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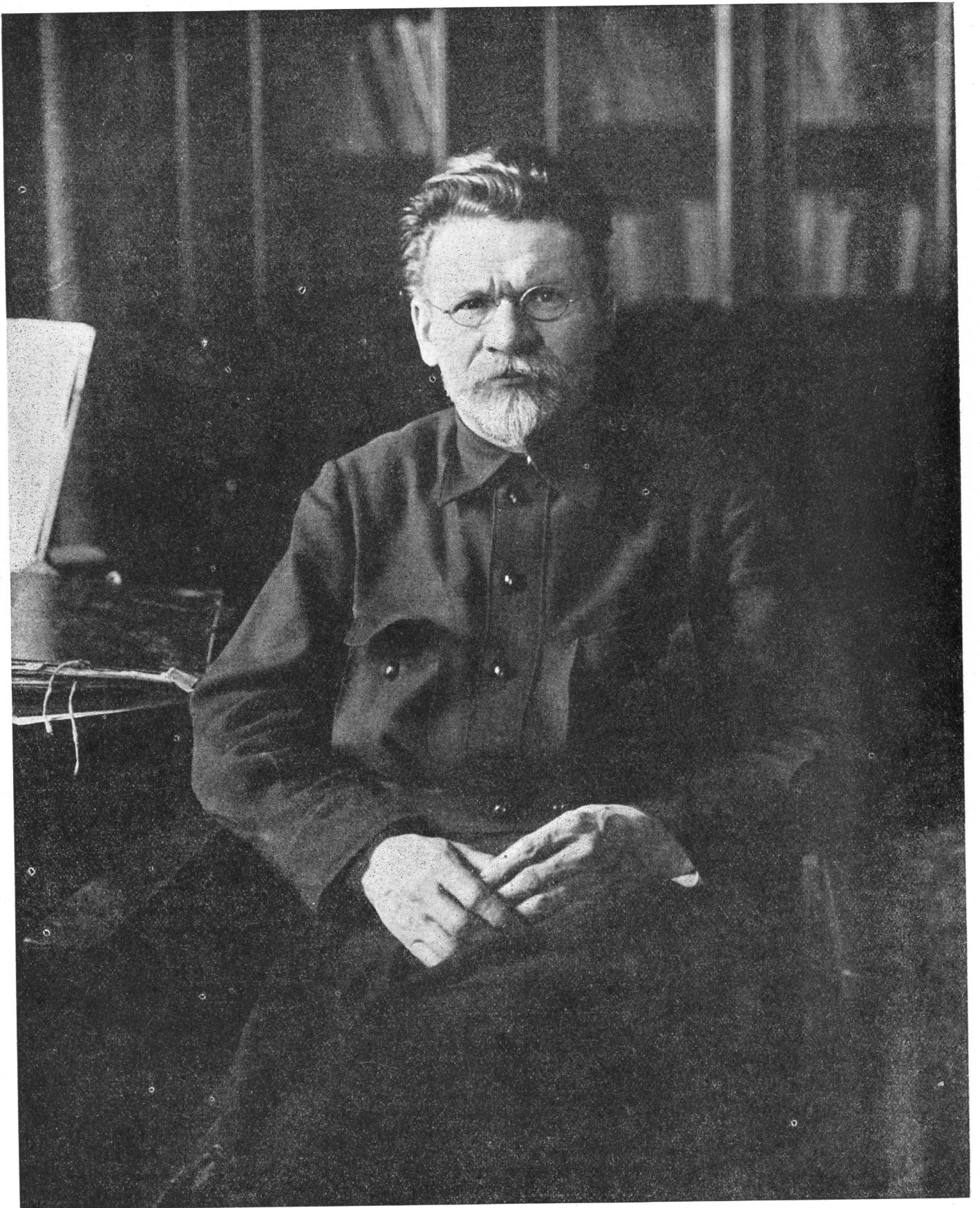
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Celebration of Women's Day in Soviet Russia



M. KALENIN, Chairman of the All-Russian Executive Committee

A TRADE UNION DISCIPLINARY TRIAL

(FROM THE MOSCOW PRAVDA)

A FEW days ago a disciplinary trial was held by the trade union branch at the club of the Moscow First Model Printing Works. There were two cases of violation of the internal regulations of the trade union and of the provisions of the Labor Code.

The hall of the club was packed with over 1,000 men and women workers.

The first case concerned the locksmith Maximov, a foreman, who struck the apprentice Poietaiiev because the handle came off his hammer. He had struck another apprentice with a ruler, and had abused many of the pupils under his charge. The works disputes committee had requested the trade union to hold a public trial of the accused.

Maximov, when examined, maintained his innocence. He explained that it was impossible to teach the apprentices in any other way, but he denied the blows. A number of worker witnesses supported the accusations. The prosecutor declared that Maximov had not only struck the apprentices, but had sworn at them disgustingly. The accused did not deny the latter charges, but said that his pupils answered in the same way. "Grown-ups and juveniles, all the workers swear like troopers."

"It is a good thing," said the president of the court, "that only Maximov thinks thus, and not all the workers. This sort of behaviour is an inheritance of the past we must overcome.

Otherwise our youths, when they become adults, will say 'so we were taught by Maximov, so we must do in our turn.'"

The court passed the following sentence:

"The court declares Comrade Maximov guilty, and sen-

tences him to suspension from the trade union for six months and recommends his dismissal from the enterprise without compensation.

"Recognizing, however, that the accused had himself in youth passed through the hard school of blows and vulgar treatment, the courts looks upon the offenses committed by Comrade Maximov as a survival of the old slave habits and customs, and therefore decides to lighten the sentence by suspending it conditionally for one year, in the hope that Comrade Maximov will desist from such behaviour in future."

The second case was that of the printer Dubov, forty years of age, who was employed as instructor. He was accused of making improper proposals to the women workers who were under his care, and of threatening to transfer them to heavier work in other departments if they refused.

The defense of the accused was that the women were themselves to blame for his behaviour. A number of women workers, however, proved the contrary. One related how, when she refused his advances, he had forced her to heavier work.

At the conclusion of the trial the court passed the following sentence:

"Comrade Dubov, whilst working as an instructor in the works, was guilty of using his position of authority in making improper proposals to the women workers under his

care, although he knew that the Soviet Revolution had given women equality of rights, and that every violation of these rights must be punished mercilessly.

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Chicherin, Russian Commissar of Foreign Affairs in Turban and Shawl conferred upon him by Mohammedan Soviets of the U. S. S. R. as a sign of Distinction.

George Bekanchick, 12-year old Pioneer of Moscow, sends comradely greetings to his young comrades in America.





Octobrina is a 11-year-old pioneer from Moscow. She got her name from the victorious Revolution in October 1917.



Trotsky with Prof. Getey, his Physician, in Sukhuni-Kale, on Black Sea

indeed. Here Lenin is not only Lenin, but a comrade of the past, perilous and heroic struggle, with whom so many events of their lives were associated. The path is strewn with graves. Many a time were these heads (now grey) bent in sorrow and their eyes suffused with tears.

Another has gone. . . . Comrades, let us stand up in honour of his memory. . . .

Only the ticking of the clock is heard in the thoughtful silence.

One two, one two. . . .

Lenin's death has left a deep mark on the old veterans of the revolution in the house on the Shabolovka. They are only just beginning to recover from this severe blow and re-assume their usual occupations.

Not many of the old fighters have lived to see our glorious days. They now lead a peaceful life, being content that their sacrifices were not in vain

The large house on the Shabolovka was originally presented by the merchant Popov to the town of Moscow to serve as a home for aged artists and actors. Subsequently it became a home for aged members of the nobility.

Today it is inhabited by former political prisoners who had been condemned to penal servitude—veterans of the revolution. It is a rest home dedicated to Lenin. Here live 63 former political convicts—communists, old members of the Party "Narodnia Volia" and Chornoprediel'tzy a section of the "Narodnaia Volia" Party advocating a special system

of re-distribution of land. Here we meet Deutsch, Frolenko, Kovalskaia (the chief organizer of the South Russian Union), the 72-year-old metal worker Belokon, the old one-time incarcerated in the Schlüsselburg revolutionary Aschenbrenner, whose 82nd anniversary was recently celebrated by these former political convicts. The joint age of three of these people—Aschenbrenner, Deutsch and Frolenko—is almost 250 years. Everyone of them spent from 20-30 years in prisons, fortresses and in distant exile in Siberia.

But the home on the Shabolovka is not an alms-house, it is not a refuge for old people, but a Red House inhabited by a united family. Here friendly and comradely relations reign supreme and even the personnel of the Rest Home are treated as members of the family. As to Dr. Rose (himself an old revolutionary worker), he takes an active part in the activities of the former political convicts.

In this House only the sick and the weak do not work.

All the others are occupied, everyone with his special task, and all work together for the common good. All speak enthusiastically of their work.

"Nearly everyone works," said comrade Reisen, "most of our people are engaged in literary work and are writing their memories. Deutsch, Aschenbrenner, Aptakman, Gorin-Galkin and Kovalskaia are all of them writing. Golovin is a member of the editorial board of the journal "Penal Servitude and Exile."

"Now, of course," chimed in L. Deutsch, "we can work in peace! I am sorry to say that some comrades had to leave off working because of bad eye-sight. Aschenbrenner suffers with his eyes and Chernavsky is getting gradually blind. Skvortzov has gone quite blind, but a reader visits him every day and keeps him in touch with events. Yes, it is sad but it is true that our old eyes are giving way. . . ."

The ex-political convicts are patrons of the Youth House and also keep in touch with the young pioneers, the tramway workers and the builders' union. They are taking over the management of a very large house for homeless people situated not far from here on the Shabolovka. They visit all those whose patrons they are, hold lectures and speak to the universities, who frequently invite them.

Some of the ex-political convicts are active in factory nuclei. Thus, the old metal worker Belokon works energetically in the nucleus of the "Izoliator" works. He is an honorary member of the regiment connected with these works and also an honorary member of the Young Communist League. Not so long ago at the request of the "Izoliator" nucleus he visited Ivanovo-Voznesensk with the object of taking part in the workers' meetings. He has also received an invitation from Leningrad where he is an honorary member of the nucleus of the former Obukhov works.

The energy of this 72-year-old young communist is truly amazing.

The regime of the Rest House has been established by the ex-political convicts themselves. The bell rings at 9 a. m. This is the signal for getting up. At 9:30 a. m., breakfast and tea. At 2 p. m., dinner, at 6 p. m., supper and at 11 p. m., all must retire to their rooms. From 3 to 5 p. m., is the "dead hour," a period of rest when profound silence must reign throuth the building.

Those who do not wish to retire to their rooms, meet in the reading room behind tightly shut doors and read or talk sotto voce.

In their free time, the inmates of the Ilyitch Rest Home play chess. In the evening they visit theatres.

"Our thanks are due to those who take such tender care of us," said L. Deutsch. "All the publishing firms provide us with books. We have at present as many as 2,000 volumes in our library."

Outside a snowstorm is raging and the wind is howling. But in the cozy reading-room a group of ex-political convicts are talking of old times.

"Do you remember, the wind was howling just like this at that time in far away Siberia. Only over there it was a cruel storm, a regular Siberian storm, while here it is only a good-natured Moscow storm. . . ."

Old Frolenko is reading his long memories. Every now and then the eyes of one or other of the audience begin to shine when the author relates an incident with which he was associated.

Frolenko tells about his life in the Alexeevsk fortress in the Schlüsselburg fortress, and also how he helped Deutsch to escape from the prison at Kiev and Aliosha Popovitch, twice from the Odessa prison.

To liberate Deutsch, he gets into the prison in the guise of a watchman and had to serve long before being promoted to the post of warden. The recollections of the escape of Deutsch alone occupies three evenings.

The escape of Aliosha Popovitch required long and

careful preparation. It was necessary to calculate exactly how long it would take to cover at full speed the distance between the prison and the place of conspirational meeting. Many horses had to be tried before a suitable one was found. On the appointed day and at the appointed hour Aliosha Popovitch clambered over the railings, jumped into the telega prepared for him and galloped towards the market. The alarm was given; guards poured out in pursuit. But Aliosha Popovitch disappeared in the market crowds.

When he returned the horses and cart to their rightful owner—a Frechman—the latter to his dismay discovered in the cart two bombs which Popovitch had forgotten. The latter retains his presence of mind and explains to the Frenchman by signs and gesticulations that the things left in the cart were nothing but weights for gymnastical exercises.

Memories are revived of Narym, Minusinsk, the exiles prisons, and every recollection calls for a nervous grimace, a smile or loud and gay laughter.

The veterans live in the distant and glorious past.

Their recollections are a splendid theoretical school of revolutionary work for those children and youths whose "patrons" they are



Children's Home in Berlin, supported by the Workers of Spain

THE SOVIET BILL OF DAMAGES

(The following account summarizes the actual figures of claims put forward by the Soviet Government for material damage caused by intervention and blockade.)

Material Losses

AT the Genoa Conference, which opened in May, 1922, the Soviet Delegation presented a summary of the damages inflicted on the U.S.S.R. by the Allied blockade and intervention. This summary was based on the findings of the Commission of Inquiry on this subject set up by the Soviet Government in 1920. The results of the inquiry were checked later by the systematic research work of various Government departments, Commissariats, and the Supreme Economic Council.

Other evidence sent in by the Ukraine and other of the Soviet Republics came too late to be included in this summary of the Commission's findings.

The Soviet losses were divided in the Genoa Memorandum in to four main categories. The first category includes the following main items: gold exported from the State treasury illegally (by Koltchak and others); destruction of food and other property; known damages caused to railways, river transport, etc., which can be accurately estimated, and which are based on direct documentary evidence. Altogether, this category totals 12,213,160,000 gold rubles.

The second category consists of domestic losses which cannot be estimated so exactly. In particular, it includes deterioration and damage of railways, water transport, town buildings, peasants' stock, etc.; and pensions to be paid to victims of the civil war (on the precedent of the Versailles Treaty). The total losses of the second category are estimated at 11,271,590,000 gold rubles.

The third category is still more difficult to estimate in figures, but the damages are no less real. It includes the losses sustained by Soviet foreign trade by the blockade; and losses resulting from reduced industrial and agricultural production. The estimated total is 15,560,220,000 gold rubles.

The fourth category cannot be estimated in figures. No attempt was made to do so. It is certain that, if all the losses enumerated could be computed, they would make an immense total. Amongst the items included are: stores and movable property carried off by invading armies (not included in any of the previous categories); the loss in livestock; the value of food crops not reaped, as a result of invasion; the famine, in so far as it was made more severe by the blockade which prevented the import of agricultural machinery, etc.; the epidemics of typhus, and other infectious diseases, in so far as the consequences of the blockade made it impossible to struggle against them successfully; the material losses resulting from pogroms, chiefly in South and East Russia, various properties of the State, municipalities and other organizations carried off from Russian territory: or sums standing to the credit of these bodies in foreign banks, etc., etc.

Without, however, including the losses and damages of the fourth category, the bill of damages thus amounts to 39,044,970,000 gold rubles, or, roughly, about £4,000,000,000. According to Mr. Lloyd George's estimate, Great Britain is responsible for over 50 per cent of the total damages and losses, or at least £2,000,000. The total, it must be

emphasized, does not include all the actual material damages and losses suffered by the Soviet Union as a result of the Allied intervention, and blockade.

It is, of course, impossible to estimate in cold figures the terrible suffering inflicted on 130,000,000 human beings by the civil war, which was fostered by the Allies for nearly four years, or the agony of the prolongation and intensification of the Famine by the Allied blockade (which Mr. Lloyd George called "the death cordon"), or the miseries resulting from the impossibility of fighting, without soap, disinfectants, linen, etc., the epidemics which always follow in the wake of famine. There is no mathematical means of estimating the suffering of the numerous widows and, above all, of the orphans, left helpless as a result of the civil war, famine, and epidemics.

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THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE U.S.S.R.

ONE of the great principles of the Soviet Revolution was that of complete equality of rights for women and men. Politically, this has been realized to the full. Legally, women (married or unmarried) are in exactly the same position as men (see Russian Information and Review, October, 1923, p. 219). There is no sex disqualification whatever. Women are eligible for all government posts.

Of course this does not mean that women are taking an equal part with men in the work of government. Women are eligible, but they have tremendous handicaps to overcome—tradition, custom, and, above all, illiteracy.

In the R. S. F. S. R., where illiteracy is no worse than in other parts of the Union, nearly 73 per cent of the women are illiterate—about three times the proportion of illiteracy amongst men.

Women in Soviet Elections.

The proportion of women taking part in election to the lower Soviet organs, such as the county and village Soviets, is on an average about 14 per cent of the total electors voting. In the case of provincial Soviets, this proportion is only about 5.5 per cent. In the elections for the All-Russian Soviet Congress, the proportion of women voting was only 2.9 per cent. Women have exactly the same voting rights as men, but they have not yet learned to use these political rights.

With such low proportions of women voting, it is natural that the proportion of women elected to Soviet congresses is very low. In 1922 only 0.9 per cent of the total members of the county executive committees, and 2.3 per cent of the members of the provincial executive committees, were women. The percentage during 1923 increased, but no exact figures are at present available.

Recent Government Measures.

The Government is anxious to attract proletarian and peasant women to take a more active part than ever in Soviet institutions. With this object in view, the Union Central Executive Committee recently issued a circular in which, after noting with satisfaction the increase in the number of women elected during 1923 to government organs in the Ukraine, Siberia, and other parts of the Union, and the more active part taken by women in the work of these organs, it urges the Central Executive Committees of all the Republics in the Union to instruct their district and provincial executive committee to give every possible opportunity to their women members to carry out or to participate in the practical work of the soviets.

The women of the East suffer peculiar disabilities, even in the Eastern provinces of the Soviet Union. Since 1922, efforts have been made by the local Soviet authorities to improve the lot of the Eastern women.

On March 7, 1924, the Council of People's commissaries of the R. S. F. S. R., in consultation with the local authorities, issued a decree. This decree, applicable to the Kirghiz, Turkestan, Bashkir Republics, makes it a criminal offense to give or accept payment (kalym) either in money or kind for a bride, or to compel a woman to marry against her will.

Similarly, a decree has been issued for the Oirat Autonomous Area, making it a criminal offense to steal a woman for the purpose of marrying her, or for parents or guardians to force any woman to marry against her will. Marriage with a woman below the age of maturity, polygamy, and payment of kalym are also made criminal offenses. On the



Semenova, representing the Republic of Chivash in the last All-Russian Soviet Congress

annulment of a marriage, a wife is to have the right to her own property, in addition to a certain proportion of the property that may have been acquired during the marriage.

Trade Union Work.

The trade unions of the U. S. S. R. have generally been very successful in attracting women members. But the same conditions which have hindered the participation of women in the work of government have naturally also affected their participation in the active work of the trade unions.

At the fifth All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions in September, 1922, note was taken of the growing participation of women in trade union work in the resolution of the congress or organization. This congress decided to carry on the work of organizing women as part of the general work of the unions, and appointed special women organizers in unions and trades in which there were a large number of women workers.

According to the report of the All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions for 1923, the number of women members of trade unions has decreased slightly, owing to the greater proportion of unemployment amongst women resulting from the concentration of industry and the cutting down of government staffs. On the other hand, the proportion of women taking an active part in trade union work has increased very considerably.



Kalenin's Mother and Daughter

At the present time, women make up 36.6 per cent of the trade union membership; 21.5 per cent of the disputes committees; 32.5 per cent of the labor protection committees; 30.3 per cent of the educational committees; 18 per cent of the mutual aid fund commissions; and 32.6 of those in attendance at delegate meetings. These figures are high, compared with the trade union statistics of the Western countries.

The proportion of active women workers, whilst high in the lower committees, particularly in those organized by the factory committees, is considerably smaller in the higher and central departments of the trade union. In the factory committees and the local trade union committees, women constitute on an average 14.4 per cent of the members (varying from 0.9 per cent in the sugar workers to 36.7 per cent in the tailor's union). The proportion of women in provincial councils of trade unions is only 6 per cent (varying from 0 to 36.4 per cent in the above-mentioned unions.) In the presidiums of the provincial councils, 5.7 per cent, and in the central executive committees, 4.2 per cent are women.

In 1922 only 3.5 per cent of the elected members and 10.4 per cent of the paid officials of provincial trade union councils were women. In 1923 these proportions increased to 5.7 per cent and 17.2 per cent respectively.

Women and the Co-operatives.

The co-operative movement has carried on systematic propaganda amongst women. Since 1921, at every delegate meeting or conference of peasant or proletarian women,

lectures have been given on co-operation. Special women's sections have been formed for the systematic study of the co-operative movement and of all questions concerning co-operation, and its significance in socialist reconstruction. Many women are attending education courses on co-operation.

This agitation has borne fruit. The number of women who have joined the co-operative societies is considerable. Women take part in the administrative and control commissions, as well as in co-operative conferences. In the local administrative departments there are now more than 7,500 women workers and peasants.

The Peasant Women.

The following typical recent reports illustrate the great revolution in thought and custom since Tsarist days.

In the Lipetsky county, in the central region of the R. S. F. S. R., 67 peasant women have been elected to village Soviets, and 31 to district Soviets. In several of these Soviets women have been elected chairmen. There are also in this country women presidents of the people's lay courts. Peasant women take part in the district agricultural commissions. Three hundred women attend the school for illiterates.

In out of the way villages of Azerbaidjan, there was in 1922 only a woman here and there who had been elected to the country Soviets. In 1923, however, various county Soviets have from 27-50 women members.

Throughout the provinces of the Union, special peasant women's conferences are held from time to time, at which the range of subjects discussed varies from the most humdrum daily needs of the peasant to foreign policy and conditions in Germany. There are peasant journals, edited and written by peasant women. Many peasant women are well-known as splendid organizers.

Spanish Prisoners Ask for Pictorial

Cell Prison of Madrid, April 20, 1924

"Soviet Russia Pictorial,"

Chicago.

Dear Comrades:

In consequence of the military repression we are under arrest at the Prison of Madrid for the last four months, several members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain. We should like, since the prison regime permits it, to follow daily the Communist movement of other countries.

Before our imprisonment we had the publications which were sent out to the Party. Now this material does not reach us because it is used by the new members of the Central Committee.

We would be very much obliged if you would have the kindness to send us regularly a number of "Soviet Russia Pictorial" at the address below.

It will serve to inform imprisoned comrades who when they will be released will put all their activity at the service of Communist propaganda.

We are sure, dear comrade, that you will do everything possible to grant our wish and we thank you in advance.

Receive our Communist greetings,

JUAN ANDRADA, Editor of "La Antorcha".