

WARTIME METHODS IN GERMANY

(Continued from Last Issue)

Case of Mme. Duncker.

In the same fashion, the authorities are hounding the Socialist movement among the young people. The military Government in the Marches has forbidden Comrade Katy Duncker to take any action in favor of the young workingmen's classes under threat of preventive imprisonment. Comrade Duncker asked the military Government for explanations of the jurisdictional basis for this order, and wrote: "I add, besides, that the order must evidently rest upon inaccurate information. In the young workingmen's classes I discuss scientific subjects relating usually to the political sciences and to economic history. It is incomprehensible how such work can be a menace to public safety. Through my class lectures and study courses I have earned a part of my livelihood, and I can the less easily give this up for myself and my three children because my husband has been absent on military service since August of last year.

Thus you see how, as the result of some wretched denunciation, they are taking away from the wife of a soldier the possibility of earning a living by intellectual labor for herself and her children. The example of a pupil of whom I shall speak later proves what high moral character and intellectual force is created in the young workingmen's classes through Mme. Duncker's activities. But first I am going to touch upon yet another case of a young married working woman.

Mme. Spahn in Prison.

On the 1st of August of this year a woman, Anna Spahn, was thrown into the preventive prison at Berlin. She wished to attend a meeting called at a public place. On a street corner near the designated place she learned that the meeting had been forbidden and demanded the reason; at this moment some one put a few leaflets into her hand, and she threw them into the air. A policeman came up and arrested her. Up to the present day, after more than three months, that woman is still in prison. [Interruption: "She has just been released."] If she has been released it was done probably because it was known that the question of the "preventive prison" was going to be discussed here. She is the mother of two children of 2 and 6 years, and her husband at the front. Until her arrest she was earning her living; at that time relatives had to take charge of the children.

Treatment of Young Girls.

The authorities have acted in the same way in many other cases: Young working girls of 17 or 18 years, mere children, as the prison director said, have been held under arrest for months, though they had been living with their parents, had steady employment, and were helping to support their families. One young girl of 17 years was kept in a cell for months, and finally the injurious charges against her ended in a verdict of no grounds.

Two young girls of 18 years were arrested in Berlin on June 27 for having distributed invitations calling the working women together en masse at Potsdam Palace to protest against the Liebknecht trial. The wording of these invitations infringed upon no penal law. Even the words, "Down with the Government!" on that invitation are not punishable. Junius Alter has gone so far as to say that the chief end of the war is to eliminate the Chancellor, and one of his intellectual friends, as you know, has given the lethal advice to blow out the brains of the Chancellor. Then, though the invitations contained

nothing punishable, these young girls were taken by the district police of Charlottenburg to the police headquarters of that borough, and on the morrow, to the police station in Alexander Place. For two months they have been held in prison contrary to all law. The authorities have not been ashamed to put them with a prostitute part of the time. If these young girls are released from that royal Prussian prison without damage to body or soul they will owe the fact primarily to the high moral philosophy which, as they themselves testify with pride, was instilled into them by the Society for the Education of the young, and notably by Mme. Duncker.

A Young Girl's Letter.

A passage from a letter of one of these girls shows, on the one hand, the great moral and physical danger in which they find themselves, and, on the other hand, the moral elevation which they derived from their knowledge of socialistic philosophy, and which protected them from all impurity. The young woman writes:

"The fourth woman was a prostitute held under restraint; she said that she desired to lead an honorable life again. I have not been able to feel the least moral indignation against her. Her moral and intellectual inferiority are accounted for by her heredity, her education, and her previous life. Her father and mother were half-witted; the former is dead, the latter is in an insane asylum. The woman herself was raised in an orphanage. She has been subjected by turns to forced education, several times in the House of Correction, and latterly in prison and in the institution for the control of manners. She was choleric and nervous; in order to have peace we said nothing, even when she told her past in most shameful fashion. We took our precautions when using the common wash basin; that wounded her, and there was a portable our life together, a thing painful enough in any circumstances. After eight days she left us, and we experienced great relief.

This passage from the letter of a working girl of 18 years is a document for our civilization. It is a brilliant witness to the high value of education for the common people, but also a document of the shame and ignominy of a system of violence which thus tramples under foot the moral consciousness of young girls. The danger for such girls exists also in the preventive prison, for the arrangement of rooms compels the inmates to hear through the windows the conversations carried on by persons who are expiating crimes by imprisonment.

Those two girls and many of their unhappy companions were left for months in that kind of atmosphere. Our language is too poor to exorcise such shamelessness as it deserves. We demand protection against such a prison of filth. (Schutz für diezer Schutzhaft welche eine Schmutzhaf ist!)

Brutality of the Police.

If the Berlin Prefect of Police, in his functions, is still capable of feeling shame, he ought to be ashamed in the presence of these Berlin working women. Respect for the most elementary human sentiments is trampled upon in these arrests; for eight days that young girl was forbidden to announce her arrest to her mother, who was in a torture of fright to know what had happened. They told the girl that the matter would be attended to, but no actual news was given to the mother; it should be remembered, too, that this girl was helping to support her mother and little sister. In consequence of the arrest she lost her place; her father has been at the front for two years and is wounded. By way of thanking him, they brutalize his daughter behind his back. What must be the feelings of such a father?

After having been released the 11th of this month the young woman was again present at a meeting of the So-

ciety for the Education of the Young, at which she did nothing more than attend to matters of business, elections, etc. She was summoned to police headquarters, and an examining magistrate harangued her, telling her that her presence at the meeting was an unheard-of impudence when she had just been released. It seems to me that the unheard-of impudence was on the other side. She was threatened with imprisonment for the remainder of the war if she took part in another public political meeting. As the girl objected that the Society for the Education of the Young had no political character, and that the meeting was neither political nor public, the magistrate denounced her anew, threatening to arrest her immediately if she said another word. There you have police brutality in all its purity.

That is how, in a country which has been promised a new official attitude and in which the way was to be opened up for all kinds of ability, they treat a workingman's daughter who, with firmness of will, seeks, despite all difficulties, to follow her path toward instruction and education. By these means the Government is trying systematically to kill all spirit of independence. This is why members of the Social Democratic Party who desire an energetic opposition are arrested. By eliminating the directing elements of the opposition the Government thinks to crush the head of the serpent: it has learned nothing and forgotten nothing.

Meyer and Regge Cases.

The director of Vorwärts, Dr. Meyer, who can be reproached with nothing except political ideas that are not agreeable to the authorities, has been confined for months in preventive prison. He is suffering from an affection of the lungs, and is at the present moment in the infirmary of the Moabit Prison; all his requests to be allowed to go to a sanatorium have been denied.

The Director of the organ of the Furriers' Association, Companion Regge, the father of six children, has been in preventive prison since August 17 of this year. Why? Because he condemns and combats the war policy of the committee of the Social Democratic Party. There has been issued at his expense a circular which he had published a half year before his arrest, under his signature and that of two others, which treated of an internal difference in the Teltow-Beeskow faction. By energetic insistence he succeeded, on the 11th of September, in being at least told why he was under arrest. At that time the following reasons were imparted to him: On May 27 he had been Secretary of the general meeting of the electoral association, and had proposed at that meeting a resolution advocating a refusal of contributions to the Social Democratic Committee, at the same time urging a more active policy in the Reichstag on the part of the Social Democratic Labor Union. Furthermore, he had signed the protest addressed to the committee of the party. In June he had taken part in the demonstration for Liebknecht, though he had not made himself prominent in any way. The charges against him, therefore, were purely political.

(To be continued.)

Certainly the workers of Europe did not make the war. They had no voice when it should start. And the probability is that they will not have a voice when it will end. Germany may be exhausted and offer peace at a time when Europe could get really satisfactory terms that will practically prevent war permanently, but owing to secret diplomacy running the war the Allied capitalists, with their pull on European chancelleries, have the power to cry "Go on!" or "Enough!" And in the end it is a few individuals, probably those very largely interested, who will re-make the map of Europe and plant a fresh crop of trouble.

CLIP AND COMMENT

SIR ADAM POPS THE QUESTION.

Sir Adam had a little suggestion of his own to make. He quoted F. F. Pardee, M.P., to show that the C.N.R. owed \$26 to every man, woman and child in Canada. He had predicted that they would be back for another \$45,000,000 at the next session of Parliament. So he had a little favor to ask. Would the "fair and impartial" committee of engineers appoint another committee of auditors and accountants to report on C.N.R. affairs?

Perhaps, he suggested, it would also tell who was going to build the road, if the plans were approved. Would tenders be advertised for? Had anybody ever heard of tenders being advertised for a Mackenzie and Mann undertaking? It had wheels within wheels all along the line, he declared. One corporation owns the profit-making terminals in Montreal; another owns the bankrupt railroad.

"Are we to go on forever giving Mackenzie and Mann the cream and getting the milk?" he asked.

Sir Adam Beck is not so antediluvian as his name might suggest. He is reputed to possess remarkable insight with regard to transportation problems, and the generous favor Mackenzie and Mann, railway magnates, have received at the hand of their servants, the Dominion Government. He might reasonably have read "The History of Canadian Wealth," by Gustavus Myers. The quotation only serves to emphasize the fact, i.e., that the machinations of this corporation bodes ill to the citizens of this country, by the strangle hold the Mackenzie and Mann interests are getting on the resources of Canada.

NOT INVITED TO MEET DUKE.

Rigg and Dixon, Who Opposed Registration, Feel Slighted.

Winnipeg, Man., March 6.—In the closing hours of the Legislature last night R. A. Rigg, Labor M.P.P., fiercely criticized the Governor-General because he and F. J. Dixon, the other member who opposed national registration, were not given invitations to the reception by the Duke at Government House. Rigg said he regarded it as a deliberate slight on the labor interests of the country, and he proposed to see that proper indignation was expressed. The Speaker called him to order, but he continued to protest against what he termed an unwarranted insult. His remarks were received with jeers.

A usage created by precedent must not necessarily be carried into effect when the policy of the individual differs from that of the Government. We remember how the late Kier-Hardie had similar contumely thrust upon him. "We should worry." This is the highest compliment that could be paid to one who is true to his class. The man in the street is asking himself if there is any relation between the attitude adopted by our friend Rigg to "Conscription of Wealth," and the assertion that the Dook possesses 65,000 acres of land? As a reasonable explanation of the important omission.

The President of the Manitoba Bridge and Iron Works, writing in "Industrial Canada," says:

"The thought I have had, and which I shall try to express, is this:—At the close of the war Canada will probably have a war debt of, say, \$5,000,000,000, which will mean an annual interest payment of \$20 for every man, woman and child in this Dominion. This must be paid out of the basic industries, farming, lumbering, fisheries, and mines of Canada. There will return at the close of the war about half a million soldiers. This mass of human energy can be used profitably and can powerfully contribute to the production of the new wealth required to pay the annual interest on our borrowed capital." —T. R. Deacon, in "Industrial Canada," official organ of the C. M. A.

The workers must achieve their own emancipation.