

ARREST STRIKERS FOR BEING ASSAULTED

Charges That Mercer Street Police See Them Beaten, Then Gather in the Victims.

WOMAN UNIONIST'S ARREST

**Miss Dreier of Their League Taken to the Station, but Released There—
Hint of Bribery in the Precinct.**

Policeman Joseph De Cantillon of the Mercer Street Station—the "Penitentiary Precinct" of the Police Department—arrested yesterday morning Miss Mary Dreier, President of the Women's Trade Union League, a wealthy champion of laboring women in this city, because she advised a young woman operative, hurrying to the lofts of the Triangle Waist Company of 29 Washington Place, that there was a strike there, and urged her not to be a strikebreaker.

This, however, Miss Dreier said last night was only the latest of a series of outrages which had been perpetrated by men of the "penitentiary precinct" for months. Miss Dreier asserted that upon every occasion the police have taken the part of the shop owners in Washington Place and the surrounding neighborhood where there have been strikes of women operatives in the last few months. The police, said Miss Dreier, always arrest the pickets put out by the striking girls, even when the pickets have been beaten, in the presence of the police, by strikebreakers, both men and women.

In the case of her own arrest yesterday morning Miss Dreier said that the young woman whom she had accosted, Miss Anna Walla of 437 East Twelfth Street, had struck her with her fist, yet De Cantillon, on Miss Walla's complaint that Miss Dreier had annoyed her, seized Miss Dreier.

At the station Lieut. Von Derzelsky told her that her arrest had been a mistake and that she was at liberty to go. She did not remain to make a complaint against De Cantillon nor against Miss Walla, although at her home, 144 East Sixty-fifth Street, she said last night that she had protested to De Cantillon, when he arrested her, that Miss Walla had delivered the blow, and not she.

Just why the police have so openly sided with the employers, as Miss Dreier charged, she declared she did not know, but among the employes in many of the shops the reason was boldly stated to be that the employers had "sugared" the police. This charge is being made upon every side.

Woman Unionist's Story.

Miss Dreier, who is a frail young woman and speaks with a foreign accent, said that about 150 girls were on strike. The Woman's Trades Union League, of which she is the President, is backing them in their fight against Harris & Blanck, owners of the Triangle Waist Company. The strike, she said, began about five weeks ago. The girls were "locked out," the owners of the factory giving as a reason that they had no work for them to do.

"When these girls were discharged," said Miss Dreier, "they took the excuse 'no more work at present' in good faith, and left without a murmur, although they are all poor girls, most of them foreigners, who find it hard to make both ends meet. Imagine their surprise when a day or two following their discharge they read advertisements in the papers for girls to take their places in the factory. Then the lockout became a strike.

"The Woman's Trades Union League became interested in the matter, and a committee in charge of Miss Violet Pike was named to take charge of the picketing. Policemen were sent to the place, some of them in plain clothes, and from the first they have all apparently been in sympathy with the employers. They have arrested many of the girls, and have been telling us we were doing wrong when we talked to the strikebreaking girls about what they were doing, despite the fact that, as we all know, moral suasion in such matters is legal.

Was Keeping Within the Law.

"Whenever we spoke to the girls the police would come up and gruffly order us to stop talking, and when we asserted our legal rights in the matter, persisted in their refusal to allow us to talk. As to the incident this morning, which resulted in my arrest, I am glad of the chance to tell the facts.

"I was crossing the street to see a girl who was on the way to the factory. One of the plain clothes men stopped me with the excuse as that I was obstructing a public highway. I insisted on my rights, and told him I would continue to act as I had been acting, as I knew the law and was careful to keep within it.

"The only thing I said to the girl was 'There's a strike in the Triangle.' She became very angry and talked about my annoying her. Then she struck me. When she struck me I turned to the policeman to see if he would arrest her, as he had been doing in the case of the striking girls. The girl told him that I had been annoying and threatening her, whereupon the policeman turned to her and said, 'If you want to press the charge, come along to the station house with me.'

Released at the Station.

"In the station the girl told the Lieutenant behind the desk that I said, 'I will split your head open if you try to go to work.' That was so palpably false that the Lieutenant refused to listen further and released me. Of course, I shall continue my work on behalf of the girls."

The striking shirtwaist operatives have had the support of the Central Labor Union of Brooklyn as well as of the Woman's Trade Union League. A special committee, known as "The Committee to Assist the Ladies' Waistmakers' Union," was appointed by the Central Labor Union of Brooklyn and the Woman's Trade Union League. Miss Helen Marot, Secretary of the Trade League, was a member of this committee. Complaint of conditions in the precinct was made by the committee in writing to Police Commissioner Baker some time ago, and on Oct. 30, by order of the Commissioner, Inspector Daly gave the committee a hearing.

To-day Commissioner Baker will receive a second letter explaining why the committee does not feel that the hearing before Inspector Daly was satisfactory. The committee admits that the hearing was a full one, so full, in fact, that it was terminated at the request of the committee itself, but only "after it became plain that the Inspector upheld your officers

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against each complaint specified in the letter as well as other complaints made against the plainclothes men."

Thugs Hired for Intimidation.

The charge is made that thugs have been hired to intimidate the pickets. This has been heard in the precinct for months. At the time of the neckwear strike, ended a few weeks ago, it was asserted that bands of "strong-arm men" were imported from the Bowery and the regions east of it by certain employers to intimidate the strikers. The intimidation took the form of beatings. It is a fact that one young girl was confined to her bed for three weeks as the result of the treatment at the hands of half a dozen of these thugs.

Miss Elsie Cole, a graduate of Vassar and a member of the Woman's Trade Union League, has been helping the Triangle girl strikers. She told some of her experiences with the police yesterday. They were similar to those of Miss Dreier. She declared that one policeman, when she quoted to him the law permitting her to use moral suasion in influencing strike-breakers so long as she did not try and influence them by acts expressing or implying threats, intimidations, coercion, or force, exclaimed:

"Well, you know me, young lady. None of that around here."

Miss Marot declares that when she was on picket duty a plainclothes man said to her: "You out-of-town scum, keep out of this or you'll find yourself in jail."

When this remark was reported to Inspector Daly at the hearing the committee says he replied:

"Well, scum might be a nice word. How do I know what it means?"

LAUNDRY GIRLS THREATENING.

In Wait for Little Man Who Threw 200-Pound Woman Into "Dip."

Half a hundred laundry girls, each and every one declaring vengeance on Benno Helm, their former employer, crowded into the Morrisania Court yesterday to hear the case of Mrs. Kate Mahoney against Helm, charged with assault.

Mrs. Mahoney weighs close to 200 pounds and lives at 200 East Thirty-fifth Street. Helm tips the scales at about 90. He runs a laundry in Ittner Place, between Webster and Park Avenues.

"'Twas this way," said Mrs. Mahoney. "He gives us starch to use that might as well be plain water. I tell him his starch is no good, and what does he do but throw me into the dip."

"And what is the dip?"

"The dip," answered Mrs. Mahoney, amazed at the ignorance of his Honor, "is the big pot in which we dip the clothes."

"And what shall I do with this man?" asked the Magistrate.

"Hang him," answered Mrs. Mahoney.

"Yes, hang him," chorused the fifty girls in the background.

"I discharge him," answered Magistrate Butts.

The girls gathered outdoors and wanted to give Helm a strong-arm reception. They were disappointed, because a policeman escorted Helm.

Then the girls, rallied by Mrs. Mahoney, trooped to the civil court up stairs. There they announced they wanted to sue Mr. Helm for damages.