

Wednesday, 20 August 1947

Hasenhecke bei Kassel

Director: Bassewitzsch

The Schlosserei ^{has} ~~is~~ a good exhibition of products. A complete program of study and of projects is posted on the wall. The projects are accompanied by small drawings, for both practical and related technical work. Another table indicates the number of hours given to each of the operations, filing, sewing, etc.

In the drawing room we were introduced to the director's son, 20 years old, who is the teacher. He is apparently successful. The model drawings which he had made were very good, and the students' copies were also good.

Some of the students are now making vises. There are two classes in Schlosserei, totaling 15 students. The machine shop has 20, and the auto-mechanic shop 20.

Galvanizing. A room, formerly housing shower baths, is to be used to teach ~~the~~ galvanizing. The sanitary facilities were very useful. Here I saw several cases of window glass, which had been obtained from the German economy on the basis of a "Bezugschein." When the school was started in this building, it was a wreck, and is only gradually ^{being} made habitable. Much needs to be done to make it habitable in the summer time, much ^{more} remains to be done for making it habitable in the winter. The store room had in it a small number of ^{tools} shoes, useful but not plentiful.

present out

Dress making. Eighteen students of thirty on register. Five sewing machines, two now under repair, shortage of paper and scissors. It seems that Kassel had been a forgotten ORT area but is now getting attention. The teacher of this class, Miss Rothmann, ~~has~~ spent two years in Berlin learning her trade and then had many years of practice in Poland.

Nearly everything in the school is improvised.

Carpentry. This was the first day for the class - the teacher, two students, one bench, and a few tools. The teacher was a worker in the camp, engaged in decorating the recreation hall. He has had much experience as a furniture maker and material maker. With this small beginning he will probably do a good job.

Auto-mechanics. The students were working at a large truck received in good working condition from IRO. IRO also supplied ~~them~~ separate parts. The students were engaged in cleaning them up. However, the shop did not have any of the appearance of ^a the place where ⁱⁿ construction ^{could} ~~can~~ really go on. An adjoining room housed a cut-off model of engine and chassis, some fairly good charts and improvised desks and benches. This was a better looking place.

I picked up a Polish book on auto-mechanics which included only a few drawings. I asked about the I and E books on auto-mechanics and the teacher raised the usual objection that he could not read English. So, again I had to point out that the numerous and detailed diagrams were

practically self-explaining. Then it turned out that there was a teacher of English in the general school of the camp who could probably do some translating. With such help these I and E books could be exceedingly useful. At this point Mr. Solun explained how hard it was to get German teachers from a city that was 90% destroyed.

Machine shop. The director had struggled with the camp committee for eight months to get the use of an excellent machine shop that was working only a few minutes each day making cigarette holders. This ^{included} ~~involved~~ five excellent lathes, shaper, hacksaw, two drill presses, and other machine shop equipment. This story involved camp politics, since the superintendent of the maintenance shop wanted to be director of the school. The problem seems now to have been solved but it was apparently a long and bitter battle.

Blacksmithing. The blacksmith is a repair and maintenance man but he takes in two or three students to work along with him. He is now making legs for tables in the carpentry shop. Each student has a program of hours in the smithy.

The director is a little, almost humorous-looking man with great vivacity and friendliness. He does not conform in appearance to the usual pattern of administrator, but Mr. Solun feels that he has done excellent work in developing the school. He is utterly devoted to it and spends all kinds of hours in it. The result is a continued struggle for efficiency against great odds.