to keep his seat, and first to obtain permission to address the Assembly. Brandenburg thereupon "dismissed" them and left with some seventy monarchists. The remainder, some three hundred, proceeded to pass a resolution condemning the illegal invasion of their rights. Brandenburg ordered the Civil Guard to disband the Assembly, and the Guard refused. The Assembly followed with an appeal to the people to defend their liberties, in which they expressed the belief that "The calm and determined attitude of a people that is ripe for freedom will, with the help of God, secure the victory of freedom." But God evidently considered the odds too great when General Wrangel paraded his troops in front of the building and locked the doors. The people were ready and demonstrated their willingness to assist, in a determined, if not a calm attitude, but the army remained faithful and the daring parliament were driven from meeting place to meeting place, finding time between jumps to call upon the people to deliver up all arms and means of resistance, to remain quiet and to refuse payment of all taxes. This met with a generous response, and trouble arose all over the country; the Roman Catholic priests, true to their salt, sought to nullify this campaign, declaring that damnation awaited those "who did not render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's." Nothing daunted, the Roman Catholic flock themselves retorted that the priests evidently were careless of their own souls, as they were never known to pay taxes themselves.

The Assembly was finally dissolved, after many meeting places, at the last of which Jacoby again showed his aptitude for wise words; when the officer in command of the soldiers who invaded the Hotel Mylius laid hands on the parliamentary records, he said: "It is a sad thing that the soldiers are misemployed for such acts of violence," and "Go on with your robberies, and scorn all laws; some day you will be brought to account for this"; but alas, it is only on the silver screen, in fiction and in dreams that the scales of human justice are "utter true." And this Assembly, having legality, God, and the people on their side, fancied somehow, that forty thousand loyal troops in the balance could not outweigh them. Marx is particularly severe in his condemnation of their passive resistance. Certainly a more revolutionary situation could hardly be required. The one thing lacking for success was the deflection of the army, or part of it. But while an army has often sided with a revolt, it has never, nor could it in the nature of things, lead an initiated one. The moment passed and the passive resistance soon ended in disgust. The bitter strictures of Marx against the policy on this occasion are fully justified, but, alack-a-day, such is life. Meanwhile the Frankfurt Assembly, unable to stand even this mild manifestation of a people to preserve its freedom, passed a resolution condemning the Prussian parliament and even sent one of its ministers to persuade them to yield, on the grounds that the government was quite right in the measures taken, as several savage looking characters had been seen in Berlin; such as, of course, appeared in Winnipeg and elsewhere, as nobody can deny. These, Marx tells us, were long

known as "Bassermannic characters." Bassermann being the name of the Commissioner who introduced this evidence of kingly justice. So the Prussian revolution was at an end.

There is one more event to record of Austria before we proceed to the last flicker of revolution in the spring of '49, when Engels, Wagner, and other young men whom the world was yet to hear from took their place in the ranks.

On December Schwarsenberg deposed the aged Emperor Ferdinand, and placed on the throne not the rightful heir but a nephew, Francis Joseph. Hungary refused to acknowledge the abdication of the old ruler, and so in the full legal splendor of a just war gave to Germany a few months' respite. We mentioned in our last that the Hungarian war is not part of our story, but we must of course, point out that its bearing on our story is full and significant.

And that, we imagine, quite fills our space, so while the hairy hordes are causing apprehension in the nerve shattered courts of Europe, we shall await the strenuous spring days of 1849.

PROPAGANDA ON THE PRAIRIES.

(Continued from page 5)

the park. Ambrose, who came in his haywire special, acted as chairman. I then went north to Trochu. The first meeting in this neighborhood was held at Huxley, and we had a good attendance. At Winborne the rain prevented many from coming, but we had a nice little bunch in the schoolhouse. The next gathering was held at Trochu Fair, and I spoke from the bandstand, and had a large and attentive audience. Comrade Tom Erwin took me around in his car and did the advertising, etc. He did his work efficiently and well and the results are to his credit. I stayed at the home of Comrade M. Bigelow, and enjoyed my visit so much that I hope to be back again before long. I was treated by the family as an old friend. I came back to Calgary on my birthday, August 12th, and spoke again in the park.

I am now resting up at the home of Dave Watts, about seven miles from town. Mr. and Mrs. Watts are old-time Reds, and we are enjoying the privilege of comparing notes and analysing the movement.

The above is a record of two months' work—spade work. To me it is a straight proposition. We can't have Socialism until we have the Socialists. I don't profess to know much, but if the other slaves knew what little I know they would be slaves no longer. We should then all be free. It is the duty then of every Red to do what he can to educate his class. There is no money in it. I lost sixty-seven dollars on my last trip, and I don't expect to come out even on this. I am, however, a welcome guest in a hundred farmers' homes, and have received such encouragement and support that I am compensated a thousand times over for the effort made. What we want to do is to cheerfully work together for the success of the Clarion, the party, and the movement generally, and we may rest assured that our labors will come to a full end. The recent troubles in the party rid us of the undesirable element. We can now depend upon each other, and although mighty storms are gathering we can defy their fury and face the future with every confidence.

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