

Your letter, dear Anne, shows that fundamentally you have remained the same: good humoured, even-tempered, full of optimism, determined to be happy and to make other people happy. When you think of me you recall a picture of two silly young things giggling incessantly. When I think of you I see both of us in tears and I know why we cried-but we both have forgotten what made us laugh!

Perhaps you have forgotten the incident I am thinking of. Let me recall it to you: It was in the spring of 1925-we both were just 19 years old and in the "Oberprima". We were-like all young intelligent people ~~at~~ at that time-deeply interested in politics and convinced socialists. If we could have voted we would have voted Socialdemocrats-not communists. Our upbringing had taught us to value the freedom of the individual as much as a just economic system and we were not willing to sacrifice this freedom to the state as the communists were.-But we were only 19 and could not yet vote. And there was ~~no~~ socialdemocratic candidate.

Ebert, the first German Reichspräsident, had died and the two candidates between whom the German people had to decide, were Marx and Hindenburg. ~~It~~ To us young idealists, it seemed quite ludicrous that the old Feldmarschall who represented the lost war, the monarchy, which did not exist anymore, who was the embodiment of reaction and militarism should have any chance of becoming the President of our young Republic. Of course, Marx was not ideal either-it was the tragic misfortune of the democracy in Germany not to be able to present any real leaders to the German people-but at least he was a reliable democrat with whom the constitution would be safe.

As the weeks passed and the *election campaign* grew to its climax, it became evident that it would be a close draw. But still we refused to admit the possibility of a defeat, ~~we~~ we did not even admit the thought of Hindenburg as Reichspräsident. It seemed impossible. As youngsters we were not allowed to take any active parts in politics-it was a rule of all high schools-you remember? Germany did not want the youngsters to be immersed in party politics before they were mature and of voting-age. (How things have changed!) But we talked of scarcely anything else during these weeks, we read papers, we listened to the Radio, we even went-secretely-to some political meetings.

And now the day had come and the blow had fallen. Late at night the election-result had been broadcast: Hindenburg had been elected.-

In the morning I went early to school, but after