

WHY?

Why are some of the aristocratic German prisoners at the Vernon internment camp treated with such sickening deference and consideration? Why are they given all manner of privileges which renders their confinement a farce? Why can a certain Baron parade the streets, enter the stores and conduct himself as he pleases with only the nominal restraint of a guard keeping carefully in the background? - Will somebody kindly inform us if these men are our enemies or friends? If not enemies why are they imprisoned? If foes why are they handled in this kid-gloved style?

These men represent the most dangerous element of our alien population. They are well educated and resourceful. They are of the class from whence come the most efficient spies and agents possessed by the Kaiser. One of them possesses far more potentialities for mischief than a hundred ignorant Austrian laborers such as are digging trenches at the concentration camp. Vigilance is doubly necessary in their cases; but all manner of privileges seem to be theirs for the asking. That there is no limit to their brazen effrontery is indicated by the letter which they sent to this paper two weeks ago, and which, for reasons then explained, we gave a place in our columns. When they were arrested in Vancouver an imbecile policeman allowed one of them to communicate with his wife over the phone, and he conducted a conversation in German with her, with the result that traces of freshly destroyed documents were found a few minutes afterwards in the furnace at his house.

On Tuesday night a number of incendiary fires broke out at Kamloops, which are attributed to German origin. Vernon may not be immune from such outrages. The fact that the concentration camp will be established here will make this city a point to which the activities of German spies and enemies will naturally be attracted. Do the authorities responsible for the affairs of the internment camp realize this? Are they merely playing at being at war, or are they seized with the supreme gravity of the situation? It is not pleasant to refer to these things, but the souls of many of us are consumed with burning and well-justified bitterness these days against our brutal foes, and the questions above set forth are forcing themselves home upon our minds with a strength that makes silence no longer a possibility.