





MAP OF POLAND.

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THE PERSECUTION
OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
IN GERMAN-OCCUPIED
POLAND

REPORTS PRESENTED BY H.E. CARDINAL HLOND,
PRIMATE OF POLAND, TO POPE PIUS XII,
VATICAN BROADCASTS AND OTHER RELIABLE
EVIDENCE

PREFACE
BY H.E. A. CARDINAL HINSLEY
ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER

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1941

THE PERSECUTION
OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
IN GERMAN-OCCUPIED
POLAND

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PREFACE

WHEN the Nazi leaders began their overt campaign against Christianity the official plan was stated thus: "We are not going to create martyrs. We shall not give the Church that satisfaction—she shall have not martyrs but criminals."

The treatment of Poland appals the world. The Nazi invaders and tyrants show the depth of criminality that inspires them. "Their frenzy is according to the likeness of a serpent" (Ps. lvii. 4). More unscrupulous treachery was never used by a strong political party against races of so-called "inferior" blood! Never was so cruel and bloodthirsty an effort made by usurping forces to obliterate the faith and culture of a nation as by the Nazis in Poland. The evidence is incontestable; it is revealed in these pages. Generations to come will hail the martyrs of Poland as victims of inhuman criminals.

The opposition of Nazi principles to Christian morality appears from their definition of "honour," as was given in the new German *Allbuch* (formerly Meyer's Encyclopædia)—"Honour: a man is honourable only if the idea of German honour is inseparably bound up with his whole being. The entire new German universe is based on this new conception of honour. The Christian idea of charity is radically opposed to this conception of honour as entertained by the German people." A still clearer idea of Nazi morality is given in the monthly *National Socialist Education of Girls*. Here we find the following remarks about "blood feuds": "Blood revenge leads into the very depths of the German religious sense; it is not, as was alleged, a relic of barbaric primitive periods. It was only considered sinful when the blood of the clan had been deprived of its sacredness." The cold-blooded mass massacres which have been perpetrated in Poland by Nazi agents are the outcome of such "religious sense."

Truly the iron language of facts has torn away the veil from wholesale deceit. The camouflage is discovered. We know the intrigues and the lying and the shifty half-truths which sought to cover a war of extermination against Christian ideals. The criminals are disclosed. Their national war-god demands his fill of blood, hecatombs of slaughtered men, women and children.

A well-informed German has written of the German "new morality" which has physically and morally corrupted the German youth: "The young inoculated with the virus cannot help but succumb to the disease. Indeed, the course of the war so far bears that out only too well. The standard is—Germany: what is deemed to advance Germany is good; anything that impedes her is evil. The outstanding example is the fate of Poland, where horrors and excesses took place that beggar description—nor are they all yet known. There, so said an eye-witness of some of those atrocities, it was the young National Socialists who were the worst, the most brutal, the most barbarous; the older men, who had not yet, despite all the propaganda of the Party, forgotten the Christian tradition in which they were brought up, were, by comparison, angels of mercy—they dared not interfere with the others, but they did little themselves to torture and destroy the conquered."

Poles, in this hour in which your faith is being tried like true gold in the fire of unequalled tribulation, when your sons and daughters are made victims of unheard-of cruelty, when your faith is persecuted and your age-long culture is marked down for destruction, when you are cut off from your truthful news and normal means of defence, we give you our hearts' full sympathy and all the help that lies in our power. We commend you confidently to the all-just Judge, who will reward the martyrs and requite the criminals according to their deserts.

March 28th, 1941.

A. CARDINAL HINSLEY,
Archbishop of Westminster.

FOREWORD

THIS book consists of a collection of documents illustrating the monstrous persecutions practised by the German authorities against the Catholic Church, its clergy, and wide circles of the religious population in Poland.

The reader should remember that the Polish territories occupied by the Germans are divided into *two almost equal portions*.

The first consists of the western provinces of Poland—Poznania, Polish Pomerania, and Silesia—together with large portions of Central and Southern Poland—namely, the areas of Suwalki, Ciechanow, Plock, Wloclawek, Lodz, Kalisz, Sosnowiec, Bedzin, Biala, Chrzanow, Zywiec, and Wadowice. The whole of this area, with more than ten million inhabitants, of whom more than nine millions are Poles and only 600,000 Germans, was as early as October, 1939, *incorporated* by the German Government in the Reich, in the face of all the principles of international law.

The second portion of the German-occupied territory in Poland consists of the so-called *Government General*—*i.e.*, the main part of Central Poland with the cities or towns of Warsaw, Cracow, Lublin, Radom, Kielce, and Czestochowa, and a population of about twelve millions. The German authorities at first proposed to make the Government General into a kind of Polish “protectorate,” and accordingly looked for Poles who would agree to take on the functions of members of the “government” in such cases. But no single Pole was to be found who would play the shameful part of a Quisling in his country, thus barbarously tortured by the invaders. The Germans therefore gave up their fruitless efforts and annexed the Government General likewise to the Reich.

There still, however, continues to be a certain difference in the treatment of the two portions of German-occupied territory. In the area "incorporated" in the autumn of 1939 and directly united with the Reich, the Germans aim at the complete abolition of the Polish character and aspect of the country, deporting masses of the Polish population to the east and confiscating the whole property, movable and immovable, of the Poles. The Government General, on the other hand, though it is likewise governed by terrorism, is yet "marked out" to be "the seat of the Polish population," and therefore in principle no Poles are deported from it, except for large numbers of young women and men who are taken for forced labour in the interior of Germany.

This difference in the method of treatment of the two areas is manifested likewise in relation to the Catholic Church, the violence offered to the Church in the districts directly "incorporated" being still greater than in the Government General.

From the point of view of ecclesiastical administration the German-occupied area in Poland is constituted as follows: the archdioceses of Gniezno and Poznan (including Poznania), the diocese of Chelmno (*i.e.*, Polish, or Eastern, Pomerania), the diocese of Katowice (*i.e.*, Polish Silesia), almost the whole diocese of Lodz, the diocese of Wloclawek, the greater part of the diocese of Plock, part of the diocese of Lomza, part of the diocese of Czestochowa, part of the diocese of Kielce, part of the archdiocese of Warsaw, and part of the archdiocese of Cracow.

The Government General includes part of the diocese of Plock, part of the archdiocese of Warsaw, a small portion of the diocese of Lodz, the diocese of Sandomierz, part of the diocese of Czestochowa, the greater part of the diocese of Kielce, the diocese of Siedlce, the diocese of Lublin, the greater part of the archdiocese of Cracow, the diocese of Tarnow, and part of the diocese of Przemysl. The remainder of the dioceses or parts of

them are under Soviet occupation. The reader is advised to refer to the accompanying map showing these ecclesiastical divisions.

The situation of the Catholic Church in the area directly "incorporated" in the Reich has been described in two reports presented to Pope Pius XII by the Primate of Poland, H.E. Cardinal Hlond. The first relates to the two oldest Polish archdioceses, those of Gniezno and Poznan, and the second to the remaining dioceses, or parts of dioceses, "incorporated" in the Reich, with a supplement relating to the archdioceses of Gniezno and Poznan.*

Both these reports are here printed unchanged and in full. Only the Final Observations of the second report, which describes in general terms the persecutions of the Catholic Church in the directly "incorporated" area, has been transferred to the end of both reports, relating as it does to the territories described in them as a whole.

Cardinal Hlond's reports do not take in the situation in the Government General, which, however, has been described, together with the situation in the directly "incorporated" area, in a report by that eminent representative of the Polish clergy, Mgr. Sigismund Kaczynski, who before the war was manager of the Polish Catholic Press Agency in Warsaw, and now is Chaplain to the President of the Polish Republic in London. Mgr. Kaczynski spent a number of months in the part of Poland occupied by the Germans, and his report is therefore based on carefully checked facts and evidence. After he reached Rome it was printed in Italian under the title: *La situazione della Chiesa Cattolica nella Polonia occupata dei Tedeschi* (The Situation of the Catholic Church in German-Occupied Poland).

It is here presented in its entirety in an English translation.

It is followed by a few shorter reports, likewise written

* In the first report of Cardinal Hlond the Government General is called Central Poland.

by Catholic clergy, on the unheard-of cruelties practised by the Germans in Poland.

In conclusion, this book gives the full text of the first broadcast from the Vatican concerning the persecutions of the Catholic Church and the Polish population. This broadcast was intended for America, and was sent out in the night of January 21st to 22nd, 1940. It was followed by further broadcasts in various languages: Spanish, Portuguese, German, and others following the same text with certain modifications.

In all these materials the reader will find unusually interesting and moving evidence, not merely of the situation of the Catholic Church, but also of the tragic fate of the Polish people under the most monstrous yoke known to history.

The situation has undergone no change since the reports here presented were written. The best evidence of this is to be found in the answer of the Vatican broadcasting station on November 16th and 17th, 1940, to the false German propaganda asserting that the position of the Catholic Church in Poland had improved. The Vatican radio most categorically denied that statement, and laid stress on the fact that the brutal persecutions of the Catholic Church and the Polish people, especially in the areas directly "incorporated" in the Reich, still continue.

The same statements, supported by detailed evidence, were repeated in a Vatican broadcast in French of November 29th, 1940.

The texts of these broadcasts are given at the end of this book.

The situation in the Polish territories occupied by the Soviets, where the Catholic Church is likewise harshly persecuted, requires separate treatment and is not dealt with here.

LONDON,
March, 1941.

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FIRST REPORT OF CARDINAL HLOND,
PRIMATE OF POLAND, TO POPE PIUS XII.

RELIGIOUS SITUATION
IN THE
ARCHDIOCESES
OF
GNIEZNO AND POZNAN

FIRST REPORT ON CARDINAL ILIAND
PRIMATE OF POLAND TO POPE PIUS XII

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I

ARCHDIOCESE OF GNIEZNO

1. AT Gniezno the post of Vicar-General is held by the Rev. Edward van Blericq, Metropolitan Canon, Doctor of Canon Law.

When the Germans occupied the territory, they forbade him to exercise acts of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, a prohibition which was lifted in the middle of November. Moreover, the possibilities of so acting were limited. The Archdiocesan Curia was closed by the Gestapo. The Vicar-General exercises his office in his own home, deprived of access to the records and to the archives, which, on the contrary, are the object of study on the part of the police. He may receive those priests only who obtain permission to come to Gniezno, but he himself is not permitted to visit the parishes outside of the city. The money of the Curia has been seized and the fund of 80,000 zloty sequestered. Likewise, the Metropolitan Tribunal of the first and second instance has been closed and taken over by the Gestapo.

The keys of the Curia and the Tribunal are in the hands of the Gestapo.

The Metropolitan Chapter was dispersed. The Vicar-General and Mgr. Krzeszkiewicz remain in their houses. The others were ejected from their homes, and Canon Brasse was deported to Central Poland (*i.e.*, that part of Poland seized, occupied and ruled by the Germans, but not incorporated into the Reich).

The primatial Basilica, restored and ornately decorated in recent years, was declared unfit for habitation and closed by the police, who likewise took possession of it. With the doors closed, concerts are given there from

records, for the purpose of German propaganda. It appears that the sanctuary is being used as a place for various types of work, without any supervision, and it is feared that the venerable Basilica is being despoiled of its antique ornaments and precious furnishings.

The archiepiscopal seminary of philosophy at Gniezno was taken over by the soldiers. A German general has taken the archiepiscopal palace as his quarters. The homes of the expelled Canons, as likewise the dwelling-places of the lower clergy of the Basilica, have been occupied by the Germans. For the civil administration was taken over the house of Retreats and of retired priests, who took refuge with generous and virtuous families. The Conventual Fathers of Gniezno were thrust out of their parish and convent, the latter being used as a place of detention for Jews. The principal parish church, that of the Holy Trinity, was profaned, the parish house invaded, and the entire belongings were stolen.

2. The German authorities, especially the Gestapo, rage against the Catholic clergy, who live under a rule of terror, constantly harassed by provocations, with no possibility of recourse or legitimate defence.

The following were shot by the Germans:

Rev. Anthony Lewicki, rural dean and parish priest of Goscieszyn.

Rev. Michael Rolski, rural dean and parish priest of Szczepanowo.

Rev. Matthew Zablocki, rural dean and parish priest of Gniezno.

Rev. Wenceslaus Janke, parish priest of Jaktorowo.

Rev. Zeno Niziołkiewicz, parish priest of Slaboszewo.

Rev. John Jakubowski, curate of Bydgoszcz.

Rev. Casimir Nowicki, curate of Janowiec.

Rev. Ladislaus Nowicki, curate of Szczepanowo.

Rev. Peter Szarek, a Lazarist Father, curate of Bydgoszcz.

Rev. Wiorek, a Lazarist Father, curate of Bydgoszcz.

With blows of their rifle-butts, German soldiers killed:

Rev. Marian Skrzypczak, curate of Plonkowo.

Died due to forced labour:

Rev. Joseph Domeracki, rural dean and parish priest of Gromadno.

Died in prison:

Rev. Canon Boleslaus Jaskowski, parish priest of Inowroclaw.

Rev. Romoald Soltysinski, parish priest of Rzadkwin.

Killed by a German bomb:

Rev. Leo Breczewski, parish priest of Sosnica.

Many priests are imprisoned, suffering humiliations, blows, maltreatment. A certain number were deported to Germany, and of those there is no news. Others have been detained in concentration camps. Already there has begun the expulsion of priests into Central Poland, whence it is impossible and forbidden to return. The number of these last is on the increase. A group of priests have concealed themselves amongst the people, accomplishing a small measure of pastoral work in those regions that have already been completely despoiled of their clergy. Imprisonment and arrest were carried out in such circumstances that priests did not even have the opportunity either of consuming or of placing the Blessed Sacrament in a place secure from profanation. Those priests who are detained in the camp of Kazimierz Biskupi, if unable to pay four zloty a day for their support, are forced to hard labour. In the camp of Gorna Grupa they have been frequently maltreated. It is not rare to see a priest in the midst of labour gangs working in the fields, repairing roads and bridges, drawing wagons of coal, at work in the sugar factories, and even engaged in demolishing the synagogues. Some

of them have been shut up for the night in pigsties, barbarously beaten and subjected to other tortures. As illustrations, we cite three facts.

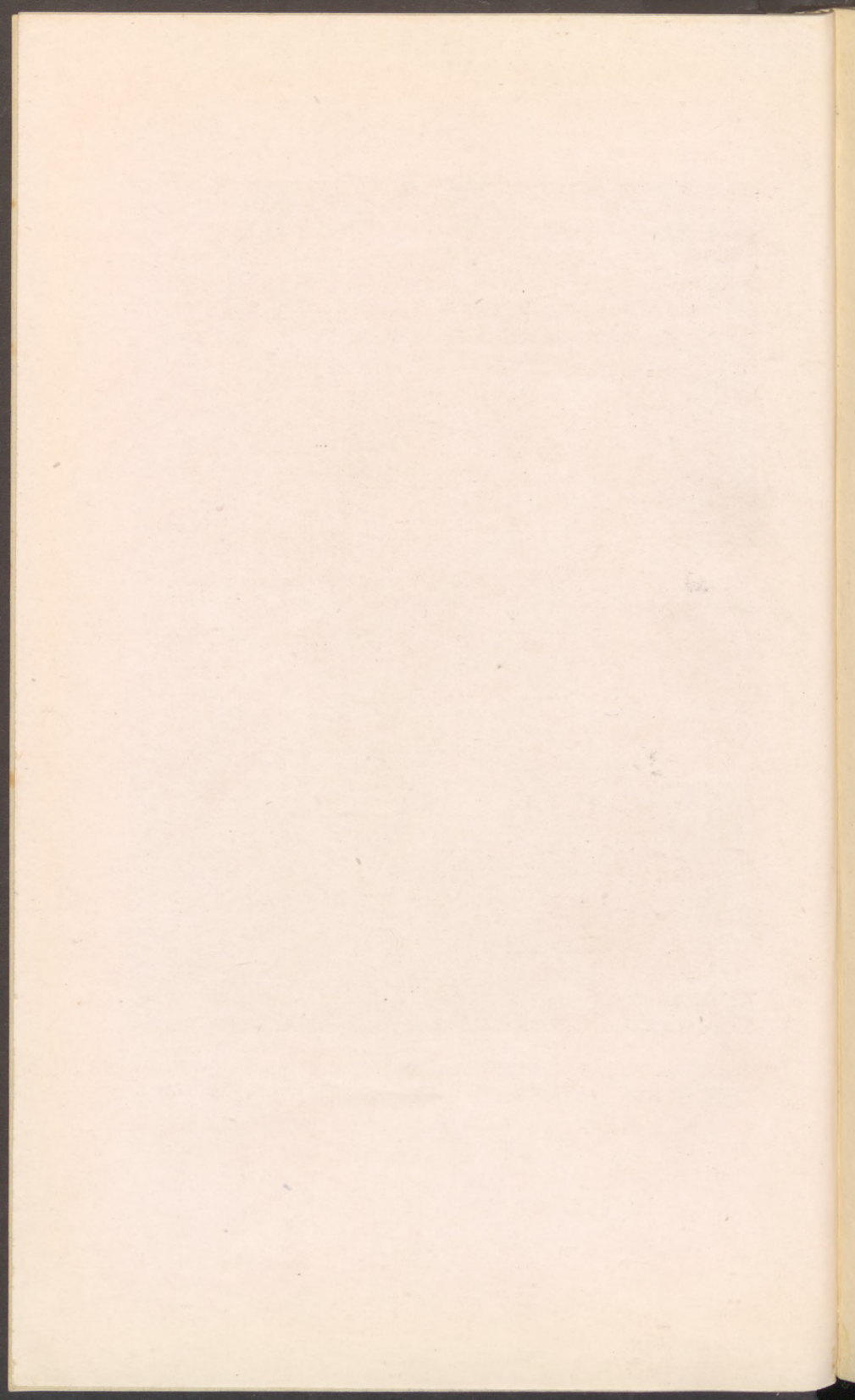
At Bydgoszcz, in September, about 5,000 men were imprisoned in a stable, in which there was not even room to sit on the ground. A corner of the stable had been designated as the place for the necessities of nature. The Canon Casimir Stepczynski, rural dean and parish priest of the place, was obliged, in company with a Jew, to carry away in his hands the human excrement, a nauseating task, considering the great number of prisoners. The curate, Adam Musial, who wished to take the place of the venerable priest, was brutally beaten with a rifle-butt.

The Rev. Anthony Dobrzynski, curate at Znin, was arrested on the street while, vested in surplice and stole, he was carrying the Viaticum to a dying person. The sacred vestments were torn from his back, the Blessed Sacrament was profaned, and the unfortunate priest was dragged at once to prison.

In November, at Gniezno, about three hundred families, assaulted totally unawares, were thrust out of their homes and shut up in the warehouse of a leather factory. Many were arrested on the street as they were returning from church. It was here that the Chancellor of the archdiocesan Curia, the Rev. Canon Alexius Brasse, the director of the primatial choir, the Rev. Canon Stanislaus Tloczynski, three Conventual Fathers, the curates Rev. Bogdan Bolc and Lawrence Wnuk were also confined. The last mentioned was taken by surprise, while still undressed, and was imprisoned, clothed only in pyjamas. Only after several days was he permitted to send for his clothes. All of these citizens, men, women, young and old, were shut up and confined promiscuously with the priests, with no separation whatever. This was a painful situation for the poor priests, especially when some time later another one hundred



THE CATHEDRAL AT GNIEZNO, THE ORIGINAL CAPITAL OF POLAND.
THIS ANCIENT CATHEDRAL HAS BEEN CLOSED BY THE GESTAPO.



and fifty families were added. Finally, all were deported in cattle cars to Central Poland.

3. From an authoritative source it is stated: "Between Bydgoszcz (Bromberg) and Gniezno the churches have been closed, with very few exceptions." In particular, the priests were removed from—

- All the 15 parishes of the deanery of Gniewkowo.
- All the 12 parishes of the deanery of Lobzenica.
- All the 16 parishes of the deanery of Naklo.
- All the 21 parishes of the deanery of Znin.
- 6 parishes of the deanery of Bydgoszcz, rural.
- 16 parishes of the deanery of Inowroclaw.
- 9 parishes of the deanery of Kcynia.
- 7 parishes of the deanery of Powidz.
- 7 parishes of the deanery of Trzemeszno.
- 5 parishes of the deanery of Wrzesnia.

In the remaining eleven deaneries there is not even one which does not count at least a few parishes deprived of its pastors. Many of these are considered by the German authorities simply as *aufgehoben*. This situation (in the total 261 parishes almost half are without any priest) is growing worse and worse in proportion as the Polish population is being violently torn from the land of its ancestors and is being replaced by Germans, who have been brought from various parts of Europe. Among these Catholics are rare.

Those churches which still have the ministrations of priests are permitted to be open only on Sunday, and then only from nine to eleven o'clock in the morning. At Bydgoszcz alone is there greater liberty. Sermons are allowed to be preached only in German, but since these serve often as a pretext for the Germans to carry off the priests to prison there is scarcely any preaching. Church hymns in Polish have been forbidden. The devotion of the afflicted people is edifying. As soon as the churches are open the people enter in throngs to have their children

baptized, to go to Confession and to receive Holy Communion, so that the priest has scarcely time to finish Holy Mass before the fatal hour of eleven. Marriages are not being celebrated, as it is severely forbidden to bless a marriage which has not already been contracted before an official of the civil government. The latter, as a matter of principle, does not admit marriages between Poles. In various places the priests are interned in their own homes, and cannot bring the last Sacraments to the dying.

The crucifixes were removed from the schools. No religious instruction is being imparted. It is forbidden to collect offerings in the churches for the purposes of worship. The priests are being compelled to recite publicly a prayer for Hitler after the Sunday Mass.

In such conditions pious and religious associations are not functioning. The Catholic Action, so flourishing but six months ago, has been proscribed, and its more conspicuous advocates have been persecuted. Catholic societies of charity, the Ladies of Charity, the Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul, the pious foundations, have been dissolved and their funds confiscated.

From the time of the entrance of the German troops into those regions, numerous crucifixes, busts, and statues of Our Lord, of the Blessed Virgin and of the Saints that adorned the streets were battered to the ground. The artistic statues of the patron saints, placed in the squares of the cities, and even the pictures and sacred monuments on houses and on private grounds, met with the same fate. At Bydgoszcz the monument of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was profaned and destroyed.

The Church, after ten centuries of apostolate and after a glorious renaissance of the religious life during these last twenty years, has been forced to withdraw to the catacombs. Priests are beginning to say Mass and to administer the Sacraments secretly in private homes. The zeal of the priests is astonishing, the piety of the

faithful is greater than ever, the devotion to the Church is heroic.

4. The oppression being exerted against the houses and apostolate of Religious houses has as its purpose and end their total extinction. As we have already noted, the Conventuals of Gniezno were imprisoned and deported. A new and beautiful house and the sumptuous church just erected at Bydgoszcz were confiscated from the Lazarist Fathers. The police have installed themselves in the house, while in the church, closed for worship, the German soldiers are carrying on licentious orgies. The Minorites were expelled from their new and large college at Jarocin. The same fate fell to the lot of the Congregation at the Holy Ghost at Bydgoszcz, to the novitiate of the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Family at Górká Klasztorna, to the novitiate of the Pallotine Fathers of Suchary, to the novitiate of the Oblates of the Immaculate Conception of Markowice, and to the Mother-House along with the novitiate of the Society of Christ for Emigrants at Potulice.

Much more serious were the losses suffered by the religious institutes of women. The Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul lost fourteen houses, among these hospitals, orphanages, asylums. The Congregation of the Sacred Heart witnessed the occupation of its new High School and College and Boarding-School at Polska Wies. The Sisters of Saint Elisabeth (*Graue Schwestern*: Grey Sisters) were expelled from nineteen houses. The Daughters of the Immaculata, whose mother-house is at Pleszew, were forced to close their house for aspirants to the congregation, their novitiate, and in addition lost seventeen other houses. Two houses were taken from the Congregation of St. Dominic of the Third Order, and likewise from the Daughters of the Mother of Sorrows.

A repugnant scene took place at the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration of Bydgoszcz. The Gestapo

invaded the papal cloister, and summoned the nuns to the chapel, where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed. One of the police ascended the pulpit and cried that the nuns were wasting their time praying, because "God does not exist, for if there were a God, we would not be here." The nuns, with the exception of the Mother Superior, who was gravely ill, were conducted outside the cloister, and shut up for twenty-four hours in the cellars of the *Passtelle* (passport office). Meanwhile the Gestapo searched the convent, and one of the policemen carried to the Mother Superior, confined to bed in her cell, the ciborium that had been taken out of the tabernacle. He commanded her to consume the consecrated hosts, crying: *Auffressen!* (Eat them up). The unfortunate nun carried out the command, but at one point asked for water, which was refused. With an effort the nun managed to consume all the sacred element, and thus save them from further profanation.

5. The Church is in the hands of the Gestapo also with regard to its possessions. The funds of the archdiocesan Curia have been sequestrated. The Braciszewo estate, proprietor of the archiepiscopal seminary, is under forced administration. The archiepiscopal palace was given over to the general of the division for his quarters. The Gestapo has taken possession of the Curia, of the Basilica, of the diocesan archives, of the very old and famous archives and library of the Chapter. The parochial books have been carried away. Particularly in the parishes, from which the priests had been removed, the German authorities consider themselves owners of the church, the cemetery, the parish house, and of all property, ecclesiastical and private. Above all, the administration of the lands that constituted the benefices and the funds of the Church were entrusted to men in the confidence of the German Government, who turn over nothing either to the Church or to the parish priest. Even in the parishes

still provided with pastors, priests have already been expelled from their parochial houses, and in their places trustworthy followers of the new lords of Poland have been installed. Funds for the maintenance of the churches have begun to fail, and the priests are living solely on the charity of the faithful. If this state of affairs continues for any length of time, a complete spoliation of the Church will be the consequence, and the great means of support that long centuries had collected at the price of great effort and generosity for the purposes of divine worship will be lost.

II

ARCHDIOCESE OF POZNAN

6 The Vicar-General, His Excellency Mgr. Valentino Dymek, an able prelate, pious, generous and very active, has been interned in his own house since October 1st.

The Curia and the Metropolitan Court, whether of first or second instance, for Cracow, Lwow and Wlodelawek are closed and in the hands of the Gestapo, who are making a study of the records. The archiepiscopal palace was invaded by soldiers who have remained there for weeks ruining its fittings. The records of the Primatial Chancellory have been and still are being carefully examined by the Gestapo, who also raided the important archiepiscopal archives.

Of the Metropolitan Chapter the Canons Rucinski, Zborowski, and Szreybrowski have been imprisoned. Mgr. Pradzynski, seriously ill, is under military guard in his home. Canon Jedwabski, Chancellor of the archiepiscopal Curia and two German Canons, Steuer and Pach, have remained at their posts. Canon Zwolski alone of all the Canons of the Collegiate Church of St. Mary Magdalene is free.

The Cathedral of Poznan, which is at the same time a parish church for 14,000 souls, was closed by the police under the pretext of being unsafe for use. The keys are in the hands of the Gestapo. The most beautiful of Poznan's churches, the Collegiate Church of St. Mary Magdalene, a parish church for 23,000 souls, has likewise been closed, and it seems that the Germans behind closed doors are working in a way to arouse suspicions and fears. The Vicar Forane and the pastors of the city, with the ex-

ception of a few from the suburbs, are in prison. A good number of the assistants, too, were deported, so that just about 25 per cent. of the parish clergy of twenty-one parishes are at their posts.

The Theological Seminary, which numbered 120 students in the four-year course, was closed by the German authorities in October and the buildings were given over to a school for policemen. The land belonging to the Seminary, about 1,700 hectares, has been given to the secret agents to be exploited by them.

7. The clergy is subjected to the same treatment as the priests of the archdiocese of Gniezno. They are maltreated, arrested, held in prison or concentration camps, deported to Germany, expelled to Central Poland. At present about fifty are in prison and in concentration camps.

The pastors Rev. John Jadrzyk of Lechlin, Rev. Anthony Kozlowicz, Rev. Adam Schmidt of Roznowo, and Rev. Anthony Rządki, professor of religion at Srem, have been shot. There is an insistent report that other priests have also been shot, but the report is not certain, for one reason that the executions are being carried out now without publicity being given to them.

In general the clergy are living in constant uncertainty of the morrow, threatened as they are day and night with arrest and acts of violence. Here and there in the country there are still places that have not yet been reached by the wave of persecution. Generally speaking, the unlawful removal of the clergy from the parishes has not reached the proportions verified in the archdiocese of Gniezno; but now the colonization being pushed forward by the Baltic Germans looms as a threat from the north and the south, for this is usually preceded by the removal of the clergy and the closing of the churches.

The churches that are open can be used for devotions only on Sundays from 9 till 11. Priests have begun to say

Mass on week-days in the early hours of the morning behind closed doors. Marriages are not being celebrated. There are no sermons and no music. Crucifixes have been removed from class-rooms, as well as holy pictures, and religion is no longer taught.

8. The Polish Episcopate had made Poznan the national centre for organization and direction of religious activity and especially of the Catholic Action for the entire Republic. Unfortunately, all these centres of tremendous activity, charitable works, organizations, and publications have been destroyed by German authorities. In particular:

- (a) The national centres of the Pontifical Association for the Propagation of the Faith, and of St. Peter the Apostle have been suppressed; their funds, about 250,000 zloty, have been confiscated.
- (b) The National Institute for Catholic Action has been abolished. It was the directing centre of all the Catholic activity in Poland. Its funds, about 70,000 zloty, besides its publications, valued at more than 100,000 zloty, and the furniture of its offices were sequestered. The National President of Catholic Action, the lawyer Mr. Dziembowski, and the office staff are in prison. The Director of the National Institute, Rev. Francis Marlewski, was first imprisoned, then expelled into Central Poland.
- (c) The offices of the national centres of the Association of Catholic Women were raided and assigned to other purposes; the same is true of the offices of the Catholic Youth and Catholic Girls Associations. The National President of the Catholic Youth Association, Edward Potworowski, a noble of Gola, Private Chamberlain of Cape and Sword to His Holiness, was publicly shot in the Square of Gostyn. The President of the Catholic Girls Association, Miss Maria

Suchocka, also of a noble family, together with her mother and brother, who had been deprived of his pharmacy at Pleszew, was robbed even of personal effects and expelled to Central Poland.

- (d) The Graduate School of Catholic Social Studies has been closed. This school of university rank, almost unique in the Catholic world, was founded to prepare, over a period of three years, study specialists with the pen, the word, and other means of activity, for Catholic Action and especially Catholic social movements.
- (e) The Catholic Institute of Pedagogy has been closed. This was a school recognized officially, destined to form competent and qualified teachers and nurses for Catholic schools and hospitals. It was frequented by many Sisters.
- (f) The illustrated Catholic weekly, *Przewodnik Katolicki*, a paper for the people, has ceased to exist after a brilliant career of forty-three years. Technically it ranked among the best papers of the world, and its edition had reached as many as 220,000 copies per week.
- (g) The esteemed Catholic weekly *Kultura* has been suppressed. This was a literary, cultural, social, and artistic review for the more educated public.
- (h) The *Tecza*, an illustrated, literary Catholic monthly of more than ordinary value, is no longer edited.
- (i) The *Ruch Katolicki* has been suppressed, a monthly publication and official organ of Catholic Action.
- (k) The *Przewodnik Społeczny*, a Catholic monthly dedicated to modern social questions, has been suppressed.
- (l) The *Zjednoczenie*, an organ of the National Association of Catholic Women, the *Przyjaciel Młodzieży* and the *Młoda Polka*, organs respectively of the Catholic Boys and the Catholic Girls Associations, have been suppressed.

- (m) The *Teologia Praktyczna*, monthly pastoral review for the clergy of Poland, has been suppressed.
- (n) The monthly review *Ruch Charytatywny*, organ of the Christian Charity movement in Poland, has been suppressed.

Besides these organizations and publications of national scope, all the organizations and publications in Poznan belonging to the archdiocese of Gniezno and Poznan were suppressed. In particular :

- (a) The archdiocesan Institute of Catholic Action.
- (b) The diocesan centres of the Catholic Associations for men, for working-men, for women, for boys and for girls.
- (c) The archdiocesan Institute for Higher Religious Culture.
- (d) The archdiocesan Institute "Caritas."
- (e) The Supreme Council of the Ladies of Charity and of the Conferences of St. Vincent a Paul.
- (f) The headquarters of the Union of Ecclesiastical Choirs.
- (g) The Charitable Association for aged priests.

The funds and the capital of all these associations, institutes and publications have been confiscated.

All of Catholic Poland and in particular the archdioceses of Gniezno and Poznan suffered a most serious loss in the confiscation of the Printing Press and Publishing House of St. Adalbert at Poznan. It was the most important publishing house in the Republic. It manufactured its own paper, provided the country with an abundant and well-chosen Catholic literature, with scientific books and useful publications. As a diocesan institute it brought in annually about half a million zloty in cash for Catholic works of the archdiocese. The value of the buildings, factories, installations of most modern

type, stock of books and material was estimated at six million zloty.

9. The losses suffered by Religious Institutes are likewise very painful.

The Dominican Fathers lost their newly erected house in Poznan.

Having been entrusted with the spiritual guidance of students attending the University and the Commercial Academy, they had destined it as a University House. The Minorites lost their college at Kobylin and the house of theological studies at Wronki. The Conventuals of Poznan were expelled and their place taken over by German Fathers. The Jesuits of Poznan are in prison and their church has been closed by the police. The house of theological studies of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and that of the Missionaries of the Holy Family at Bablin were closed. The Salesians lost their High School, College, and Boarding-School at Ostrzeszow and the house of philosophical studies at Marszalki. The Fathers of the Divine Word were robbed of their novitiate at Chludowo; the seminary at Ninino was taken from the Society of Lyons for the African Missions. The Society of Christ for Emigrants was robbed of their very new theological house at Poznan.

The Ursulines of the Roman Union were robbed of a new High School, College, and Boarding-School in Poznan.

The Mother-House of the Ursulines of the lately deceased Mother Ledochowska at Pniewy is in the hands of a German *Treuhaenderin*, who makes the Sisters work like servants. The Vincentian Sisters were removed from their large hospital of the Transfiguration at Poznan, lost four other important hospitals and about twenty of their prosperous centres of activity. The Sisters of St. Elisabeth (Grey Sisters) have lost about twenty houses, some of them very important. The Sisters of Immacu-



lata have suffered similar losses, including their Mother-House at Pleszew. The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth were forced to abandon their flourishing High School and College at Ostrzeszow; the Sisters of the Resurrection have closed a renowned school for domestics at Poznan.

Other Religious Institutes, both those for men as well as those for women, are meeting with the same fate or at least are expecting it from day to day, while already hundreds of religious monks and nuns are dispersed and are either living with their own families or are withdrawing to Central Poland, where they are crowding the few convents which they have there, without work and means of sustenance.

10. The economic situation of the Church in the archdiocese of Poznan is similar to that of the archdiocese of Gniezno. The German authorities consider themselves masters of ecclesiastical properties, plundering at their will, paying for nothing. His Excellency Mgr. Dymek is living on the charity of others, possessing neither private funds nor receiving a salary. The people are supporting the priests. The parish clergy have lost the administration of ecclesiastical benefices and the profits derived from them. Here and there chalices, monstrances, and pyxes have been carried off; in some districts all the candle wax was robbed from the churches. There is reason to fear that the treasures from the cathedral, archdiocesan archives, and library will be lost.

Among the three ecclesiastical foundations which were confiscated special importance is attached to the "Fundacja Twardowskich," erected four years ago to serve as a home for poor ladies of the cultured classes. It was a purely ecclesiastical foundation governed according to Canon Law. Recently it acquired a beautiful new residence, built to satisfy its own particular needs. This

house was raided and the ladies were driven out without means of support.

The same lot befell other pious foundations, asylums, orphanages, which were recognized and treated as ecclesiastical corporations by the Polish Republic.

III

CONCLUDING REMARKS

11. Saddest of all is the religious aspect of the incorporation of the archdioceses of Gniezno and of Poznan into the Reich. Liberty of conscience, religious rights of the population, the sacred mission of the Church, are trampled down with contempt as the process of annihilating the Faith goes forward in those very lands which from the conversion to christianity of Poland have been profoundly Catholic, which successfully withstood both impiety in the course of ages and the insidious attacks of the *Kulturkampf*. Already there are entire districts with churches closed, priests removed and the Sacraments not administered; in others the extinction of divine worship and religious life continuously advances. Soon the persecution will attain its goal. By the middle of the twentieth century men will acknowledge that the mad and unimpeded course of Hitlerian impiety has had this effect: a region where once flourished the religion of some two million Catholics has become a reservation of a sect; the cradle of Poland's faith, the oldest dioceses of the nation, the historical and ever efficacious centres of religious activity in the Republic, will become no more than the dismal grave of Catholicism under the Hitlerian rule of peace. Nor will the sorrow and the shame of this situation be relieved, even though amidst the ruins of 631 churches, 454 chapels and oratories, 253 religious houses, a handful of German priests are the pastors of the few to survive in the dioceses which once numbered two million souls.

One must not think that the fate of Gniezno and Poznan is a singular or isolated event. What is in process

there in the diocese of Chelmno is already a brutally accomplished fact, while in the other parts of Poland incorporated into the Reich the same horrible business has now begun. In a word, the finest Polish dioceses with their seven million Catholics are doomed to be lost to the Faith.

12. After the incorporation of the two archdioceses, the extermination of all things Polish began. This was simply a further well-planned procedure, a cardinal point of German policy according to Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. It was among the real causes and aims of the aggression to which Poland has succumbed. It now goes forward without interruption, and, alas! it is stamped with sadistic perversity.

The firing squads in public squares and hidden corners, the outrages and atrocities going on in prisons and concentration camps—these we pass over. Amongst the greatest of all sufferings one must not omit the systematic deportation of the people.

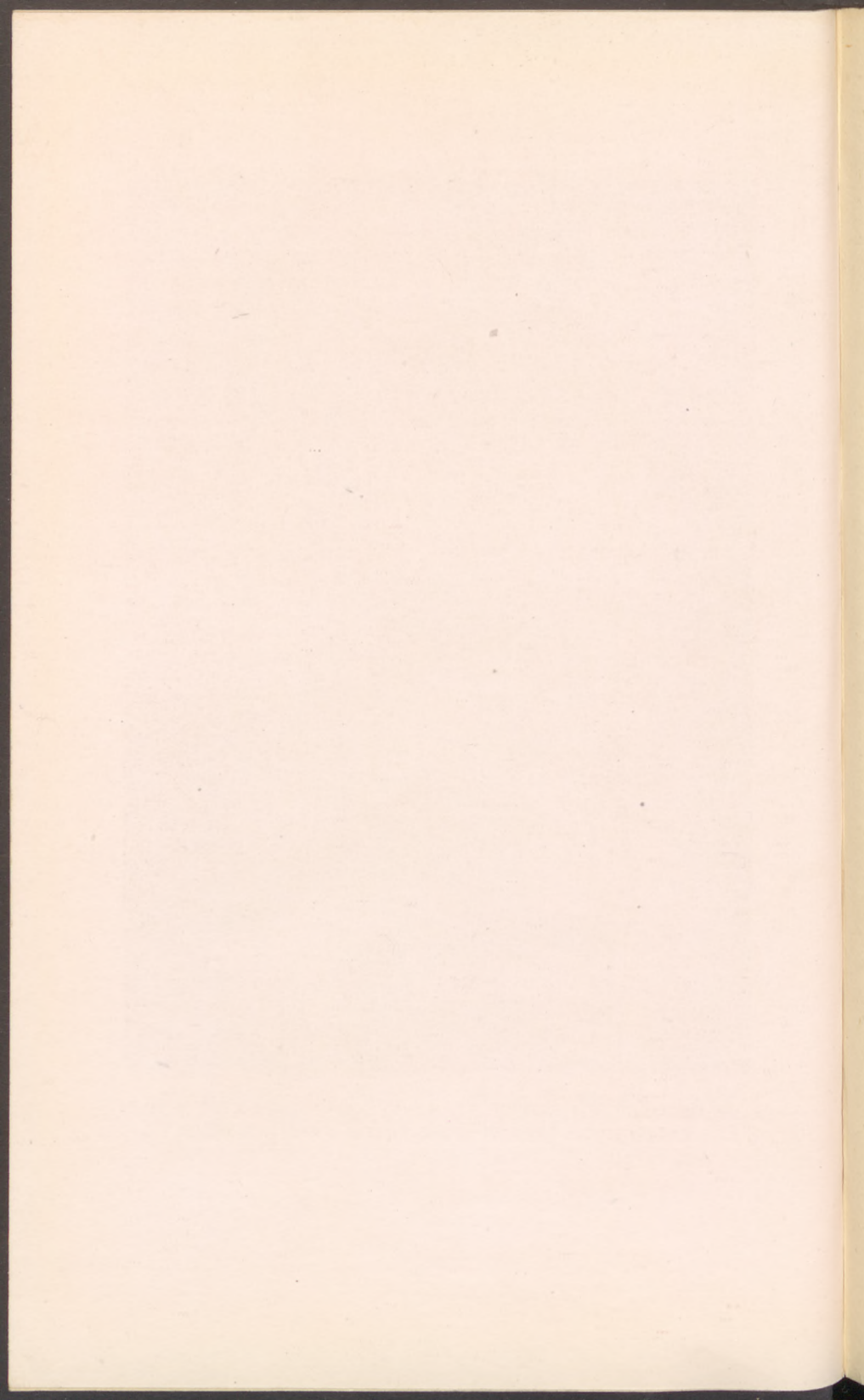
Practically the entire leading class and, in the first place, the landowners, tens of thousands of peasant families, tens of thousands of urban families, almost the whole of the educated class—all these already are in exile in Central Poland. They have lost everything that they possessed: estates and mansions, holdings and farms, buildings and equipment, stock and implements, professional equipment, factories, laboratories, furniture, ready cash, bank deposits and titles, treasures and heirlooms, nay, even their clothes and linen. They have been robbed without mercy and without any compensation whatever; in fact, they are robbed even of the little money they still have left and permitted to carry away with them only ten marks. Only labourers, farm hands, and servants are left on the spot.

In the city of Poznan the deportation was carried out with an excess of inhumanity. To make certain that no one escaped a decree was drawn up and published in

the *Ostdeutscher Beobachter* on December 10th, 1939, under the heading: *Die Zügel straffer angelegt*. It forbade Jews and Poles under severe penalties to be out of their homes between 7.30 in the evening and 6 in the morning. During this time, at any hour and without any warning, the Gestapo would swoop down, now upon one group of dwellings, now upon another, to carry off night after night an average of 500 to 1,500 people. No one could sleep from fear and dread. No one even now dares undress, for the time allowed to leave the house has been recently reduced to a few minutes, and those who are not ready to depart at once must leave with whatever clothing they happen to have on. Once out on the street under the looming menace of the Gestapo rifles the members of each household wait—at times for hours—for a motor-bus to take them away. There have been times this winter, with the thermometer standing 15 degrees and more below zero [C.], when these pitiable groups of women and children, the aged and the sick, have been forced to stand in the open air for as long as four hours. The silence of the frosty night is broken only by their doleful cries and moans. Their immediate destination is the horrible camp in the suburb of Glowna: wooden barracks, unheated, with a concrete floor; there is not even a mattress in the place and they sleep on straw infested with vermin, stinking, and not changed for weeks at a time. There are no toilets and no hot water. The food is bad. Exceptions are made for no one, neither for the sick, nor for the dying, nor for infants, nor for the aged, nor for pregnant mothers. Babies have been born without privacy in that open place, and that they might be washed the kind-hearted have deprived themselves of their tepid coffee: there is no warm water. Sickness strikes down a great number, deaths are frequent, but no doctors and no priests are admitted, except as prisoners. For some time now it has even been forbidden to bring in food from the outside.



THE MEDIÆVAL CHURCH OF ST. MARY (FOURTEENTH CENTURY) IN CRACOW HAS BEEN STRIPPED OF ITS ARTS TREASURES.



During the terrorism of this detention at Glowna, those men who are healthy and strong are separated from their families and shipped off under military guard to work in Germany: nothing is heard of them again. Boys over fourteen years of age are also deported to Germany, probably to undergo a Hitlerian education. A certain proportion of good-looking girls are sent off to Berlin: the despair of their families is easily understood. Those who remain, women and children, the aged and the infirm, after a few days and sometimes even after a few weeks of this terrible life which is rather a martyrdom, are packed into cattle wagons for their trip to Central Poland. The wagons are locked and throughout the journey they are not opened; once locked in the victims receive neither food nor drink, nor are they given liberty to attend to their natural needs. In this fashion they travel in the freezing cold from two to four days; almost always some die from exposure; practically everyone arrives at its end in ill health. For the first few weeks their destination was barracks at Radom, Kielce, or some other larger centre, but at present the exiles are simply put off the train in some town or village or even in the open country. There they are left to their fate; the German authorities do not give them another thought. Those who were the first to arrive have exhausted the resources of these towns and villages, converting them into hospitals and public homes. Those who arrive now wander for days and days along the snow-covered roads from one village to another, unknown, heart-broken and hopeless, before they can find the least bit of shelter for themselves and their children.

The misery of this situation is aggravated by the fact that the towns of Central Poland were in a great part destroyed by German aerial bombardment, that its countryside was stripped of its food supplies by the German army, and that, even before this influx, the region was over-populated. Here hundreds of thousands of

exiles have been already deported from the diocese of Peplin; now hundreds of thousands are being added from the archdioceses of Gniezno and Poznan, while tens of thousands are coming from the dioceses of Wloclawek and Plock, and even from the cities of Lodz and Cracow. Since the German press informs us that this deportation of the Polish population from the regions incorporated into the Reich must be completed by April 1st of this year, soon the refugees in Central Poland will be counted by the million—millions without money, without possessions, without the possibility of gaining a livelihood; millions condemned to the severest hardships, the most unbearable conditions, diseases, and starvation. All this spells extermination, extermination conceived with the malice of the devil and carried out with unparalleled brutality.

We cannot conceal, what is evident from letters and reports, that the unfortunate members of my dioceses—righteous and staunch Catholics—undergo the most cruel moral sufferings. They see themselves driven out of their homes and despoiled of all that they owned; they see that they have been mercilessly doomed to perish, and that they have found no aid, no protection, no defence. So to be outraged in one's beliefs of religion and of conscience, in one's dignity, and in one's rights to liberty, to family, to property, to life itself, fills the soul of man with an overmastering bitterness which some day may break forth with deplorable consequences upon the barbarous oppressor.

The people undergoing so terrible a trial are expecting that efficacious steps will be made to end the persecution of the Church and the extermination of the Polish population.

As soon as possible the Red Cross and the Foreign Relief Commission must come to the aid of those in Central Poland, where the final scene in the tragedy of my flock is being enacted.

ROME,

January 6th, 1940.

IV

DOCUMENTS SUBJOINED

1. *Report of November 29th, 1939*

The churches between Bydgoszcz and Gniezno with a very few exceptions have been closed, the property of the Church in most cases has been sequestrated, religious services no longer take place, church funds have been confiscated. People are dying without the Last Sacraments. His Excellency the Vicar-General cannot send new priests here because at once they are arrested, driven out, even often insulted and beaten. A certain number of the parishes are considered as suppressed or as having ceased to exist.

The Germans openly declare in their speeches that they are masters of the occupied land, and that the Poles are their slaves. Farmers are being driven out unmercifully and are not allowed to take anything with them even though their families have been in possession of the land for centuries. Hence, for example, in the villages around Szubin and Inowroclaw, where only Poles lived and not a single German, you will find not even one Pole there today.

Shopkeepers, as well as educated classes, artisans, and finally all those who have means of subsistence, are being expelled from the cities. They are forbidden to carry away what they possess; they must leave behind even their beds, their personal linen, being permitted to take only the winter clothes they are wearing. Sometimes they are told to take along their money and jewels, but in the concentration camps all that is confiscated in the course of a very minute inspection. Their homes

and their workshops are given to the Germans arriving from the Baltic countries, from Volhynia and Ukraine.

The Germans are following a really diabolical plan, according to which all Poles are to be removed from the districts of Pomerania, Poznania, and Silesia. Only domestics and labourers may remain. If there is not forthcoming a strong, moral support from some section of the world, we are all condemned to perish. It is merely a matter of time: today or tomorrow such will be our lot. The Protestants will take our churches, and if among the Germans arriving from the Baltic and from Volhynia there may be some Catholics, they have to be attended to by priests brought from Germany.

The Church itself is entering the catacombs. Confessions are heard, Holy Communion is distributed clandestinely. Civil marriages have been suspended for Poles since the past month, so that the parish priest may bless a marriage only secretly and in exceptional cases, exposing himself at the same time to severe penalties.

At present greater religious liberty has been granted at Bydgoszcz after the atrocities which were committed there. The number of those who were shot is not known, because the bodies are no longer given over to the families, and a list of the executions is rarely made public. The Church, too, is enjoying greater liberty just now at Bydgoszcz, although the Polish language is forbidden in sacred functions. A prayer for Hitler has been introduced and made obligatory.

Our boys and a part of our girls over fourteen years of age are being deported to Germany. After the Sunday services these young people are arrested at the church door and sent off; a transport leaves every week.

The Gestapo is master of the Church. In the archdiocese of Gniezno the Curia is not functioning, its safe has been sealed, 80,000 zloty have been taken. The Metropolitan Tribunal is not functioning. Priests are forbidden to leave Gniezno. Priests may not be sent

to vacant posts. Canon Brasse has been in the concentration camp for four weeks. Canon Styczynski was driven from his house. Canon Formanowicz is forbidden entrance into his house. Canon Tloczynski is in a concentration camp. The seminary of the archdiocese has been dispersed and the building occupied by soldiers. The funds of the seminary were seized without previous notice. The Cathedral at Gniezno is closed; the motive given is that a building commission must examine its condition.

The Rev. Fr. Zablocki, dean of Gniezno, was shot, the parish house was taken over and the money seized. Retired priests have been driven out of their homes and are in hiding among the poor. The Sisters of St. Elisabeth have been excluded from their house of retreat. The Conventuals have been removed from their convent and imprisoned in a concentration camp; Jews were housed in their convent. Their church to the present time has remained open.

Nothing certain is known of the fate of Canon Schulz of Bydgoszcz; probably he has been shot, and Canon Casimir Stepczynski as well. The Lazarist Fathers Wiorek and Szarek have been shot, while their confrères are in prison; soldiers are indulging in orgies in the church, which was closed under the pretext that the dome was unsafe. The priests of the deanery of Gniewkowo were all taken to prison and nothing more is known of them. Fr. Skrzypczak was killed by blows of a rifle. The parish priest, Fr. Domachowski, was imprisoned and obliged to repair a bridge, standing up to his waist in water. The clergy of the deanery of Inowroclaw were imprisoned; what has happened to them is not known, except that some were deported to Germany. Canon Kubski is in prison at Weimar Buchwalde. Canon Jaskowski has died in prison. The Rev. Frs. Dabrowski and Bolc were first obliged to work in a sugar factory and later were arrested. Fr. Klein of Chometowo was

imprisoned and forced to break stones on the streets. Fr. Janke of Jaktorowo has been shot. All the priests of Kcynia have been deported; the church there has been closed for two months. Fr. Romoald Soltysinski of Rzadkwin has died in prison. At Strzelno eighteen priests were put in prison, some of whom were later released, others deported. Fr. Cichowski of Sokolniki has been in prison from the beginning and nothing is known of his fate. Fr. Namyslowski was beaten; they tried to force him by inhuman torture to profane the cross; he was taken to Wrzesnia half dead, and nothing more has been heard of him. Fr. Smolinski of Morzewo was put in prison and forced to dig potatoes. At Naklo, the pastor, Fr. Geppert, and his assistants, Frs. Chojnacki and Domek, were put in prison and are probably at Weimar Buchwalde; their church is closed and ecclesiastical funds confiscated. Fr. Chojnacki has been forced to transport coal through the streets of Naklo. Fr. Koncewicz, at first in prison at Gniezno, was later deported to Germany. Canon Schwarz, at first in prison, has now been interned. Mgr. Schvenborn is in prison. Fr. Lewicki of Goscieszyn was shot. The interned priests of the deanery of Trzemeszno were compelled to tear down a synagogue. For the past two months Mass was no longer celebrated in the district of Znin; all the priests are under arrest; the administration of the Sacraments is forbidden. Fr. Zeno Niziolkiewicz has been shot. At present the priests of Znin are forced to break stones on the streets.

2. *Report of December 30th, 1939*

1. The parish records have been carried away. Ecclesiastical funds are in the hands of the secret agents. The churches in the districts of Znin, Szubin, Wyrzysk, and Wrzesnia have been closed. The Cathedrals of Gniezno and of Poznan are also closed; in the latter

city the Collegiate Church of St. Mary Magdalene and the Church of the Jesuits are closed. Outside Bydgoszcz churches are allowed to be open only on Sundays from 9 to 11. During the week in some parishes a requiem Mass is allowed. Priests have begun to say Mass privately at home: there they hear confessions and distribute Holy Communion. There are no sermons at all. There is no music in church. This condition of affairs is becoming worse everywhere; however, in Bydgoszcz there is less persecution.

Soldiers live in the seminary of Gniezno; a school for police has been established in the seminary of Poznan.

Hundreds of crosses and statues along the roads have been destroyed and profaned. The monuments of the Sacred Heart at Poznan and Bydgoszcz have been demolished.

The following priests have been shot: the Rev. Frs. Zablocki, Rolski, Ladislaus Nowicki, Casimir Nowicki, Niziolekiewicz, Janke, Jakubowski, Lewicki, and two Lazarist Fathers of Bydgoszcz. The Rev. Fr. Breczewski was killed by a bomb. Rev. Frs. Domeracki and Jaskowski died in prison. Some priests are in hiding among the people, fearing the same fate. A certain number of priests have been deported to Germany, others are either in prison or in concentration camps at Gorna Grupa, at Gniezno, and in Germany. The number of priests exiled to Central Poland is continually increasing.

The Conventuals, the Minorites, the Jesuits, the Fathers of the Holy Ghost, the Lazarists, have lost their houses. Many houses have been taken from the Sisters of St. Vincent a Paul, the Sisters of the Immaculata, the Sisters of St. Elisabeth.

2. The Polish people are cruelly persecuted. The number of those shot is counted by the thousands, of those imprisoned by the tens of thousands. Horrible

things are happening in the prisons. For example, at Bydgoszcz prisoners had to lie face down to the cold concrete pavement while they were being beaten until they lost consciousness, and were constantly threatened afterwards with being shot.

Actual raids are made to gather young girls, who are sent off into Germany.

Mass deportations of Poles into Central Poland are now being carried out; due to this the deported lose all that they possess: land, houses, furniture, business, clothes, linen, and money. In an instant they have been turned into beggars. Thus stripped of all, they are driven to the central regions, where people are already suffering from a lack of everyday necessities; in the spring many will die of hunger.

The following method is used. As the police enter the houses the people must leave within a few minutes and are taken to a concentration camp; thence they are transported in the midst of a cruel winter in cattle cars towards the East. I have seen 450 families leave Gniezno, another thousand families leave Inowroclaw. At the same time thousands of families were sent into exile from Bydgoszcz, Poznan, Znin, Janowiec, Witkowo, Powidz, Mogilno.

The exiles, victims of despair, depart as though they were going to death.

3. Some particulars:

Sometimes while making inventory of what is in a house the Gestapo will leave a revolver with the intention of later arresting the inhabitants, accusing them of keeping arms, which is strictly forbidden. This happened, for instance, on November 11th, 1939, in the parish house of Lopiенno.

On December 5th and consecutive days about 1,500 persons left the city of Znin for the East. First they were assembled in three rooms: Mr. Unrug, of a noble

family of Cerekwica, paralysed for some time, was brought with the others and laid on the floor in one of them. At first permission was granted to each to carry a bag, but when the people were boarding the train a part of such baggage was ruthlessly confiscated. They were allowed to take with them but 200 zloty; when they had to cross the border of Central Poland they were submitted to further examination and were relieved of all but 20 zloty. Women were subjected to the most unpleasant physical examination under the pretext of searching for hidden money.

Most of the families have been deliberately scattered: the father sent to Germany or to prison, the sons taken to Germany, the mother with the little children in exile condemned to be vagabonds and to beg for a living.

Incredible tortures are inflicted on those in prison. Some of the victims have lost their reason. Three priests, the Rev. Frs. Badzinski, Mamrot, and Gozdiewicz, were locked in a pigsty during the night of October 19th. At Gniezno one night a soldier entered the prison cell and called a priest who was imprisoned there. He led him out, saying: "Come along, you will be shot." The poor prisoner was recommending his soul to God when the soldier said: "Now you can go back to sleep."

Crucifixes were removed from all the schools. The schools in Bydgoszcz have been reopened; the German language is used, but religion is not taught.

3. *Letter of December 31st, 1939*

Relatives write me that it is a torture to hear the moans and cries of the dying, who are deprived of the Last Sacraments because there are no priests at hand. When, oh, when will the Almighty enter into judgment upon these assassins of body and immortal souls!

Even those Germans who were formerly honest are

losing the sense of righteousness. News from the archdiocese of Poznan states that some days ago Count met the Baron with his wife, neighbours, in his own stables, selecting racehorses for their own use. When asked what they were doing, they replied that they had come to take away a few horses, since such conduct was permissible to Germans in respect to Poles.

4. *Report of December 26th, 1939*

As to Poznan the hierarchy and organizations of the Church are being persecuted. His Excellency Mgr. Dymek is under arrest at home. At Poznan 25 per cent. of the clergy remained: the majority of these are young parish assistants. Five members of the Cathedral Chapter still remain, among them the seriously ill Mgr. Pradzynski, the Chancellor Fr. Jedwabski, and two German canons. The rest of the clergy either have been deported into Central Poland or detained in concentration camps and prisons. Those imprisoned are really martyrs. The severest prison is that of Fort VII at Poznan, where the prisoners are beaten and ill-treated.

The Cathedral, the Collegiate Church, and the Church of the Jesuits have been closed. It seems that the Collegiate Church has been turned into a concert hall. The Church of the Conventuals is reserved to Germans only. Masses are permitted only on Sundays from 9 to 11. There are no sermons. During the week one Requiem Mass is allowed. Since civil marriages are not granted to Poles their marriages cannot be blessed.

The Sisters have been removed from the hospitals. The Ursulines and the Religious of the Sacred Heart have been driven from their houses. Catholic charity organizations have been suppressed and their funds confiscated. The Twardowski foundation has been confiscated; the old ladies were put in the convents of the Jesuits, where they live on what is left of their resources.

5. *Report of December 10th, 1939*

At Poznan the expulsion of the Poles from their houses and places of abode is carried out under heart-rending conditions. At 7.30 at night the lights on the streets and in the houses are extinguished; then begins a German hunt for Poles, five hundred and more of whom are deported every night. The unfortunate people do not sleep, but stand in the dark near the windows, waiting to see if their time has come. They put on the warmest clothes they have, so as not to die of the cold in the camps, knowing that they are permitted to carry only what they have on their backs. Sometimes a more kindly policeman will allow one to carry something extra, especially some woollen clothes. One must leave the house immediately clothed as he is; if he is not ready to depart he is taken away in his night-clothes. No one is permitted to visit those who are in a concentration camp, nor may they bring them food.

There are no more Polish stores or shops in Poznan; the Polish owners were robbed of them and thrown out without any formal procedures.

Bishop Dymek is interned, possessing no means of maintenance.

The Episcopal Curia and Archives have been taken over by the police. The funds are sequestered. The Cathedral and Collegiate Churches are closed, the latter being destined either to be destroyed or turned over to some other purpose. Sixty or more priests are among those now held in prisons and concentration camps, and every now and then some of these are deported to Central Poland. With a few rare exceptions there are no longer any parish priests in the suburbs of Poznan. Three cathedral dignitaries are in prison—namely, the Rev. Canon Zborowski, who has been there from October 1st, 1939, Rucinski, and Szreybrowski; the latter has been forced to repair roads. A fourth, Mgr. Prad-

zynski, is seriously ill. The Jesuits and Conventuals have been deported. The Vincentian Sisters have been driven from their houses; the Sisters of St. Elisabeth are confined to a part of their house. The Hitler Sisters are employed in the hospitals.

Priests are arrested and deported so unexpectedly that in most cases there is no opportunity to save the Blessed Sacrament. If the police fail to find a priest who is in hiding, they threaten the others with death unless they succeed in their search. The publishing house of St. Adelbert, with the printing press and machines for making paper, has been confiscated.

The Gestapo rages especially against Catholic Action, all of whose funds they have confiscated. The national president and its officials are in prison.

Crucifixes and statues which lined the roads and had given the country a Catholic character have been destroyed; even the holy figures of saints that were on the houses or in the gardens have been destroyed. In one district candles were confiscated from the churches.

In the archdiocese of Poznan horrible mass executions took place at Kostrzyn, Sroda, Srem, Koscian, Gostyn, and other cities and towns. The best of the noble families and the prominent priests were killed. Almost every day, I am sorry to say, I receive news of other executions, which, however, are no longer brought to public notice.

The primatial palace of Poznan has been completely ruined, the pious objects of devotion destroyed, decorations torn down, furniture broken. They carried off the linen, wine, and paintings; they burnt records and books. When all this became generally known certain soldiers were punished, and an order was given to restore the palace as well as possible. It is now closed.

POZNAN,

December 10th, 1939.

SECOND REPORT OF CARDINAL HLOND,
PRIMATE OF POLAND, TO POPE PIUS XII.

THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION
IN THE
POLISH DIOCESES
OF
CHELMNO, KATOWICE, LODZ,
PLOCK, WLOCLAWEK, AND OTHERS,
INCORPORATED IN THE REICH

DIOCESE OF CHELMNO

Incorporated areas. Seat of the Bishop: Pelplin

1. H.E. MGR. OKONIEWSKI, Bishop of Chelmno, was evacuated by the Polish authorities and went to Rome, whence he has been unable to return to his diocese, the German authorities having refused him the necessary authorization.

In consequence of these events, his Vicar-General, Mgr. Dominik, a priest of great merit, fell seriously ill. The German authorities forbade him to exercise any jurisdiction, and he was scarcely restored to health when, on January 31st, the German police ordered him to leave Pelplin and establish himself at Danzig.

The episcopal Curia at Pelplin was closed and its archives confiscated; the ecclesiastical court suffered the same fate. All the members of the Curia without exception were deported.

The Cathedral Canons, with the exception of H.E. Mgr. Dominik and Mgr. Sawicki, were thrown into prison, and some were sent to forced labour. The others likewise had much to suffer. The head of the Chapter, Mgr. Bartkowski, apostolic protonotary, despite his advanced age and precarious health, was forced to perform hard labour.

The ancient Cathedral, a veritable jewel of Gothic art, was first closed and then made into a garage, and it is now proposed to turn it into a market-hall. The statue of the Immaculate Virgin, erected in front of the Cathedral in 1854 to commemorate the promulgation of the Dogma, has been overthrown.

The bishop's palace was entered and despoiled of all its treasures, works of art and furniture. The valuable

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The bishop's palace was entered and despoiled of all its treasures, works of art and furniture. The valuable

library, containing about twenty thousand volumes, was pillaged. The diocesan park was laid waste. Shortly afterwards the bishop's palace was turned into a hotel, its beautiful chapel being used as a ball-room.

The seminaries, large and small, with the college and the secondary school, are occupied by the German army. All the teachers have been driven out. The seminary cellars have been for several weeks the scene of tortures inflicted on both priests and Catholic laymen.

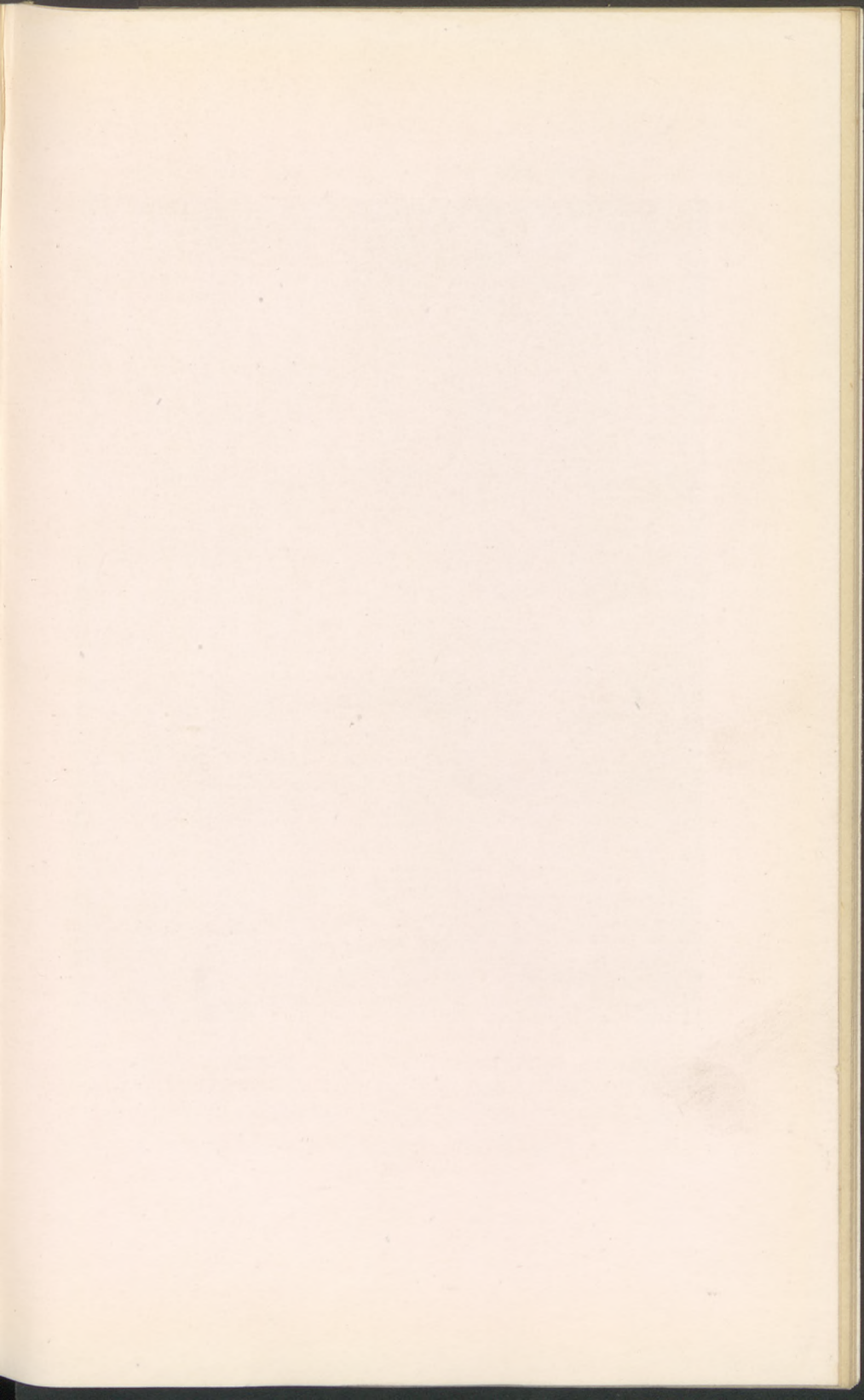
2. Of the 650 priests devoted to the cure of souls in the schools and in the Catholic Action, only some twenty have been left. The others were imprisoned or deported, or forced to perform exhausting and humiliating labour, at which some died of fatigue.

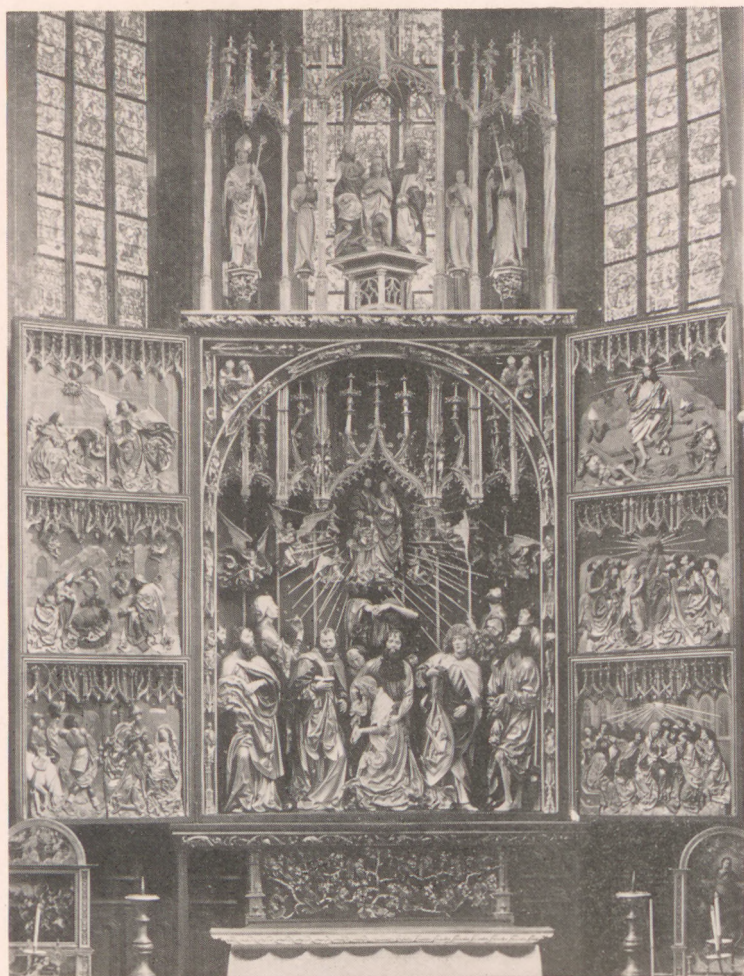
Those priests who worked in the Catholic Youth associations had most to suffer.

It is not known where the majority of the clergy are detained, as the German authorities keep it a secret. It seems likely, however, that a large number are imprisoned in the concentration camp at Gorna Grupa, and the rest in that of Kazimierz Biskupi, or at Stuthof near Danzig, if not in other concentration camps in Germany. Some, however, were sent to the area of the Government General.

It is stated that a large number of priests have been shot, but neither the number nor the details are as yet known, as the occupation authorities maintain an obstinate silence on the subject.

In any case it seems certain that nine priests, Mgr. Felix Bolt, the octogenarian parish priest of Srebrniki, Fr. Burdyn, parish priest of Gorna Grupa, Fr. Chudzinski of Pelplin, Fr. Dykier, curate of Fordon, Fr. Echaust, curate of Nowe, Fr. Kotowicz, curate of Bieniaszkowo, Fr. Litewski, curate of Sliwice, Fr. Losinski of Sierakowice, and Fr. Raszkiewicz, parish priest of Fordon, have been executed.





THE FAMOUS TRIPTYCH OF VIT STWOSZ (FIFTEENTH CENTURY),
ABOVE THE GREAT ALTAR OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH IN CRACOW, HAS
BEEN TAKEN TO GERMANY.

Mgr. Szydzik, apostolic protonotary and parish priest of Fordon, died in prison, and Fr. Kaszubowski, parish priest of Kossakow, died as a result of the sufferings he endured in prison.

3. The flourishing religious life of the diocese has been almost entirely suppressed. The churches have almost all been closed and confiscated by the Gestapo, which removes the pictures and other objects of value. Scarcely thirty churches are open for just two hours on Sundays. There is a little more liberty allowed in the city of Torun, where singing during divine service is permitted.

Not many of the dying are able to receive the Last Sacrament, and the priests when they visit the sick must dress in lay clothes, under which they conceal the Viaticum. The clergy are not allowed to accompany funerals through the streets, and preaching is forbidden.

Many parishes are completely deprived of the offices of religion. Children are baptized by their parents. Marriages between Poles are forbidden. The Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist are no more than a pious memory. The majority of people die without the Sacraments, and the dying count themselves happy if the priest can visit them secretly in the night and give them the Absolution and Extreme Unction.

All the Catholic associations and societies for charitable work have been dissolved. In general, it may be said that the conditions of religious life are worse than in heathen countries. Persecution is attaining its end, which is the complete suppression of the Faith.

The following details may illustrate this state of things. It has been established, above all, that the Catholic element throughout the diocese is being systematically oppressed in a terrible way. Some noted people have been shot, among them M. Thomas Komierowski, Chamberlain of Cape and Sword to His Holiness, the president of the Gdynia court of justice, the director of the

Naval School, and the director of the port—all Catholics.

All the Polish landed proprietors have been dispossessed, even when their families have lived for seven or eight hundred years in the country. Some ten thousand peasants, constituting the main element in the population of the district, have likewise been expropriated. All the Polish intellectuals have been either shot or deported. A large number of persons, more than 250,000, were robbed of their goods, their linen and their money, and expelled from Gdynia and other towns and villages to the Government General, whither they were transported in cattle trucks, in the midst of winter when the temperature was over 30° below freezing point. After a journey of two, three, or four days, during which the wretched people received no food and were not allowed to leave the trucks even to satisfy their natural needs, the trains deposited them near Cracow, Radom, Tomaszow Mazowiecki, Kielce, or other parts of the "Government" territory. Dozens of persons froze to death, especially the old and children.

Further, the practice was begun of arresting hundreds, and then thousands, of men, women, and young people without cause and sending them to Germany, where they were employed either in the fields or in industry or in armament works as slaves, ill fed and ill paid. Worse still, young Poles were taken by force from the diocese and sent to Germany to be brought up in Hitlerian impiety, and young girls were condemned to the saddest fate.

At Gdynia, which in twelve years had come to have a population of 120,000, there are now only 15,000, all Germans, brought from the Baltic countries and the interior of the Reich. The churches were at first converted into prisons; they were profaned by the physiological needs of the inmates who were shut up in them for whole days. The Church of the Holy Virgin

was turned into a Protestant place of worship. That of the Sacred Heart is open only for German sailors on Sundays.

In the cathedral city of Pelplin, which was one of the most active centres of religious life, only two priests, Germans, have been authorized to remain, and they are only permitted to officiate on Sundays, in a small church which is open only for two hours. Formerly the number of priests in this town was forty, and religious activity, the work of the Catholic Action, and the continuous development of diocesan centres of the apostolic movement were proceeding actively. Now all that has been crushed. Neo-paganism is taking the place of Christianity owing to the violence of the dictatorship which has occupied the country.

4. Religious institutions have been ruthlessly suppressed. The Jesuit Fathers have been driven from their college and secondary school at Gdynia, now christened by Hitler *Gotenhafen*, and those of Grudziadz (*Graudenz*) have all been imprisoned. The Redemptorist Fathers of Torun have been expelled, after having had to endure the most painful annoyances in prison; their magnificent monastery, built quite recently, together with their college, secondary school, and boarding-house, have been turned into barracks for German aviators. The Salesians have been driven from Rumia. At Chelmno the Church of the Pallotins has been made into a gaming hall.

The losses suffered by the Religious Congregations have been particularly painful in this diocese. The Ursuline Sisters of Gdynia have been driven out and despoiled of their boarding-school, lyc ee, and boarding-house. Their Superior, good and worthy as she was, was treated with brutality despite the fact that she was seriously ill. The Ursulines have also been brutally driven from their flourishing school at Koscierzyna.

The Sisters of St. Vincent a Paul have been driven from their provincial house at Chelmino, where they had been established for three centuries. Twenty of them were killed when the place was bombed by the German air force in September, 1939. At Gdynia the members of the same order have been dispossessed of their large and modern hospital, finished only a few years ago. They were expelled at night, without having time to take with them their personal linen. A shop has been set up in their chapel. The Sisters of the order in question have likewise had to cease some twenty charitable activities to which they were giving themselves with admirable devotion. They are now scattered, either in the Government General or in their own families.

The Sisters of the Resurrection of Our Lord have been driven from their apprentice school at Brusy, from three houses at Grudziadz, and from a greatly appreciated school consisting of lycée and boarding-house which they conducted at Wejherowo.

The other religious orders were not spared; for example, the Franciscan nuns and the Servants of Mary, who were expelled from Oksywie, together with their orphans, with whom they had to seek refuge beyond Warsaw, amidst the greatest difficulties.

5. By order of the authorities of the German Reich the endowments of the bishop's Table, the patrimony of the Chapter, the funds of the large and small seminaries, and all the endowments of parish livings have been confiscated. Altogether they amount to ten thousand hectares. Similarly, all ecclesiastical property, and that of the pious and Catholic associations, has been confiscated, as well as parish churches which were left without priests. They are in the power of the German Government authorities, who consider them as the patrimony of the State, and pillage them at their leisure. In the same way, the churches, chapels, immovables, and

institutes belonging to the religious orders which have been expelled are considered to be the property of the German State. Moreover, all the parish records have been sequestrated and carried off, a fact which is destined to cause grave difficulties in the future, particularly as regards Catholic marriages.

All the crosses and sacred emblems by the roadsides have been destroyed. At Gdynia the Germans publicly overthrew the great cross which stood before the Church of the Holy Virgin, and covered it with filth. The population then went in secret to cover the remains with flowers and take small pieces as relics, until this act of piety was rendered impossible by the German authorities.

The great cross standing on Kamienna Gora, which used to be illuminated at night and venerated from afar by mariners at sea as a religious greeting of a Catholic Gdynia, was also overthrown.

6. It goes without saying that the Nazi aim is to dechristianize as rapidly as possible these countries which are attached to the Catholic faith, and the results are as follows: 95 per cent. of the priests have been imprisoned, expelled, or humiliated before the eyes of the faithful. The Curia no longer exists; the Cathedral has been made into a garage as at Pelplin; the bishop's palace into a restaurant; the chapel into a ball-room. Hundreds of churches have been closed. The whole patrimony of the Church has been confiscated, and the most eminent Catholics executed. The Poles have been driven from the land of their ancestors and replaced by Germans. All the religious emblems in streets and public places have been removed, and Hitlerian agents blaspheme or denigrate the Catholic faith in public.

Apparently, it has to be admitted, Hitlerism has succeeded in its designs. The diocese in question has been deprived of its centre, and its organization has been

dissolved. But, despite this, the people remains what it was before. Deeply wounded as it is in its national feelings, its beliefs, its conscience, and the practice of its religion, it remains faithful. Though terrorized and menaced day and night, it remains strong and unyielding, waiting till the hour of justice shall strike.

DIOCESE OF KATOWICE

Incorporated in the Reich

7. H.E. Mgr. Adamski, Bishop of Katowice, is at the moment still in his diocese. From October 7th, 1939, however, he has been forbidden to leave Katowice.

When he realized the imminence of war, Mgr. Adamski had made the best arrangements he could for the administration of his diocese during military operations, nominating, in addition to his regular Vicar-General, H.E. Mgr. Bieniek, three other regional Vicars-General: Fr. Dwucet, curate of Lubliniec, for the northern part of the diocese, Fr. Thomas Reginek for the southern, and Mgr. Kasperlik for the Cieszyn district. Fr. Dwucet was imprisoned and afterwards expelled by the German authorities; Fr. Reginek only avoided imprisonment by withdrawing in time; and Mgr. Kasperlik was ordered by the Government of the Reich to withdraw on April 1st, 1940. In January, 1940, H.E. Mgr. Bieniek resigned his office as Vicar-General, and was succeeded by Fr. Strzyz, curate of Godulla.

The part of Silesia situated on the banks of the Olza remained under H.E. Mgr. Adamski as Apostolic Administrator, and on January 1st, 1940, passed under the jurisdiction of the Most Eminent Cardinal Archbishop of Breslau.

The diocesan Curia of Katowice was raided and searched by the Gestapo, but has continued to function.

The Cathedral is open and still serves as parish church.

As for the Cathedral Chapter, only two members are left. The Canons Mgr. Brandys, Lewek, Matea, Szramek and Sz wajnoch were imprisoned by the German authorities, and then expelled to the territory of the Government General, administered by Reichsminister Frank, from Cracow.

The diocesan seminary, whose building at Cracow was new and whose students attended the lectures of the Theological Faculty, was broken up by the German authorities and had its premises occupied. It was proposed to bring the students together again in the House of Retreat at Kokoszyce, but this proved impossible and the seminary has been dissolved.

8. The secular and regular clergy at Katowice are in a painful and difficult situation, as the German authorities take no official notice whatever of them. The priests are frequently exposed to insults and vexations of all kinds, particularly at meetings of the N.S.D.A.P. party and at those of the Hitler Youth, who surpass themselves in invectives directed against the Church and its clergy.

Some priests have been executed, others arrested. For example:

- (a) Father Mamzer, parish priest of Gostyn, was shot by the Germans.
- (b) Father Kukla, parish priest of Konczyce Wielkie, died in prison in consequence of the atrocious treatment which he suffered.
- (c) Father Kwiczala, parish priest of Cieszyn, died at Cracow as a result of the troubles and vexations he endured in prison.
- (d) Four priests died in prison, whereabouts unknown—viz.:

Father Galuszka, curate of Jablonkow.

Father Kupilas, parish priest of Ledziny.

Father Henry Olszak, parish priest of Trzyniec, and Father Robota, parish priest of Gieraltowice.

The number of priests imprisoned by the Germans amounted to over a hundred. Some of them were afterwards released, while others were sent into exile. There are still some thirty in prison, including Mgr. Bilko, parish priest of Karwina; Canon Barabasz, rural dean and parish priest of Czechowice; D. Molc, parish priest of Wozniki; D. Franek, parish priest of Dziedzice, and Fr. Otreba, parish priest of Swietochlowice.

At the present moment the occupation authorities are hastening to expel the priests to the territory of the Government-General, which is considered not to have been annexed by the Reich—treatment equivalent to exile and dispossession of everything they had. Among the exiled are some of the most eminent clergy in the diocese, such as Canon Matea of Katowice, Mgr. Lewek of Tarnowskie Gory, Fr. Dwucet, parish priest of Lubliniec, Mgr. Grimm of Istebna, the parish priest of Bogumin, and many others.

The treatment inflicted on certain priests in prison has been outrageous. For example, Fr. Kupilas, parish priest of Ledziny, was shut up for three days in the confessional of the church at Bierun, where 300 men and women were imprisoned at the same time without anything to eat and without being allowed to go out to satisfy their natural needs. Fr. Wycislik, vicar of Zyglin, was arrested and beaten in the streets of Tarnowskie Gory until the blood ran, and kicked and even trampled until he lost consciousness. Curate Budny had his sides pierced by numerous bayonet stabs, because the German authorities had ordered him to hold his hands up, and after a certain time he was unable through fatigue to do so any longer.

The terrorism to which the clergy and the 500 civilians interned in the concentration camp at Opava (Troppau) in the Sudeten were exposed during September and October, 1939, was particularly frightful. On their arrival they were received with a hail of blows from

sticks. Priests were deliberately confined together with Jews in wooden huts, without chairs or tables. Their bedding consisted of rotten and verminous straw. The Germans forced the priests to take off their cassocks, and their breviaries and rosaries were taken from them. They were set to the most degrading labours. For any infraction of the regulations, even involuntary, the prisoners were beaten; sometimes, merely in order to terrorize them or perhaps from caprice, they were beaten until the blood ran. Many died, among them Fr. Kukla, above mentioned, and, it seems, also Fr. Galuszka, curate of Jablonkow, of whom no news has been received since it was learned that he was suffering harsh treatment in the camp in question.

9. Where there is a priest still at his post, the church so far remains open, but everywhere it has been made compulsory to hold divine service and to preach and sing in German, even in those numerous parishes where it has always been customary to preach and sing in Polish. There were thus many cases where services in Polish were forbidden, despite the fact that the great majority of the population is Polish. It is noteworthy that wherever there are services in Polish as well as in German, the attendance at the former is very large, whereas the latter attract but few.

The German police are beginning to take much interest in those who attend the Polish services, and to register their Christian and surnames at the church doors. There have been cases where those attending Polish services have even been photographed. And even prayer-books brought to church by the faithful are examined and listed.

The German authorities refuse to allow Polish children to be prepared for confession and first communion in their native language. As the children, boys and girls, very seldom understand a little German, they are

forced to wait before being able to receive the Sacraments.

The diocesan illustrated weekly, *Gosc Niedzielny* (The Sunday Visitor), founded in 1924 and widely read, has been suppressed, as have the weekly parish bulletins. The diocesan weekly, *Sonntagsbote*, published in German, still appears, but it has to publish as its own articles sent to it by the Hitlerian authorities.

The pilgrimages to the shrine of Our Lady of Piekary have been forbidden; all manifestations of the faith outside the churches have become impossible; and even inside, every act and every word of the priest's is controlled.

The Catholic Action has been interdicted in all its forms, and has now ceased to function — that is to say, the diocesan institute of the Catholic Action, the Catholic League, the Central Institute for Internal Missions, and all the other centres of the apostolic movement, as well as the Catholic associations. The lay orders and the religious congregations have the right to meet only in certain parishes once a month, and then only in order to take part in a religious service. In many places the pious associations have been obliged to give the police lists of their members' names. Works of charity are still tolerated, but the Ladies of Charity have been driven out.

The important educational work carried out in the diocese by the *Catholic Press and Book-Shop*, which published a selection of important volumes, especially on religious problems, has also been stopped.

When the first shouts of joy and triumph were over, German Catholics themselves seem to have begun to reflect at the sight of the cruelty and impiety of the Nazi regime, and of the increasing economic difficulties and the gradual suppression of the individual liberty of the citizens and of religion. There were, however, some painful examples to the contrary, due to

the efforts made to propagate Hitlerian ideas among the young. Some of them have become perverted and made themselves the scourge of the clergy, whom they spit upon and denounce. During divine service some groups of young Germans sang *Deutschland über Alles* or the *Horst Wessel-Lied* in church. Priests carrying the Sacred Viaticum to the sick were greeted in the street with a sonorous *Heil Hitler*, and on the occasion of the traditional blessing of houses after Christmas several little family altars were found with portraits of the *Führer* instead of the cross and candles.

10. The religious orders have been suppressed; the Conventuals have been expelled from Klimszowiec and their church made into a gymnasium. The Jesuits were driven from their important monastery at Dziedzice and from the parishes of Cieszyn and Ruda. The Salesians have had to leave Maslowice. The Fathers of the Divine Word have lost their great institute at Rybnik. The Salvatorians have had their large and recently built house at Mikolow taken from them. The Brothers of St. John the Divine were brutally driven from their great and popular hospitals at Cieszyn and Bogucice; the latter, which is very large and modern, is used at present for German soldiers, who have turned the chapel into a refectory.

The Ursulines have had to close their institution with its school, lycée, and boarding-house at Rybnik; it was first occupied by the *Schützpolizei*, and afterwards sequestered. The Sisters of St. Vincent and those of St. Elisabeth have been sent away from their hospitals, orphanages, and other charitable institutions. The same fate befell the Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo, whose mother-house at Rybnik was confiscated. In their place were installed the "Sisters of Hitler" (*Hitler-schwester*), who are evidently not esteemed by the population, because of their conduct and their undis-

simulated hatred of Christianity. In the hospitals to which they come they find some means or other to destroy the chapels.

It is to be feared that little by little all the centres of religious life and all religious activity in the diocese will come to an end. Henceforth there will be no Catholic education whatever in the diocese.

11. The parish church of Laziska and the Church of the Oblates of the Immaculate Virgin at Lubliniec were damaged in the course of the military operations in September, 1939. The latter was then used by the authorities for secular purposes, and its presbytery turned into a store for wireless sets confiscated from the Polish population. The statues of saints in this church had their heads knocked off, and in one case a mouse-trap was placed in the tabernacle.

The large cross which stood on the town square at Tarnowskie Gory is there no more. At Ruda the Germans have broken the statues in the Grotto of the Immaculate Conception.

Here also all the crucifixes have been removed from schools and public buildings. At Lubliniec a cook belonging to the Hitlerian *Arbeitsdienst* made a fire in his kitchen with the crosses thrown out of the school-rooms. In the churches and cemeteries the Germans are removing Polish inscriptions, even when they are most ancient and carved in stone.

Along with the monasteries and religious institutes, the important diocesan house of spiritual exercise at Kokoszyce was confiscated, with the fields and gardens belonging to it.

12. The fact that in this diocese ecclesiastical life has not been entirely suppressed, as it has been in Poznania and Polish Pomerania, is to be attributed to the opportunism of the German Government, which does not wish in war-time to irritate too much the miners and

other Polish workers who constitute the majority of the labour force in numerous industries and in the valuable coal mines of Silesia, whose products the Germans need. These workers, Catholics and attached to their faith, are expert and conscientious at their tasks, and it would undoubtedly be impossible to replace them.

On the other hand, the Polish intellectuals, land-owners, or merchants, have been expelled from Silesia in the same painful conditions as their compatriots of Poznania or Pomerania. At the present moment, at Katowice and in the other towns of Polish Silesia, there are neither lawyers, nor doctors, nor engineers, nor schoolmasters who are Poles; and similarly all owners of large landed properties have been evicted. The houses and shops of Polish proprietors were confiscated in January and February, 1940, without their receiving the least compensation for their buildings, sites, or merchandise.

From Silesia those workers who were no longer needed to carry on the local industries were sent by force to Germany. Their lot in an enemy country is a very sad one, as is that of their families who have remained in Silesia and to whom they are unable to send any of their pay. In any case, as soon as a father of a family has been sent to Germany, his family are usually driven from their home.

The worst suffering, however, which the populace have to bear is the sight of their sons carried off by force, to be made, by a special course of education, into apostles of the gospel of Hitlerism. The Germans are also beginning to carry off young girls, who are sent to special camps in Germany and in the chief centres of the western front.

The hatred of the populace for Germany and Hitlerism is very deep and menacing. The reasons for it are chiefly the outrageous misuse of its authority by the Gestapo, the inhuman deportations of young people into Germany,

and above all the mass executions of thousands of Poles. These last, carried out without trial or sentence, were numerous in September and October, and were renewed in January and February, 1940. Among the numerous victims executed publicly at Katowice were some of the clergy.

The faith and religion of the Silesian people will once again prove superior to their hard trials. The Poles of Silesia will suffer, but they will not allow themselves to be dominated by the Hitlerian-Prussian jack-boot.

DIOCESE OF LODZ

(CALLED BY THE GERMANS AT FIRST LODSCH, AND
AFTERWARDS LITZMANNSTADT)

*Incorporated in the Reich, with the exception of some
parishes which are situated in the Government
General*

13. H.E. Mgr. Jasinski has remained at his post. He had to submit to more than one examination, and is interned in his house.

H.E. Mgr. Tomczak, suffragan bishop and Vicar-General, was imprisoned and sent to a concentration camp at Radogoszcz, near Lodz, where he was beaten, insulted, and forced to perform humiliating work. He is there still.

The diocesan Curia has ceased to function. The Seminary is occupied by soldiers. The Cathedral Chapter has been broken up.

14. A regular avalanche of arrests and penalties has fallen on the regular and secular clergy. Half of them at least are in prison or have been expelled. After sufferings and ignominies of all kinds in a detention prison, the

priests were then sent to the Radogoszcz concentration camp, a place of terrorism and sadism.

An eye-witness reports as follows: " In the diocese of Lodz alone several dozens of priests and religious clergy, with their bishop, Mgr. Tomczak, were sent to Radogoszcz. The new-comers were greeted with a frightful hail of blows with sticks, which did not spare even H.E. Mgr. Tomczak himself. The majority were then left without food for three days. The number of those detained amounted to about 2,000. They had to sleep on mouldy straw. The guards insulted and cruelly maltreated the prisoners. One could not enumerate all the insults and humiliations inflicted on them. The priests were made to wash out the latrines with their hands. It was not rare for the guards to order the prisoners to kneel down in a row, touch the ground with their foreheads, and call out, ' We are Polish pigs.' One day a policeman came into a room and said sarcastically, ' You would like me to hang an image of the Virgin on the wall for you to pray to for victory ? That would be the last straw.' Then, turning to the bishop he added, ' You also will be hanged soon.' A man who asked to be allowed to tend the bishop's injured foot was shot." (Authentic statement.)

After long weeks of this sort of treatment, the sick priests were dismissed from the camp, and immediately sent to the " Government General." In this way the unhappy diocese was likewise deprived of its clergy.

15. In these conditions ecclesiastical life rapidly disappeared. A large number of parishes are without pastors. The churches are open for a short time on Sundays. The parochial buildings are occupied by the police or given to the German authorities. Poles are forbidden to marry. Religious teaching is forbidden in the schools. The Catholic Action has been dissolved, and its director, Fr. Nowicki, beaten so brutally that his

skull had to be trepanned in order that his life might be saved.

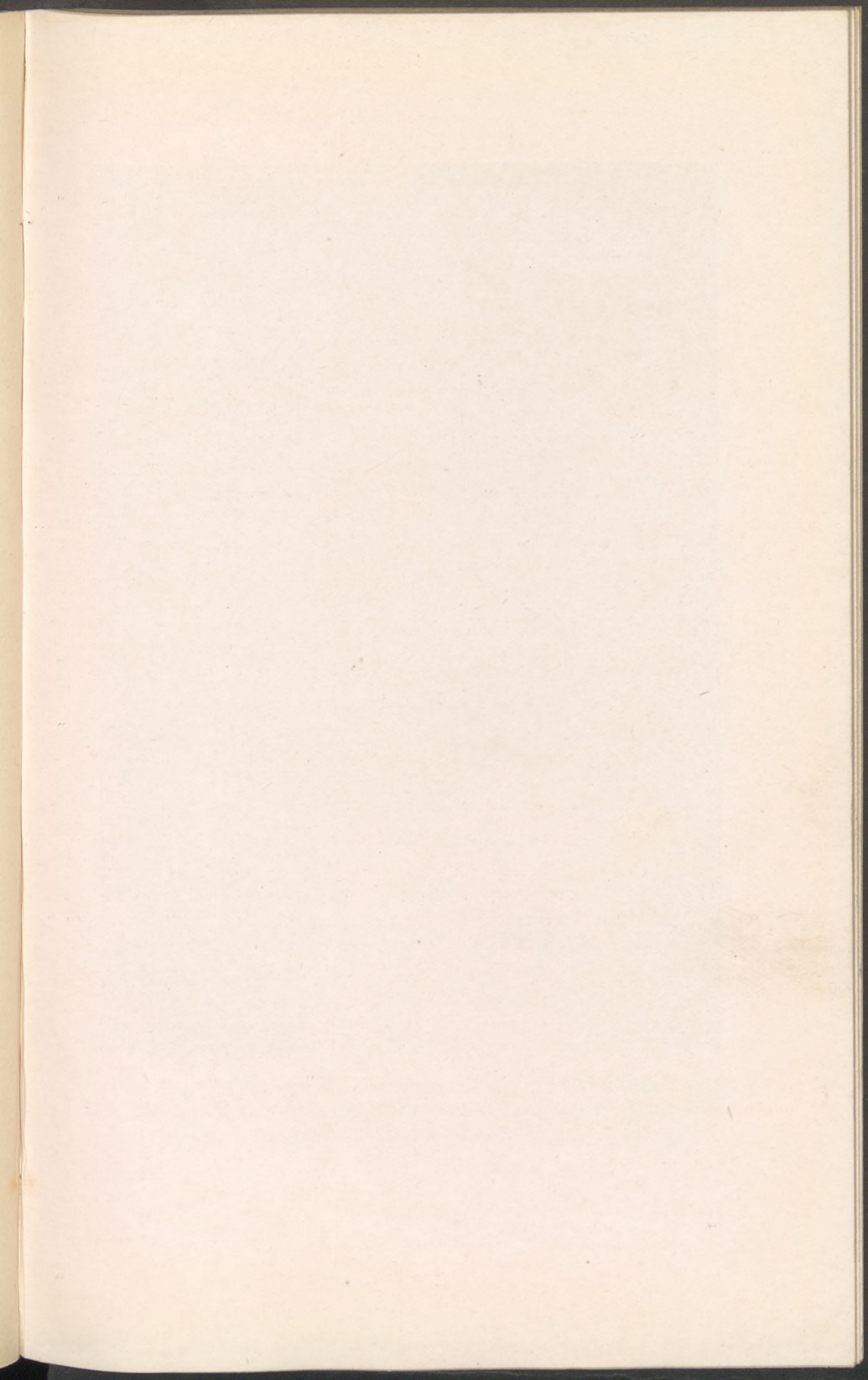
All the Catholic organizations for charitable and pious purposes have ceased their activities.

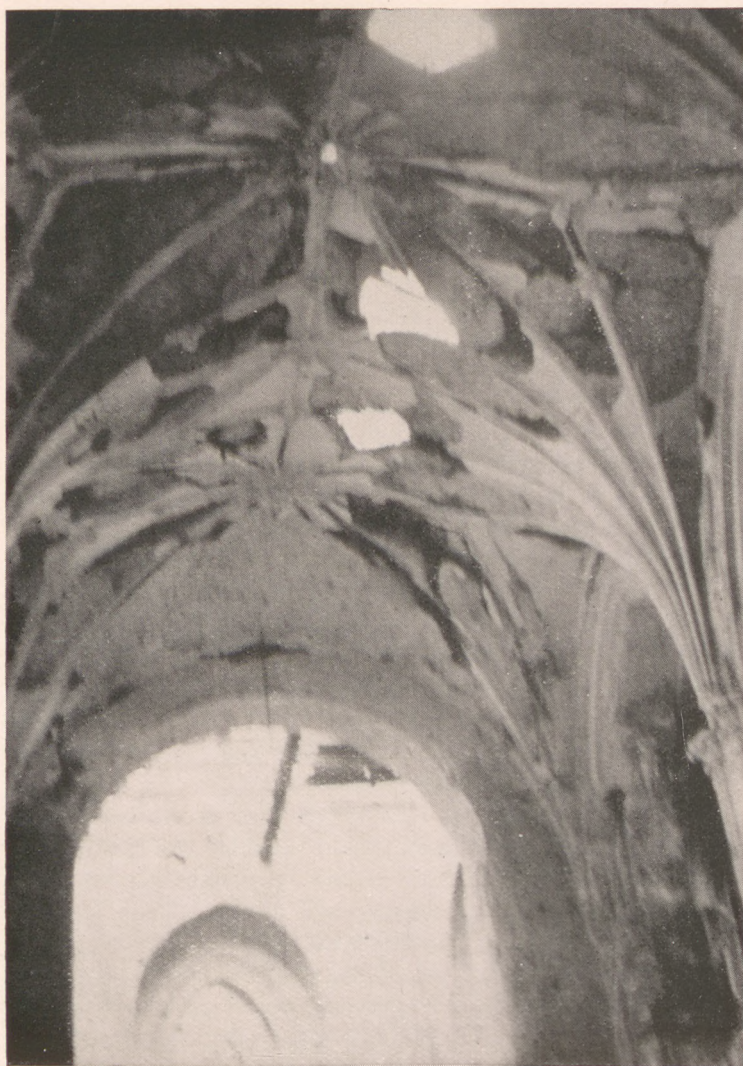
The monasteries of the religious orders and their works have been suppressed. The Jesuits have been moved from Leczyca. The new, scarcely finished hospital of the Brothers of St. John the Divine at Lodz has been sequestered. The Lazarists have been driven from Pabianice; the Salesians have been sent away from their orphanage at Lutomiersk with all their poor and abandoned children. The religious institutes for women have also had to suffer grave losses.

In this way the diocese of Lodz, which in twenty years had accomplished a great task of organization and influenced by its Christian life the most important industrial centre in Poland, has been reduced to inaction. The Germans, with manifest haste, are depriving the whole of this region of its Catholic character.

16. Thus, all the Polish and Catholic elements have been expelled without scruple or compassion from town and village alike and sent to the Government General, where they suffer from hunger, cold, and sickness. As in Poznan and Polish Pomerania, these expulsions are carried out in the cruellest manner, and the victims are robbed of everything they possess. Only the workmen who are needed for the various industries are left on the spot. The number of persons expelled from the diocese amounts already to 200,000. Their places are immediately taken by Germans, who establish themselves in the houses, shops, and fields of the Poles, and appropriate all their goods—furniture, clothes, and victuals.

In six months Lodz has become a non-Catholic German city; the entire aspect of the country has been forcibly changed, so that in certain districts there is not a single Pole, or a single Catholic, to be met with any more.





THE MAIN NAVE OF THE CATHEDRAL OF WARSAW, WHICH WAS SHELLED BY GERMAN HEAVY ARTILLERY ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1939, DURING HIGH MASS.

DIOCESE OF PLOCK

Partly incorporated in the Reich

17. H.E. Mgr. Nowowiejski, who is advanced in years, and was the doyen of the Polish bench of bishops, has been expelled from his residence and is detained at Slupno.

His suffragan and Vicar-General, Mgr. Wetmanski, was first arrested by the occupation authorities, and then released, and finally sent with Mgr. Nowowiejski to Slupno.

The diocesan Curia is unable to function. The large and small seminaries have been broken up and their buildings occupied by the German authorities. Their rich and important archives, as well as the diocesan museum, have been seized by the German police.

A large part of the clergy was arrested, detained in the monasteries, and finally expelled into the occupied territory called the Government General. The extensive district of Mlawa, Przasnysz, and Ciechanow, which extends from the borders of East Prussia to the Vistula, has lost many of its clergy. Those of the Rypin County had to endure the most suffering. There are parishes without pastors and without Mass. Marriages are forbidden. The Catholic Action does not exist any more. The Sunday services are limited to only two hours.

At Soczewka the vicar Kwiatkowski was shot; other priests have disappeared and there is no news of them.

The Passionists of Przasnysz have suffered, but still more the Salesians, who were simply driven from their noviciate at Czerwinsk and from their school of arts and crafts at Jaciazek.

A report received runs as follows: "In the church of Skepe, where a miraculous image of the Virgin was worshipped, the German police destroyed the altars and the statues of saints, exactly as the Reds did in Russia.

They then forced the populace to remove the debris. But when the people, sorely grieved by the sacrilegious destruction, went to the church to carry away the said debris, the police posted a notice on the walls of houses to the effect that it was the populace who had destroyed the altars of the church, and that, in order to avoid fresh damage by them in the sanctuary, it was forbidden, under the severest penalties, to cross the threshold of the church, to which all had been accustomed to go to seek comfort. Thus sacrilegious instincts were mingled to the full with perfidy."

18. Thus this venerable Polish diocese was Germanized without respite or mercy, and despoiled of all the gifts and characters of Catholicism. Yet it was always, in the past, an exclusively Polish and Catholic country; it was proud to be the home of St. Stanislas Kostka. Never before in history had it been under German domination. Now it has been annexed to the German province of East Prussia, with the name of *Südostpreussen*. The town of Ciechanow, which has been made the chief place of the district, and the venerable city of Plock, former residence of the dukes of Mazovia, were both, in the course of six months, so emptied of Poles and other elements by the Germans and populated in haste by Germans brought from elsewhere, that they look like German towns. Hitlerian propaganda never ceases to proclaim in every tone, in Poland and foreign countries alike, that these towns and this country were of German origin.

It is only too plain that this hasty and cruel Germanization means also overbearing and tyrannical invasion by pagan Hitlerism. The German authorities, and in particular the police, are brutally destroying the organization and life of the Church, making war, in an intransigent and subtle manner, against Christianity and the essence of Catholic morality.

DIOCESE OF WLOCLAWEK

Incorporated in the Reich

19. H.E. Mgr. Radonski is at Budapest, and the German authorities have refused him permission to return to his diocese or to any other part of Poland.

H.E. Mgr. Kozal, suffragan bishop and Vicar-General, devoted himself most zealously to the service of the people of Wloclawek during the hostilities. On the arrival of the Gestapo he was arrested and subjected to painful examinations; and after two months passed in the prison at Wloclawek he was interned in the concentration camp at Lad, of which more will be said presently.

The episcopal Curia has been raided and occupied by the police. Its Court is no longer able to function. Of the forty-two clergy resident at Wloclawek, either as members of the Chapter, or attached to the Curia or the Catholic Action, or engaged in the cure of souls, only one sick canon and one young priest were left; the rest were imprisoned and sent to concentration camps.

The bishop's palace was first denuded of its furniture, works of art, and linen. Then a Nazi personage was installed in it, but he left it when the new masters of the palace had spoilt the central heating in the midst of a severe winter.

The Cathedral was closed after having been thoroughly searched by the police, who keep the keys and are doing all they can to find the treasure.

The residence of the canons as well as the large and small seminaries are occupied by German soldiers.

20. The clergy are suffering the same fate as those of the other dioceses incorporated in the Reich. Both secular and regular priests are maltreated, injured, and beaten. Half of the clergy have been arrested. After weeks in various prisons where they suffered as has been

described, these priests were collected, together with those of the contiguous dioceses, in three concentration camps: at Gorna Grupa, at Kazmierz Biskupi, and at Lad. In the last camp Mgr. Kozal and about eighty priests are detained: they live in the College of the Salesians, the Director of which is charged with their maintenance.

From the said concentration camps the priests are sent in groups to the Government General, whilst their places are filled by others who have been forcibly removed from their parishes. In this way Catholic life in these districts is being destroyed according to a prearranged plan. There are, however, some priests who are living in hiding and continuing their work among the people.

At Kalisz Fr. Pawlowski, vicar of Chocz, was publicly shot. He was led to the place of execution barefoot and without his cassock. The police compelled the Jews to fasten him to the execution post, to unbind him after he had been shot, to kiss his feet, and to bury him in their ritual cemetery.

21. The diocesan administration at Wloclawek having been destroyed, the Germans proceeded to crush the life out of the Church in the diocese. At Wloclawek, for three months the people were forbidden to attend any church but that of the Minorites; but there have now for a few weeks been Sunday services in one of the parish churches. In the deaneries of Lipno and Nieszawa there are no priests any more; in the others there are ever fewer.

Services, where they are permitted, take place only on Sundays. Marriages and all offerings for the needs of public worship are forbidden. The Catholic Action has been suppressed, and its diocesan president, M. Pulawski, Chamberlain of Cape and Sword to His Holiness, was shot. The popular diocesan weeklies and the outstanding monthly, *Athenæum*, edited specially for the

clergy, and widely read throughout Poland, have all been suppressed.

The crosses and chapels have been destroyed, and the patrimony of the Church confiscated; the parochial houses and the lands of the beneficiaries have been confiscated, and the revenues of the clergy stolen. After the publication of the encyclical *Summi Pontificatus*, the police destroyed a monument to Pope Pius XI put up on the walls of the Cathedral.

The college and the *Dlugosz* episcopal lycée at Wloclawek have been occupied and stripped of all their modern equipment, and are at present used by the soldiers. The Jesuit church and noviciate at Kalisz were made into a temporary prison for persons exiled to the Government General. The Salesians had to move from their fine college, lycée, and boarding-house at Aleksandrow, and a school for policemen has been established in it; while their college at Lad serves as a place of detention for interned priests, as was said above. The large modern school, lycée, and boarding-house belonging to the Ursulines of Wloclawek were turned into barracks; and the Sisters of St. Vincent were driven from their hospital at Wloclawek and from all their other works.

22. In the diocese in question there have also been executions among the nobility and the most eminent persons. The landowners have been dispossessed of all their estates and exiled; and the same is the case with the intellectuals. The peasants likewise have been driven out, without receiving the least compensation for their lost property, particularly in the districts of Kalisz, Lipno, Nieszawa and Turek. The population of the towns is continually diminishing, and the aspect of the towns is changing. Wloclawek, which used to have 67,000 inhabitants, has been reduced to 18,000. Kalisz looks German, its population having diminished to

20,000. The procedure for transforming the character of this Polish and Catholic country is the same as that adopted in the other dioceses incorporated in the Reich: heinous injustices, cruelties, acts of brigandage, sadism, robberies, and executions. The *Voelkischer Beobachter*, the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, and the *Ostdeutscher Beobachter* contained impressive details of the feverish anxiety of the Germans to get rid of the real population of this country and put Germans in their place. With the expulsion of the Poles the beautiful and very fertile region called Kuyavia, which had been Catholic for a thousand years and whose bishop, in the ancient Republic of Poland, held the office of Vice-Primate, is becoming more and more a pagan country. Often enough the new settlers imported into the towns are distinguished by a pronounced Hitlerian impiety and by an implacable hatred of Catholicism.

THE PART OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CRACOW INCORPORATED IN THE REICH

23. About a quarter of the archdiocese, and in particular the portion including the coal mines, metallurgical industries and textile factories, has been incorporated in the Reich. As in the diocese of Czestochowa, the frontiers of the Reich have been so extended as not to leave the Government General a single coal mine.

The absolute expropriation and complete expulsion of the nobility, the landed proprietors, and the intellectuals have here been achieved, and the Germans are now proceeding to send away the peasants. Among the new settlers are to be found several German families transplanted from the Upper Adige.

The clergy live in terror of the Gestapo, which last November executed Canon Thomas Czaplicki, vicar of

Trzebinia, aged seventy-five, and Fr. Felix Piatka, his curate. The activities which can now be carried on by the parishes are very limited. If a marriage has to be celebrated, it must be done in secret and one must go to the Government General. The Catholic Action is no longer tolerated.

The losses suffered by the religious orders have been very grave. The barefoot Carmelite Friars of Wadowice have been expropriated from their college and boarding-school. The Salesians of Oswiecim had their large institute occupied by soldiers, who are still quartered there. Several religious orders have had to cease or limit their educational or social work.

THE PART OF THE DIOCESE OF CZESTOCHOWA INCORPORATED IN THE REICH

24. A good half of the diocese of Czestochowa has been incorporated in the Reich: that is to say, the whole of the important industrial basin of Dabrowa (with its deposits of coal and iron and its cement and glass industries) and the fertile districts of the Wielun region. The border between the Reich and the Government General passes a few hundred metres from the Sanctuary of Czestochowa, which itself is in the Government General, while several outlying parts of the town are in the Reich.

The Germans expropriated the nobles, the industrials, the landed proprietors and the intellectuals, and many peasant families, while the workers were allowed to remain, although some of them were arrested and shot.

Here and there the clergy have had much to suffer, but up till now a few priests remain almost everywhere. The church services have been restricted, as they have

been everywhere. Marriages are no longer celebrated. All Catholic activities have been suppressed. The spirit of the population remains, however, high, and perhaps better than before.

The episcopal college of Wielun, with its lycée and boarding-house, has been turned into barracks.

THE PART OF THE DIOCESE OF LOMZA INCORPORATED IN THE REICH

25. Here we have to do with two different and separate areas. The one consists of the northern part of the diocese, lying between Lithuania and East Prussia: the enchanting Suwalki district, with its picturesque lakes, rivers, and forests; while the other is the sandy district of Myszyniec, between the rivers Pisa, Narew, and Omulew, covered with magnificent forests and inhabited by the very distinct Kurpie people. The motive underlying the incorporation of these lands in the German "living-space" was the desire of the Reich for a large quantity of timber. Except for an inconsiderable Lithuanian minority in the Suwalki district, the two areas mentioned are indisputably Polish. Their population is of medium density.

So far the population of these districts has not been much interfered with; the Polish intellectual class alone has had to leave them.

It is to be hoped that, being as they are deeply religious, the inhabitants of the region will suffer the trial of the Hitlerian occupation without great injury to their faith and morals, preserving the best ancient traditions.

THE PART OF THE DIOCESE OF WARSAW
INCORPORATED IN THE REICH

26. Almost all the deanery of Kutno is within the frontiers of the new Reich. It penetrates in an acute-angled triangle towards the west, between the dioceses of Plock and Lodz. It is one of the most fertile districts in Poland. The prosperity of the towns and villages has been gravely injured by the German night bombardments. The new institute belonging to the Salesians, near Kutno, was one of those which suffered most. At the present time it is occupied by German troops.

In this area, now incorporated in the *Vaterland*, the same regime was introduced as in the dioceses of Wloclawek and Lodz. After Easter large numbers of persons were expropriated, even in the villages.

The religious life has been subjected to the same restrictions and the same rigorous control as in the diocese of Lodz.

SUPPLEMENT TO THE REPORT OF JANUARY
6TH, 1940, ON THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION
IN THE ARCHDIOCESES OF GNIEZNO AND
POZNAN

Archdiocese of Gniezno

27. (a) Since January 6th the number of priests expelled by the German authorities has been increased by those from the deanery of Kruszwica and several vicars from the deanery of Trzemeszno. All of these were at first confined in the concentration camp at Lad, and then sent to the "Government General."

(b) To the list of priests shot has to be added the name of Fr. Wybuda of the Congregation of the Oblates of the Immaculate Conception, parish priest of Markowice.

(c) Among the numerous prisoners at Stuthof, Fr. Kubicki, parish priest of Piaski, died.

(d) The Church of the Jesuits at Bydgoszcz has been destroyed, and a new municipal centre built on its site.

(e) The churches have been despoiled of their sacred vessels, their objects used in divine worship, and their sacred vestments.

Archdiocese of Poznan

28 (a) To the list of priests shot has to be added the name of Fr. Ignatius Czemplik, parish priest of Noskow.

(b) The following have died in prison: Fr. Louis Haase, rural dean and parish priest of Kicin; Fr. Paul Polednia, rural dean and parish priest of Krzyzowniki; Canon Nicholas Swinarski, parish priest of Czarnkow; Fr. Casimir Szreybowski, metropolitan canon and parish priest of Poznan Cathedral; and seven other priests. The bodies of the victims were burned in crematoria, so as to leave no trace of their sufferings.

(c) Fr. Henry Szymkowiak, parish priest of Drobnin, was killed by a German bomb.

(d) In the course of the last two months two priests have been expelled from the deanery of Kepno and of Krotoszyn. Some days before Easter the clergy from several other deaneries were sent away. Those from the deanery of Borek and from that of Gostyn have been interned at Bruczkow; those of the deaneries of Grodzisk, Koscian, and Zbaszyn were confined at Lubin; those from the deaneries of Leszno and Rawicz have been sent to Goruszki; while those from the deanery of Srem are at Puszczykowo.

(e) The Philippines of the Sacred Mount at Gostyn have been deported and their large monastery with its boarding-school for boys sequestered, as well as their landed estates, amounting to 1,000 hectares (2,600 acres).

(f) Poznan has been declared *Klosterfrei* (free of monasteries), only the German monastics having been left. The Church of the Sisters of St. Vincent has been turned into a gymnasium. In the chapel of the Primate's palace the Hitlerian police put a dog-kennel.

(g) During the course of hostilities the parish church of Krotoszyn was damaged by the German artillery. The Church of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth at Ostrzeszow, which before had belonged to the Friars Minor, was turned into a stable.

(h) Besides numerous statues of the Holy Virgin and of saints standing in the open squares of the towns, the beautiful monument of the Sacred Heart at Poznan has been demolished, and also the figures of the Sacred Heart in the chief squares at Kozmin, Krotoszyn, and Wolsztyn. The same fate befell the monument to Cardinal Ledochowski at Ostrow.

In general, the situation in the archdiocese of Poznan may be stated as follows:

5 priests shot.

27 priests confined in harsh concentration camps at Stuthof and elsewhere in the *Altreich*.

190 priests in prison or in the concentration camps at Bruczkow, Chludowo, Goruszki, Kazmierz Biskupi, Lad, Lubin, and Puszczykowo.

35 priests expelled into the territory called Government General.

11 priests died in prison and their bodies burned in crematoria.

11 priests seriously ill in consequence of ill-treatment.

122 parishes entirely without priests.

DOCUMENTS

1. *Report of February 11th, 1940*

The expulsion of the Poles from their soil continues. At this moment hundreds of thousands of persons are being banished in a barbarous manner from Poznania, Polish Pomerania, Lodz, Wloclawek, Kalisz, and the villages. Young men and girls are being deported to Germany. The leading classes will soon be exterminated in prisons, concentration camps, and forced labour camps. Many persons have been shot. The Germans rob, sack, and carry away everything they like, without giving any receipt. If this goes on we shall perish miserably. It is not astonishing that a profound and terrible hate is being born in every heart. It is to be feared that in time there will be some frightful massacre. But they do everything, in very truth, to make themselves hated. With few exceptions they are only executioners and sadists, without any human feeling. Terrible indeed is the trial which God is imposing on us. But, despite everything, the people is strong and enduring. It does not complain, but suffers heroically.

2. *Report of February 14th, 1940*

It was early in December, 1939. The winter was extraordinarily severe, the temperature falling to 30 degrees of frost (C.). At Mielec I saw a train full of deportees from Bydgoszcz enter the station. It was composed entirely of cattle-trucks, sealed, without windows, without water, lavatories, or any heat. The journey had lasted three days and three nights. The people confined in it were mainly women and children. When the trucks were opened, there got down from them spectres who could scarcely stand upright, all dirty and emaciated, in a state of terror. They began to undo their baggage. I

approached and saw that it was frozen children, frost-bitten. One, two, ten, twenty—thirty or more. None of the mothers wept, they were as if petrified. Two half-dead children had great lumps of ice on their cheeks: it was their tears frozen on their pale faces.

3. *Report of February 19th, 1940*

The chapel of the Ursulines at Koscierzyna has been profaned. The sacred vestments were used for sacrilegious buffooneries. One of the stoles was put on a dog. A servant-girl succeeded in saving the Holy Sacrament: she opened the tabernacle herself, put the Blessed Host on a consecrated linen cloth, and carried it, hidden on her breast, to the parish church.

4. *Report of February 27th, 1940*

A few days ago I was at Katowice, when there were renewed mass executions of Poles on the space near the municipal park. Among the victims were priests. Their eyes were bandaged with pocket-handkerchiefs. After the volley had been fired, these same handkerchiefs, blood-stained though they might be, were used to bandage the eyes of others of the condemned. One of the priests was not killed and began to rise. He was then dispatched by blows with gun-butts.

Persecution is increasing in the district between Katowice and Cracow. The poor people try to escape to the mountains of Slovakia, in 30 to 40 degrees of frost (C.). The whole country is dragged, as it were, for young people, who are sent off in train-loads to Germany. Railway officials have given me terrifying details of certain of these transports, particularly one from Zakopane, which left for Germany via Poznan. Some of these deportees are beginning to come back. But in what a state! Some are sick, or dying. Young men sterilized, young girls pregnant.

In one transport of exiled Poles, sent in February from Poznan to the region of Kielce, the greater part died pierced with cold in the severe winter, with twenty-five to thirty degrees of frost. In this same month of February, a group of unhappy folk had to wait on the Liberty Square from 4 till 8 o'clock in the morning for means of transport. Several children died of the cold, and others cried desperately, till the police snatched them from the arms of their mothers, saying they would take them to hospital. The mothers, despite their despairing supplications, were not allowed to stay with their children, but were sent to Kielce. As for the children, they were not sent to hospital at all, but died of cold with the others, and their little bodies were then burned in an improvised crematorium. The attitude of the people is heroic, but hatred is increasing. Only a miracle will be able to save the Germans from a terrible vengeance. It is very consoling to see how all the social classes among the Poles have drawn together. In view of the sufferings of the priests, the monks, the landowners, the industrials, the doctors, the judges, the peasants and the workers, all divisions have disappeared. All feel themselves brothers, and are full of compassion and a feeling of solidarity.

5. Report of March 3rd, 1940

Women of eighteen to twenty-four are carried off in secret and sent to Germany. These unhappy victims are taken suddenly and unexpectedly. I travelled with a gentleman who is a doctor at ——. He was in despair and inconsolable because his two daughters had been carried off: during the night a car stopped outside his house; the police broke in and carried off the two young girls. The poor father never knew anything more.

6. *Report of April 2nd, 1940*

It happened at ——. After the vicar and his curate had been suddenly deported, Monsieur —— made his way secretly into the church to save the Most Holy Sacrament from falling into the hands of the Gestapo. He took the pyx from the tabernacle and carried it to his house, where he hid it among the linen. He told us the same day what had happened, and I went to his house, having been charged by the vicar to fetch the Most Holy Sacrament. I went in secret, and finding only some pieces of consecrated host, I consumed them on the spot. The population receive the Sacraments and attend Confession in large numbers now that the church is open on Sundays. More frequently, however, confessions are heard in secret in the houses. In every family the rosary is recited, and prayers said to St. Andrew Bobola.

7. *Report of April 5th, 1940*

In the monastery at —— a few serving brothers were all who were left. The last monk had been deported in November to a concentration camp near Danzig. The aspect of —— is completely changed. The crosses and commemorative monuments have disappeared from the streets and the park. A beautiful statue of the Holy Virgin, at the feet of which numerous religious manifestations used to take place, has disappeared. The chapel of the religious community has been closed and the pews burnt in the stoves. The church has been closed. The consecrated linen from the chapel and the church, the chandeliers and all the objects used in the church services have been carried away. On March 14th the new Hitlerian tenants got up a religious masquerade. They rang the church bells, which had been silent for months, and when the faithful from the vicinity arrived,

they saw a crowd of young people making merry, wearing chasubles, copes, and priests' berets, going round the park in procession, with rosaries and holy water sprinklers in their hands. The people withdrew in indignation. It was the eve of the festival of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows !

The serving brothers have the right to hear Mass only on the second Sunday in the month, when it is celebrated by a priest from —. For the rest, they are made to serve the new tenants, all fanatic Hitlerians, for whom they have to cook and work in the garden and in the electrical power house; they do not receive any pay. The winter having been long and exceptionally cold, and the district being short of coal, while supplies could not be obtained because of the war, the brothers were ordered to burn everything that came to hand for heating. In this way, a part of our furniture was burnt.

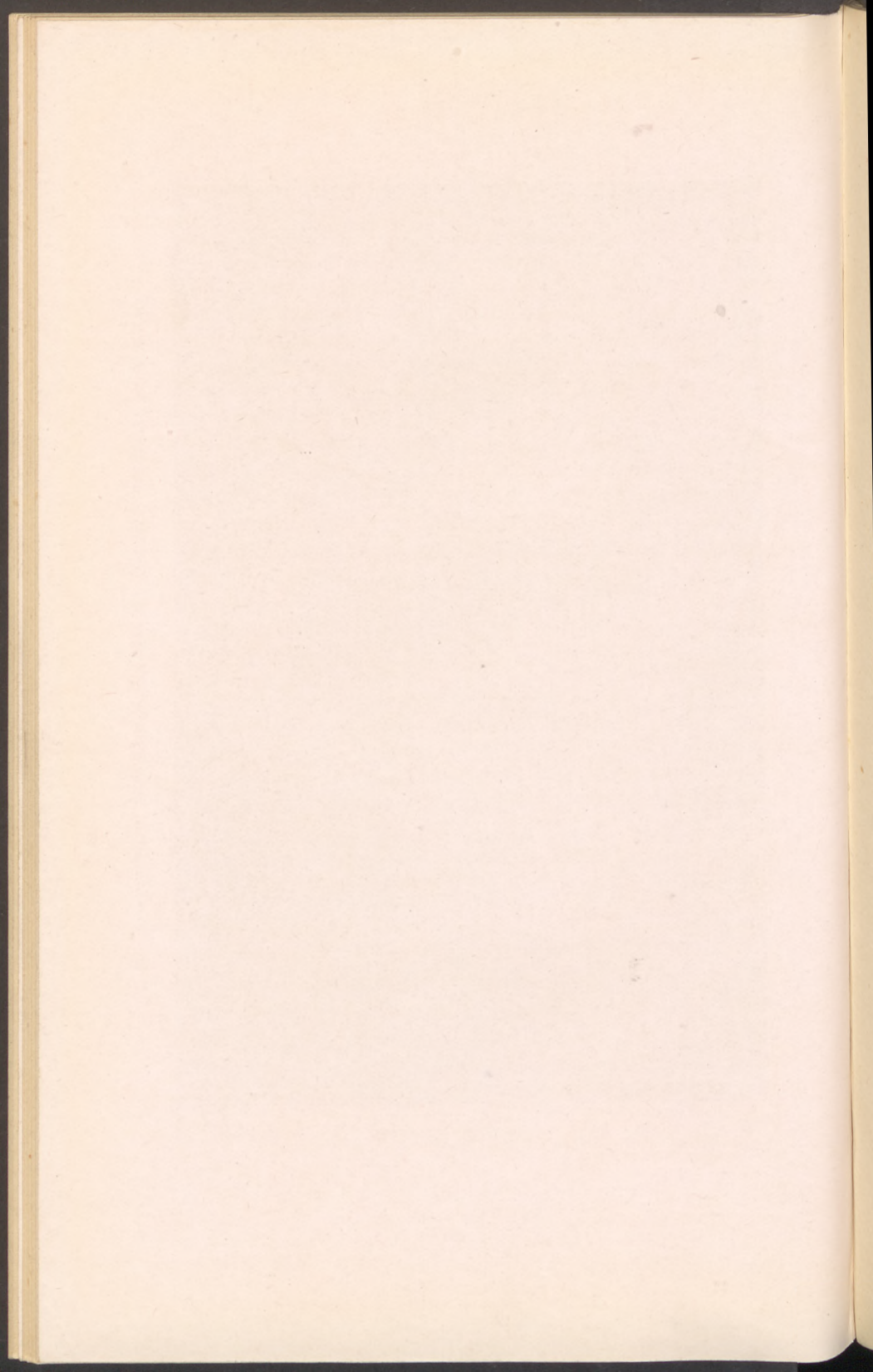
All the books from the libraries and book-shops were taken in lorries to the paper-mill, while all the laboratory apparatus, all the linen and clothing belonging to the house or to the brothers, the best furniture, the tables and the piano were sent to Germany. At the present time the machines are being dismantled in preparation for removal. The same kind of robbery has been carried out in every parochial presbytery, in every monastery, and in private houses.

The house of — is occupied by the police. Its library is in ruins. The chapel pews have been burnt and all the linen stolen. In the house of — an Hitlerian course of instruction has been arranged. At — the police are installed. Thus we have ceased to exist in that part of Poland which is now called *Neudeutschland*, as have all the other religious orders.

We have also had losses. Brother — was shot by the Germans in the environs of Warsaw. A bomb blew Brother — to pieces. Three brothers lost their lives at Warsaw in the ruins of a house which was bombed



A MOCK RELIGIOUS PROCESSION STAGED BY GERMAN SOLDIERS IN POLAND.



by German airmen. Brother — died in an epidemic. Brother — was killed in an accident on the road during hostilities. A German shell caused Brother — to lose his leg. Several others were wounded, but have recovered. A large number were arrested. Some are still in prison or concentration camps. Father — and Brother — are in the dreadful camp at —. There is one in the hands of the Bolsheviks; others are in Lithuania and even in Latvia. Many have disappeared.

Thus we are sharing the fate of the other religious Congregations, which are struck so hard by the Hitlerian occupation.

8. *Report of April 7th, 1940*

We have to do with people drunk with hatred of all that is Catholic and Polish. Nothing but the publication of their crimes in foreign countries can restrain them. The Poles are being systematically exterminated. They are capriciously shot, or condemned to die of hunger. Only Germans get any butter, which is rationed. The expulsion of the population from the province of Poznan continues. The exiles are collected in the Government General, which has been stripped by the Germans of everything. Hardly anything is to be found there any more, and the numbers of the population are growing disquietingly large. Committees of Poles receive the exiles with great cordiality, but they have no longer any means at their disposal.

Executions continue every day throughout the occupied territory. At least 40 per cent. of the clergy of the archdiocese of Gniezno and Poznan are in prison. Those who have suffered or who will have to suffer in the dungeons of the citadel at Poznan are true martyrs in the strictest sense of the term. Others are confined in concentration camps near the monasteries at Lad, Chludowo, Lubin, and Puszczykowo. Many clergy have been shot, or deported to Germany, where they die.

Those who have been worst treated are Canon Szrebrowski, Curate Janicki of Sroda, Father Haase, rural dean to Kicin, and Canon Swinarski of Czarnkow. The priests' families were told they must pay three marks to have their ashes.

If this state of things continues much longer it is impossible to say what percentage of the population will be able to survive. Yet the spirit of the people is strong. They say it is necessary to suffer until the Hitlerian pestilence has been finally overcome.

9. *Report of April 8th, 1940*

The German press and important Hitlerian officials say that conditions of life in the Polish districts annexed to the Reich are now normal, and that the Poles there enjoy a large measure of liberty. I will permit myself to cite certain facts which are absolutely certain, illustrating the manner in which this normalization of life and this magnanimous tolerance are manifested in your Eminence's diocese and in particular in the city of Poznan.

The Poles are expropriated from their properties, not by way of any legal cession or forced sale, but by simple robbery, without any compensation. We are all reduced to misery and poverty. Those who were house-owners must pay rent if they continue to live there. So far they are allowed to use their own furniture, but they may neither sell it nor remove it. If the police come across a vehicle in the street carrying furniture or linen, they confiscate it on the spot. It often happens that the police enter a house unexpectedly and immediately confiscate the best furniture. Furniture, pianos, and pictures stolen from Poles are continually being removed to Germany.

In your archdiocese food is rationed; the amounts allowed are larger than in Germany, so as not to displease too much the Germans from the Baltic countries who now

occupy the properties and situations of the Poles. These Baltic Germans are not happy under the Hitlerian regime. The treatment inflicted on the Poles is, however, far worse. For example, whilst the Germans receive 750 grammes of meat per week, the Poles get only 60 grammes. The Germans are allowed 250 grammes of butter, the Poles only 50. For a whole month the Poles got no butter at all, although it is the only fat to be had. It seems that from April 10th the Poles will have no more meat. The shops and markets are open to Germans only till 11 o'clock, after which hour the Poles may purchase provisions, but often there are no more to be had. Soap may not be sold to Poles.

Poles are forbidden to go into hotels and cafés, and to possess wireless sets. In the hospitals Poles have to pay 100 per cent. more than the Germans; the mortality among sick Poles is so high as to have become disquieting. Owing to lack of nourishment the mortality among children and young people has increased to a frightful extent.

At railway stations Poles are forbidden to use the waiting-rooms, a very harsh measure during such a winter as the past one. Poles are allowed to travel only by slow trains and in special third-class carriages, which are never heated. From April 1st they have been allowed to travel also by fast trains.

Officials, and particularly the police, treat all Poles very badly and insultingly. It is not uncommon for policemen violently to push and even kick men and women in the streets. The insult "Polish pig" is often heard. The police often strike persons who speak Polish. The Hitlerian press is continually insisting that the Poles should be treated without any pity.

In the workshops Polish workers receive 20 per cent. less pay than Germans. Poles have no right to employment save in factories, agriculture, and other hard occupations. A worker who is maltreated or defrauded of his pay has

no possibility of asserting his rights. A large number of men and youths and of young girls are deported by force to Germany. At the present time preparations are being made for a census of all the men and women of every condition between fourteen and sixty years of age, in order that their work may be organized. The Hitlerians say publicly that the Germans are all going to war to assure Germany the domination of the world. In their place they are making the Poles work in Germany, for which end, indeed, they have enslaved them.

The Poles have no rights as citizens. Here, and more particularly in Pomerania, the man who wishes to remain a Pole is outside the law. Even if he wishes to make a plaint in consequence of some wrong done him by a German, not only will his cause not be heard, but he will be punished and persecuted as well. From 8.30 p.m. till morning Poles are confined to their houses. In the city of Poznan marriages between Poles were at last authorized as from April 1st, but the formalities required are so complicated that many persons refuse to go through them.

From April 1st young Poles have to attend the Hitlerian schools, where they are led in the direction of neo-paganism. There is no religious teaching. Some young adolescents have been sterilized.

In the course of the last few weeks the expulsions of Poles have been intensified, alike in the province and in the city of Poznan. If occasion presents itself, the whole of the belongings of the unhappy exiles, and even of their connexions by marriage, are stolen.

Executions continue; they are carried out in secret at —, near Poznan, which belongs to a German of the nobility. The victims are immediately buried, and to cover the holes trees are planted over their graves.

Towards Easter the expulsions of clergy have been still more numerous. Thus almost all the clergy have been expelled from the deaneries of Grodzisk and Zbaszyn and

interned in the camp at Lubin. The clergy from the deanery of Gostyn have been sent to Bruczkow, and those from the deanery of Rawicz to Goruszki. Priests are forbidden to go to the hospitals to administer the Last Sacrament to the dying.

Your Vicar-General at Poznan is still interned in his house. Before Easter another party of priests from the city was deported to the camp at Lad. Of the nineteen vicars in the city, only two are still exercising their functions. In the archdiocese of Poznan more than 300 priests having the care of souls have been expelled, and 122 parishes are now quite without pastors.

Such is the true aspect of the "normal" life of the Poles under Hitlerian domination. It is in fact the normalization of veritable slavery in the "living-space" of the race who claims to be predestined to rule the world.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

1. Hitlerism aims at the systematic and total destruction of the Catholic Church in the rich and fertile territories of Poland which have been incorporated in the Reich, in the face of all right and justice, because of their intellectual and artistic industries, the abundance of their high-grade coal, and the fertility of their soil and their powerful forces.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

OF

CARDINAL HLOND, PRIMATE OF POLAND,

CONCLUDING

HIS REPORTS TO POPE PIUS XII

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Except in the diocese of Katowice, where the invaders have observed certain limits in order not to provoke the Catholic workers in the metallurgical industries and the coal mines beyond endurance, almost everywhere the ecclesiastical administration of the dioceses has been effectively destroyed. The bishops, even when they are left in their sees, are only allowed to exercise their pastoral functions to a very limited extent. One bishop has been deposed together with his suffragan. Two suffragans are in concentration camps. No pastor can visit his parish, even secretly, although, after such disasters and persecutions his visits would be more than ever necessary. The Curias and their archives are in the hands of the police and cannot function at all.

The Cathedrals have been closed and their keys are kept by the invaders; one has been made into a garage. Five bishops' palaces have been invaded, and one of them has been turned into an inn, the bishop's chapel serving as a ball-room. In the chapel of the Primate's palace at Poznan the police have put a dog-kennel. All the seminary students have been dispersed and the seminaries occupied by the Hitlerian authorities.

The clergy are the most harshly persecuted. It is known for certain that thirty-five priests have been shot,

but the real number of victims, whose names could not be ascertained, undoubtedly amounts to more than a hundred. More than twenty have died in prison. A hundred priests were maltreated and tortured; another hundred are suffering in concentration camps; hundreds of others, again, have been driven into Central Poland. Those who have been permitted to stay are subjected to numerous humiliations, are paralysed in the exercise of their pastoral duties, and are stripped of their parochial benefices and all their rights. They are entirely at the mercy of the Gestapo, without possibility of appeal.

In many districts the life of the Church has been completely crushed, the clergy having been almost all expelled; the Catholic churches and cemeteries are in the hands of the invaders. Catholic worship hardly exists any more; the word of God is not preached, the Sacraments are not administered, even to the dying. In certain localities Confession is forbidden. In the remainder of the territory the churches can be open only on Sundays, and then for a very short time. For seven months marriages between Poles have been forbidden. The Catholic Action has been completely suppressed. The Catholic press has been destroyed. The least initiative in the matter of the religious life is forbidden. Charitable associations and works have likewise been destroyed.

Monasteries and convents have been methodically suppressed, as well as their flourishing works of education, publicity, social welfare, charity, and care of the sick. Their houses and their institutes have been occupied by the army or the Nazi party. Many monks have been imprisoned; a great number of nuns have been dispersed. Soon there will be no more traces left of hundreds of religious families, and in this way will be accomplished the annihilation of the immense contribution which they have made to the religious, moral, and intellectual character of the population.

The invaders have, further, confiscated or sequestered

the patrimony of the Church, considering themselves as its masters. The Cathedrals, the bishops' palaces, the seminaries, the canons' residences, the revenues and endowments of bishoprics and chapters, the funds of the curias and seminaries, the fields and woods constituting the ecclesiastical benefices, the churches with their furnishings, the presbyteries with their furniture, and the personal property of the priests, the archives, and the diocesan or religious museums—all have been pillaged by the invaders. They rob for themselves and for the State; they take off to Germany everything that can be transported and leave the rest to the new German colonists. The moral licence of their proceedings is illustrated by the fact, among others, that at Wloclawek Mgr. Kozal's furniture and effects were given by the police as a present to the prostitutes.

Everything has been deliberately planned with the aim of completely destroying the Church and its vitality in one of the most religious countries in the whole world. The above enumerated terrible proceedings have now continued in their intransigence and impiety for seven months. After so many centuries passed in the service of the Church, Poland witnesses the establishment in its midst of a paganism so godless, so immoral, atrocious and inhuman, that it could be accepted only by morbid-minded individuals who have lost all human dignity and are blinded by hatred of the Cross of Christ.

It is like an apocalyptic vision of the *Fides depopulata*.

2. The religious persecution in these profoundly Catholic dioceses is accompanied by the extermination of the Polish population. It is now incontestably proved, by information from competent Hitlerian sources, that the invaders have resolved to leave only a reduced number of Poles in these territories, to serve as *Sklavenvolk* for the Germans who are being established *en masse* as masters, or *Herrenvolk*.

No words could express the wrongs done with cold-blooded and calculated cruelty to the Polish people, with the aim of reducing them to the status of slaves, who shall serve and promote the prosperity of the "superior race." These atrocities, committed according to a large-scale, diabolic plan aiming at the realization of the conception of German "living-space," or, in other terms, the execution of the huge programme of shameful and oppressive imperialism, will constitute one of the darkest pages in human history.

Executions are carried out without trial or sentence, without mercy or restraint, in all the towns and in the villages. Neither secular nor regular clergy are spared. neither nobility nor middle class, nor peasants, nor students, nor women, nor young boys and girls. And they continue without respite; at the present time, however, they are carried out in secret, without either the fact or the victims' names becoming known. The horrors of the overcrowded prisons and the concentration camps overflowing with victims recall, nay, even surpass in the refinement of their sadism the crimes committed by the Reds in Russia. The life of the Poles is not protected by any law or any sentiment of humanity on the part of the invaders.

The Polish population are expropriated without pity and without compensation. Dr. Paul Friebe, of the German Ministry of Agriculture, writes in the *Berliner Boersenzeitung* that in the province of Poznan and in the remainder of the district now called *Warthegau*, 3,000 large country estates and at least 200,000 peasant holdings have been confiscated. The Poles have not the right to possess a field, or a house, or a garden, or any kind of building, or even a cow. Those who have not yet been actually dispossessed know that they will be tomorrow. The hereditary fortunes of the nobility, those of the peasants, and the immovable property of the urban middle class, as well as the factories

of the industrials, are all without exception objects of German rapine. The Poles are to become a servile proletariat. That is the conclusion forced upon one by the experience of the last six months, in the course of which the Poles have been expelled from a territory where they had given birth to their nation, to the Polish State and its ecclesiastical organization.

These expulsions are deliberately carried out in the most inhuman manner, so as to cause the deaths of the largest possible number of Poles whom the invaders do not need in the territories incorporated in the Reich. Landowners are driven from their ancient châteaux and peasants from their cots. The long-established middle classes are being driven from the towns, which are also being denuded of intellectuals, lawyers, doctors, engineers, and even private servants, and in this way the nation is being deprived of its leading classes. All these are sent into exile, robbed of everything they possess. They arrive in the Government General with only ten marks in their pockets, and increase the hunger of this already overpopulated region which has been reserved for the Poles.

The tragedy of this inhuman banishment of millions of Poles is the last horror of the refined cruelty of the invaders. Everything imaginable is done to make the exiles suffer, and their exile itself is made an instrument of death. All these families snatched from their homes in the night, with no regard for old men or young children, for sick persons or pregnant women, will remain an eternal and shameful witness to the degradation of humanity. One thinks with horror of these long weeks of frightful and terrible waiting in frost, dirt, and hunger in the camps, and then of these horrible and numberless death-trains, in which the victims travel in 15 to 30 degrees of frost (C.) for two, three, or even five days, packed in cattle-trucks, without room to sit down, without rugs, without food, without water—in short, without any

possibility of anything but to die miserably of cold and fatigue. Let it suffice to recall the frozen children, thrown by the police into the snow by the railway side; the dozens of people dying of cold, who from December to March were dragged from almost every train on its arrival at its funereal destination; the hecatombs of victims of inflammation of the lungs; the countless people whose health has been destroyed once for all during this tragedy; the crowds of proscribed who, in one of the severest winters, have been abandoned to misery, to hunger, and to the infectious diseases which are beginning to rage in the half-destroyed towns and plundered villages of Central Poland. The repugnant picture of Hitlerian cruelty will never be effaced from the memory of generations of Poles to come, and will be the most terrible impression in their history.

The Poles who have remained on the spot are not considered as citizens, but treated as outlaws who are only tolerated. They can buy food only on presentation of a ration card, and after the Germans have been served, which means that they run the risk of finding the shops sold out, as indeed happens only too often. In the trams Poles cannot mingle with Germans, but must take places reserved for them. In the trains they must travel in the worst carriages, which are never heated in winter. Everywhere they have to make way for the invaders and endure humiliations, insults, annoyances, and inquisitions. They live in constant terror, being exposed all the time to the arbitrary actions of the Gestapo, without the possibility of appeal for any legal protection. They are arrested without knowing why. In the streets and at the church doors they are seized by the police and taken away to work in some other locality, in the country, or in some distant undertaking or enterprise. Many are deported to the interior of Germany. Women, young girls, and young men disappear suddenly and can never be found.

Polish families are brutally crushed. The Poles may not contract any marriage. The bastard children will suffer like slaves, as they are fruits of the violence done to young Polish girls by depraved Hitlerians. The thing is practised cynically, as a right belonging to the conquerors.

At the same time, in the dioceses incorporated in the Reich, every monument and trace, every document and centre, of Polish culture is being destroyed. The national monuments have been removed. It is the same with Polish works of art in the museums, a great number of which have been destroyed. Polish archives have been carried off to Berlin. The libraries have been ransacked. In order to get rid of Polish books every Polish publication found in public or private libraries, bookshops, palaces, or private houses is marked for destruction and sent to a paper mill.

The Polish press is entirely destroyed, as well as its catalogues, even all its scientific publications. All Polish inscriptions have been effaced.

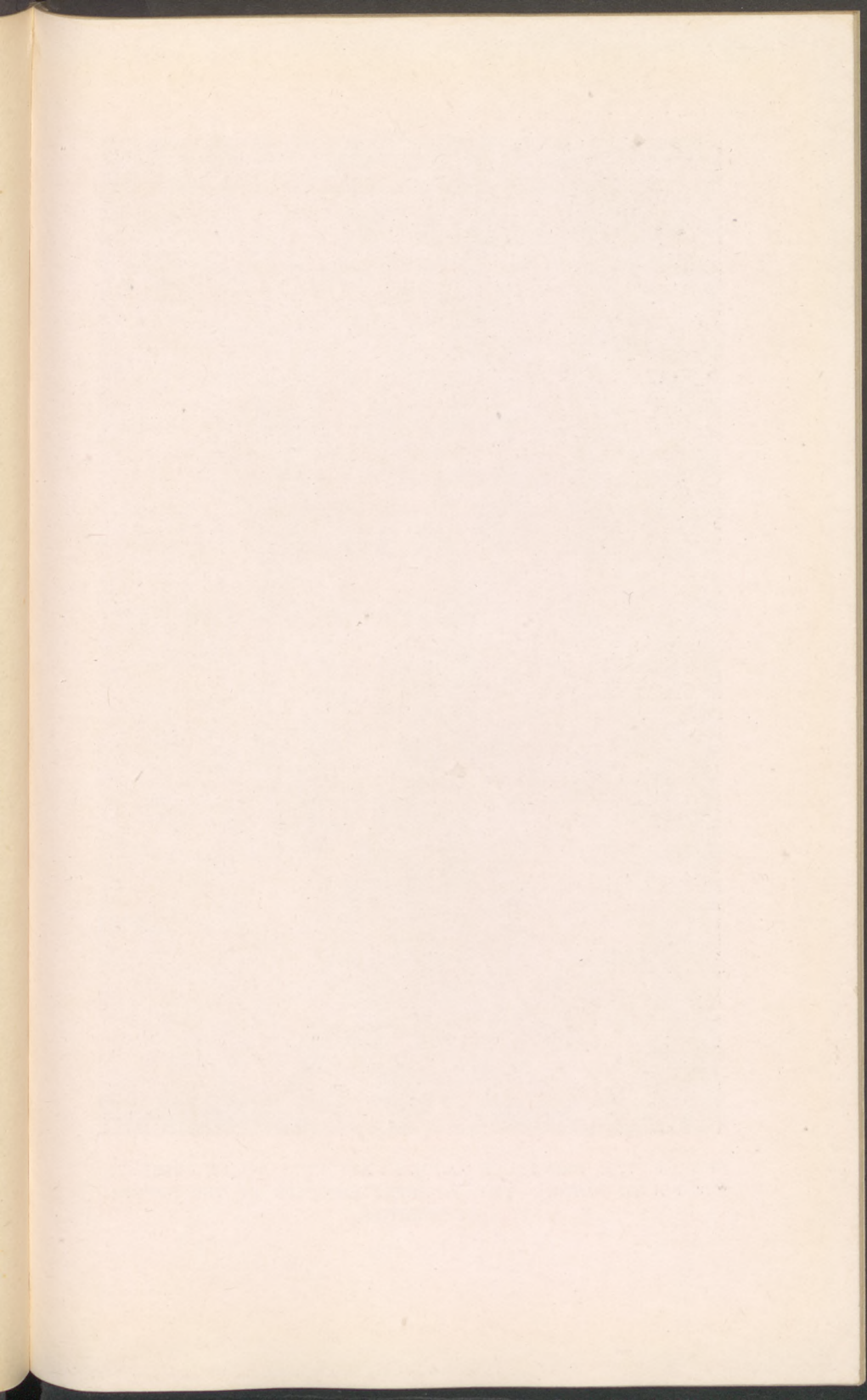
There is no longer a single Polish school. Polish boys and girls are not admitted to the high schools. A Hitlerian atheist recently said that it was good to give slaves the benefits of ignorance.

3. Exterminated as a nation, oppressed in their Christian faith, and with their families broken up, devoted to slavery and misery, in the midst of unparalleled tragedy, the Poles of the dioceses incorporated in the Reich perceive with grief that they are separated from the civilized world and from the conscience of humanity by a propaganda which has recourse to the most barefaced lies. For German propaganda strives to draw a veil of silence over Hitlerian crimes in Poland, denying the perfidy of the regime, covering the martyred nation with calumny, and threatening neutral nations who might dare to publish the truth. This propaganda tends to spread

the belief, even in the deceived German nation itself, that life is going on normally in Poland, and that the Poles have never been so happy as at present, now that they have the chance to endure Nazi domination.

Amidst all this frightful desolation the Poles are heroically maintaining their Catholic faith and Christian principles. They ask, however, not to be forgotten; they ask the conscience of the peoples of the world not to sacrifice them to Hitlerian barbarism; they ask the opinion of the world not to abandon them to the mercy of their oppressors, and by insistent protests to continue to defend their faith, their conscience, their religious worship, their rights to life, family, property, and individual and national liberty.

ROME,
April, 1940.





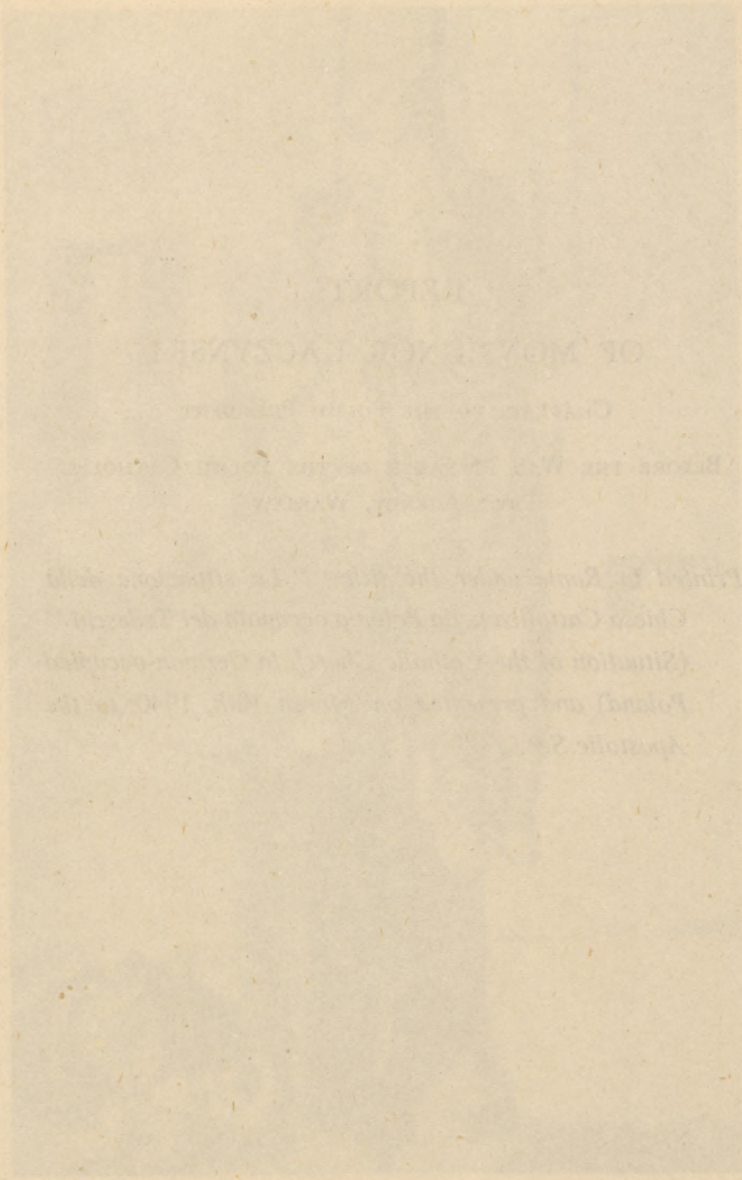
ONE OF THE PROOFS OF GERMAN ATTEMPTS TO EXTERMINATE THE POLISH NATION. TWO WORKERS EXECUTED BY THE GERMAN AUTHORITIES.

REPORT
OF MONSIGNOR KACZYNSKI

CHAPLAIN TO THE POLISH PRESIDENT

BEFORE THE WAR MANAGER OF THE POLISH CATHOLIC
PRESS AGENCY, WARSAW

*Printed in Rome under the title : " La situazione della
Chiesa Cattolica nella Polonia occupata dei Tedeschi "*
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Poland) and presented on March 10th, 1940, to the
Apostolic See.*



REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE

IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

ON THE 17TH MARCH 1870

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STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS OF THE LAND OFFICE FOR THE YEAR 1870-71
AS APPROVED BY THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE
ON THE 15TH MARCH 1871

REPORT
OF MONSIGNOR KACZYNSKI

IN drawing up this short sketch of the situation of the Catholic Church in that part of Poland which is under German occupation, I wish first of all to lay stress on two facts.

First, that I am not affected by motives of personal animosity, for I have had to bear relatively less ill-treatment and injury from the Hitlerian regime than others of my fellow-clerics, having been arrested only once and having been interrogated by the Gestapo eight times, without having been beaten or otherwise injured as others were.

Second, I hereby declare that everything stated below has been verified by me personally, or has been testified to by trustworthy witnesses, whose names I am authorized to give at the right time and place. During five months of German occupation I have frequently had occasion to go about personally collecting information on the situation of the Church, and questioning bishops, members of the clergy, and faithful Catholics.

Despite repeated statements by the German propaganda centre and declarations by Governor-General Frank, to the effect that the religious convictions and traditions of the Polish nation are being respected, the facts of daily life speak directly to the contrary. The struggle with religion becomes more bitter every day. The persecution of the Catholic clergy continues without hope of alleviation. And meanwhile the official German news-agency DNB (*Deutsches Nachrichtenbuero*) publishes forged interviews with ecclesiastical dignitaries in Poland,

as for example in February of this year with Archbishop Gall, administrator of the archdiocese of Warsaw.

In a private conversation with representatives of the Governor of Warsaw, a conversation which was not a regular interview, but was carried on in the presence of Professor O. Semkowski, S.J., of the Biblical Institute at Rome, Archbishop Gall expressly emphasized the painful situation of the Catholic Church in the area of his archdiocese, the destruction of many churches by German bombs and shells, the detention of priests in prison for months without formal accusation, the theft of Church property, the expulsion of priests from Catholic hospitals, etc.

The official DNB in its communiqué for the foreign press said not a word about the above complaints of the archbishop, but on the contrary affirmed that religious life in the Warsaw area was going on normally, to the general satisfaction. This contempt for the truth and for the person of a high Church dignitary is the more disgraceful in that the archbishop, cut off as he is from all facilities for publicity or for communication with foreign countries, was unable to deny the forgery.

Despite the assertion of the German propaganda office, the churches in Poznan, Polish Pomerania, and the portion of Congress Poland recently united to the Reich (*i.e.*, Wloclawek, Lodz, Kalisz, and Plock) are closed throughout the week and are open only on Sundays from 8 to 10 a.m. In many parishes in Pomerania, Poznan, Wloclawek, and the diocese of Lublin the churches are closed altogether by reason of the imprisonment of the local clergy. At Pelplin the ancient Cathedral has been made into a garage. In one of the oldest and most venerable sanctuaries of Poland, the Cathedral on the Wawel at Cracow, where the Polish kings were crowned and where their dust rests, the celebration of Mass is permitted by one priest only, on Sundays and Wednesdays, with closed doors, in the

presence of an agent of the Gestapo. The keys of the Cathedral and of the church treasury are in the hands of the German authorities.

In many places, even in the archdiocese of Warsaw, it is forbidden to solemnize marriages in church, and in Pomerania marriages celebrated since 1918 between Poles and Germans have actually been declared invalid. In a number of places in the diocese of Siedlce the preaching of sermons has recently been forbidden.

In the diocese of Czestochowa, Kielce, Sandomierz, and in some places even in that of Warsaw, religious teaching by the clergy in schools has been forbidden. By order of Dengel, commissary president of the city of Warsaw, priests have been removed from the hospitals, although the latter are for the most part Catholic foundations and were recognized as such even by the former Russian Government. When Archbishop Gall intervened in this connexion, all he got was a rude answer from the German authorities. The theological faculties and the seminaries in the majority of dioceses have been closed by order of the German authorities, and their buildings have been assigned to the use of new settlers. The Warsaw seminary, whose building was wrecked in the bombardment, continues formally to exist, but the rector and professors are unable to perform their duties, having been in prison since last October. One of them is Fr. Motylewski, who came to Poland only a fortnight before the outbreak of war, after seven years' studies at Rome.

Polish public opinion has been deeply moved by the news of the confiscation of works of art from the churches: liturgical vessels, pictures, and vestments. This is regarded as plain theft of Polish Church property. Despite the express provisions of international law and the Hague Convention, the German authorities forcibly seize objects used in Catholic worship and afterwards, as is said, sell them abroad and use the money thus obtained for war

purposes. Hitherto it had been only the Russian Bolsheviks who behaved like this.

The Cathedral at Warsaw has been robbed, among other things, of two artistic chalices of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, one of them the handiwork of King Sigismund III of Poland, who gave it to the Cathedral himself. At Cracow in addition to the great reredos carved by Wit Stwosz, the German authorities have taken from St. Mary's Church nine valuable paintings by Kulmbach. They came for them while a forty-hour service was in progress, and although the parson of the church, Fr. Kulinowski, begged them to wait until the conclusion of the service, his protestations had no effect: the German soldiers entered the church with their caps on, set up ladders and, to the great indignation of the faithful, noisily took the pictures down and carried them away. Similar scenes were enacted throughout the area of the Government General.

The martyrology of the Polish clergy is written in letters of blood. There is not a single diocese in German-occupied Poland where priests have not been murdered without trial or evidence. In Pomerania and Posnania there was a pure massacre of the clergy, in the course of which some (as for example Fr. Szarek at Bydgoszcz) were buried while they yet gave signs of life. At Chocz near Kalisz the seventy-year-old pastor Roman Pawlowski was arrested because two empty cartridges were found in his kitchen where soldiers had been quartered. After he had been so cruelly beaten by the Gestapo that his shirt and clothes were dripping with blood, he was taken off to Kalisz, where he was sentenced to death. He was then tied to a post in front of the church and shot before the eyes of the faithful.

At Mszczonow, near Warsaw, the Gestapo shot vicar Paciorkowski and his two curates in the presbytery without any accusation or trial. In the second half of February of this year Fr. Nowakowski, vicar of the parish of the

Redeemer at Warsaw, was sentenced to death merely because he was found in his church praying for the independence of Poland. It is still not known whether this sentence has been carried out, since the Gestapo refuses all information when either a priest or a layman has been condemned to death or to detention in a concentration camp. In cases where the death penalty has been carried out, the Gestapo does not surrender the body, but buries it at night in some secret place. Of many priests who were arrested months ago there is no news, and it is unknown whether they are alive and where they may be.

In the territory of the Government General the cruellest persecution has befallen the clergy of the diocese of Lublin, although there are scarcely any Germans there, and in consequence there was no ground for friction, and therefore no excuse for persecution. The cruelty exercised here is to be explained by the fact that the head of the Gestapo at Lublin was the same individual who distinguished himself at Vienna by his outrageous behaviour to Cardinal Innitzer.

In the middle of October last year, on the anniversary of the consecration of Bishop Fulman, when the local clergy were gathered in the bishop's residence to give their pastor their good wishes, agents of the Gestapo made their way in and arrested the bishop, his suffragan, Bishop Goral, and all the assembled clergy. Bishop Fulman was then accused of having had a machine gun, which was found in his garden near the fence. It should be mentioned that the garden is on the outskirts of the town, adjoining open meadows and fields, from which it would be easy enough to throw anything over the fence.

Even the honest Germans of the present administrative authorities of Lublin gave expression to their conviction that the machine gun had been thrown there by order of the head of the Gestapo, a specialist in persecuting the

clergy. For if it was only Bishop Fulman who was accused of possessing a machine gun, why were his suffragan and the other clergy condemned to death, and afterwards to life-imprisonment, together with him? For the rest, it is ridiculous to suppose that a seventy-five-year-old man, seriously ill and known for his goodness, could endanger the powerful German armies with a single machine gun, a weapon which he had never handled in his life and which he did not know how to use. The whole treatment of Bishop Fulman, his suffragan and the priests who accompanied them to the concentration camp of Oranienburg, near Berlin, brings shame upon our twentieth century. After some weeks' detention in prison at Lublin, Bishop Fulman and his companions were in November of last year brought before a court-martial (*Sondergericht*), and at a secret hearing at which they had no defending lawyer were sentenced to death. The Governor-General exercised his prerogative of mercy by commuting the death sentence to one of imprisonment for life.

After sentence Bishops Fulman and Goral and a number of other clerics were taken to Berlin, and thence to the camp situated near Oranienburg, on the spot where the last Olympic games were held. There are numerous huts, built for the most part of thin, two-inch boards, intended for use in summer. One of these housed the bishops and the priests, the bishops being in separate cells. After their arrival their clerical dress was taken from them, their heads were shaved, and they were led under a shower-bath, where streams of cold, almost icy water were discharged upon them, after which, shivering with cold, they were filmed from all sides before the eyes of the warders and of Hitler youth.

Bishop Fulman, who is tall and well built, was purposely given tight and short trousers and shirts, so that he could not button them and hide his body. As nourishment the prisoners receive a monotonous diet

consisting in the morning of warm water flavoured with a small dose of flour, at midday of potato or turnip soup, and in the evening of a mug of black coffee and 100 grammes of bread a day. On Sundays a few peas are scattered in the soup. They get no fats and no meat. Every day the bishops have to stand for roll-call, which sometimes lasts from one to three hours—in January and February in bitter cold, without coat or cap for the head. Sometimes Bishop Fulman was so frozen that he was unable to walk back to his cell and crawled on all fours. For the least breach of the regulations the bishops, like the other prisoners, were struck in the face. When an agent of the Gestapo or a warder comes into the cell, the bishops must spring to attention and call out "*Achtung.*" Those prisoners from Oranienburg who have returned are convinced that Providence miraculously keeps the seventy-five-year-old bishop alive that he may be able to bear witness in person to the unheard-of bestiality of his tormentors. Forty-five Polish, Czech, and German priests are living in similar conditions at Oranienburg, with only this difference, that they are more often injured and beaten.

One of the aims of the occupation policy of the Germans in Poland is the annihilation of the intellectual classes, to which, besides doctors, lawyers, professors and others, the Polish clergy also belong. Hence the large numbers of priests who are detained in prison without any accusation, trial, or judgment. The occupation authorities state that these priests are merely interned. But on what principle? Why are they harshly treated in prison like criminals, and sometimes—as was the case at Rzeszow, Tarnobrzeg and other towns—in the same cells as thieves and prostitutes? Since October of last year about 150 priests have been held in prison in the diocese of Lublin—that is to say, more than half the clergy—and many others have to live in hiding, among them Fr. Surdecki, the administrator of the diocese. There are

thirty clergy in prison in Warsaw, eighteen of them from the archdiocese. At Plock and at Wloclawek the episcopal curias have been closed and the clergy either imprisoned or deported. The administrator of the diocese of Wloclawek, Bishop Kozal, after long imprisonment was taken with forty-five priests to Lad in Poznan and there interned. In the dioceses of Poznan and Chelmno in Pomerania, after the shooting by the Gestapo of fifty or sixty priests, the great majority of the remainder were either imprisoned or deported to the Government General and there left without means of livelihood. In the diocese of Silesia twenty priests are in prison, and others, perhaps 150, have been deported. In the diocese of Cracow, priests, teachers of religion, have been arrested and carried off to prison at Wisnicz, where are also twenty-six Jesuits from Cracow.

Besides Bishops Fulman, Goral, and Wetmanski, the suffragan bishop Tomczak was arrested at Lodz, beaten with reeds upon his arms until the blood ran, and then made to clean the streets. The local director of the Catholic Action, Fr. Stanislas Nowicki, had his head so severely injured in the course of his interrogation by the Gestapo that his skull had to be trepanned.

At Radom four priests were severely knocked about during their examination by the Gestapo, their teeth being broken and their jaws dislocated. The following question, among others, was put to them, as I personally can certify: "Do you believe in God? If you do you are an idiot, and if you don't you are an impostor." When the person questioned pointed out that the question itself was insulting, he was struck in the face. Other questions ran: "Who is the greater statesman, Hitler or Mussolini?" The intellectual level of these questions and of the method used by the Gestapo in its enquiries speaks for itself.

Despite, then, the official declarations of Governor-General Frank and the assertions of Propaganda Minister Goebbels, the struggle, not only with Polonism, but also

with Catholicism, still continues in full force in German-occupied territory.

Since the Germans entered Poland we have been witnessing the dreadful extermination and destruction of the Polish nation on a scale as yet unexampled in history. Day after day numbers of persons are shot. Organized robbery of private property, museums, libraries, scientific laboratories, hospitals, and churches is the order of the day. In the parishes on the outskirts of Warsaw almost every morning several (sometimes as many as twenty) corpses are to be seen, with their skulls penetrated by the bullets of the agents of the Gestapo, who have now adopted this method of getting rid of their victims. The bodies have no papers on them, so that the clergy who draw up the death certificates are not able even to discover the names of the dead.

During the last months propaganda has been started to induce the Polish population to migrate to the Reich in search of work. As the number of those who voluntarily enrol is small, each commune is ordered to find a certain number. When this plan does not succeed, men and women are seized in the villages by organized press-gangs and deported to the interior of Germany. According to the calculations made, this method should provide over a million human beings. The Governor of Warsaw, Fischer, has recently declared that of those who go, but few will return. The victims of these slave-raids who are sent to Germany are there deprived of all religious and cultural support and are delivered over to the good pleasure of their employers and the Hitlerian organizations.

One of the worst crimes of the present régime in Germany is this deportation of the Poles from their homes and from the country where their ancestors have lived for a thousand years and more, this driving of them from their cottages and from their workshops. This mass expulsion is being carried out not only in Poznan and Polish Pomerania, but also in the portion of Central

Poland which has been annexed to the Reich. The "liquidation" of the whole of a family's possessions is carried out in a quarter or half an hour. Nothing may be taken except what can be carried in a few hand-bags or suit-cases. Not long since I was able to visit the place, Ostrowiec, near Radom, where the inhabitants of the parish of St. Martin at Poznan had just been sent, accompanied by their pastor, Fr. Taczak. Three thousand persons had been transported in cattle-trucks to a small place with a population of 15,000. They had travelled in four days more than 500 kilometres, in unheated trucks, without lavatories, packed all together, men, women and children, the old and the sick, though the cold reached thirty degrees below zero (C.). On their arrival at Ostrowiec they were accommodated in the school, where they slept on straw on the floor. The little town being very poor and unable to assure the maintenance of so large a number of deportees, foodstuffs were collected in the surrounding villages. But these, likewise, had been denuded of their provisions by incessant German requisitions. Consequently the misery was soon terrible, and diseases began to rage, including typhus. I found a similar situation in other places where Poles had been sent after being driven from their homes. The number of these deportees already reaches hundreds of thousands.

During my stay at Poznan and Torun, in January, parents came to me to complain that their children had been carried off and sent to Hitler youth camps, that X-rays had been applied to the genital glands of their sons to sterilize them, and that they had no news of many of their daughters. Grievous complaints were made to me that many young girls from Polish and Catholic families had been sent to brothels for the German army on the western front. It goes without saying that I was unable personally to verify these dreadful accusations, but they were made to me by honest and trustworthy people.

I have recently received from doctors and nuns who had come from the present "Government" of Lublin and from the districts annexed to the Reich a detailed account of a frightful massacre of mentally defective children in the sanatoria of Chelm in the province of Lublin, of Lubliniec in Upper Silesia, and of Koscian in Poznania. Poland had built model sanatoria for these backward children and provided them with every medical care, often with satisfactory results. After the occupation of Polish territory, the Germans declared that it was unnecessary to keep these children alive, and they had them shot. In this way at Chelm alone 428 sick persons perished, including many children. This massacre of innocents filled the whole of Poland with horror.

The brutality of the German authorities towards the sick and towards young children is reflected in their constant requisitioning of hospitals, ostensibly for the army, but often in order to leave them entirely empty. At Zakopane there is a large preventive sanatorium for children threatened with tuberculosis, built on the initiative of Archbishop Prince Sapieha. In January the children were driven out by force and the sanatorium requisitioned. Up till the present moment it remains entirely empty, as do other sanatoria from which the patients have been driven out.

In an attempt to justify and explain before the world these crimes committed in cold blood against the Polish people, Minister Goebbels's propaganda office has alleged that the fantastic number of 58,000 Germans were murdered in Poland. He evidently counts on the credulity of mankind and its talent for rapidly forgetting. As a matter of fact, last December the *Krakauer Zeitung*, Governor-General Frank's organ, published repeatedly that the number of Germans "murdered" in Poland had been definitely ascertained, and amounted to 12,700 persons. Scarcely two months pass, and lo! the number of these dead is suddenly multiplied by four. The honest

Germans who live in Poland are ashamed of this propaganda with its shameless lies. But still worse are the proceedings for the manufacture of "evidence" in support of these lies. Thus quite recently Minister Goebbels has published photographs of Germans supposed to have been murdered in September. Some of them, taken in January or February, represent quite fresh corpses. Is it thus that a corpse can look after five months, buried without a coffin? Evidently these photos mean that unfortunate Poles are still being murdered and made use of after their death. More than one Polish family, I have been shown, have recognized in these photos the remains of relatives who had mysteriously disappeared. The proof will be furnished when it becomes possible to publish these pieces of evidence.

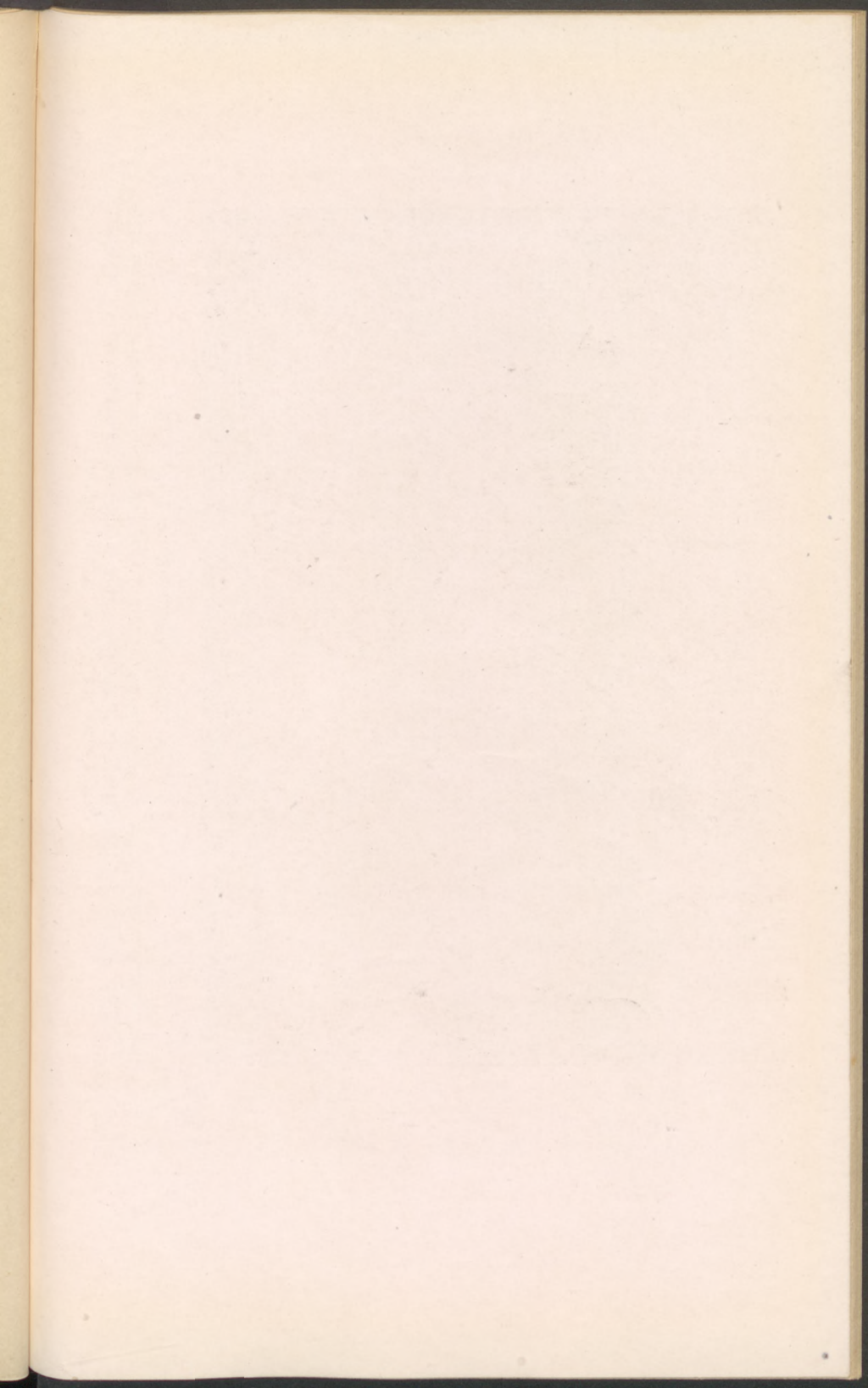
And even today the crimes perpetrated by Hitler's Government in martyred Poland will shake the conscience of the civilized world. For if they raise no echo, woe to humanity! for every nation might then expect in the future Poland's fate.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORTS

German who lives in Poland are ashamed of the
 propaganda which is directed here. But still there are
 the secretaries for the organization of "resistance" in
 support of their aim. These things recently happened
 Gorkhale has published photographs of Gorkhale and
 appeared in Paris in September. Some of
 these photos in January or February represent that
 such success. It is said that a certain day last
 five months passed without a word. Suddenly there
 photos were that important. Police are still being
 mentioned that would not after their death. Some that
 the Polish family, I have been shown. I have mentioned in
 these photos the names of the men who had previously
 disappeared. The police will be informed when it becomes
 known.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORTS

And now, I would like to mention the following
 Government in regard to the Polish resistance movement
 of the Polish world. For if they can do this, they
 in Poland and other nations have not forgotten in the
 future Poland's fate.





A SCENE OF EXECUTION.

THIS PHOTOGRAPH, SOLD BY A GESTAPO AGENT TO A FOREIGN DIPLOMAT, SHOWS THE SCENE OF A GERMAN EXECUTION IN POLAND. FOUR MEN, ONE OF WHOM IS A CATHOLIC PRIEST, ARE SEEN HERE FACING DEATH.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORTS

EVENTS AT CZESTOCHOWA

Report of Father F. M. of October, 1939

CZESTOCHOWA is well known as the town in which is the ancient monastery and church of the Paulines, with its miraculous image of the Holy Virgin, worshipped for centuries by generations of pious Poles.

This town was the scene of dreadful outrages by the German army, which made its entry at 12 noon on *September 3rd, 1939.*

On the next day, *September 4th*, the Germans drove into the space round the Cathedral of the Most Holy Family from seven to eight hundred men and women, Polish and Jewish. They were all made to stand with their hands up for two hours; and those who fainted or lowered their hands were beaten and kicked by the soldiers. Towards evening they were all driven into the Cathedral and shut up without food for two days and two nights. Dozens fainted. The Cathedral was shockingly befouled. Appeals to the German authorities were fruitless.

The same day people were hunted down in the town, on the pretext that an attempt had been made to fire at German soldiers from one of the houses. This was the same lie which the Germans used in Belgium and at Kalisz in Poland in 1914 to justify their barbarous massacres.

About sixty people were thus hunted down and shot. One of the houses in the street of the Blessed Virgin Mary was set on fire by the Germans after they had thrown hand-grenades into it. Many persons were not

allowed by the Germans to come out, and perished in the flames. It was not allowed to bury or to take away the bodies of those who had been shot, as the object was to terrorize the inhabitants by the sight of them lying about. They were not buried until two days later.

In the evening about 600 persons, including three priests, were arrested in their houses, taken in front of the municipal building, and threatened with death. It was pretended that an order was coming from the authorities for them to be shot, and in the meantime they were made to hold their hands up. On the arrival of the "order" the Germans set them all against the wall of the building, while soldiers with rifles and a machine gun faced them. Some wept spasmodically, and others prayed with resignation, while women fainted. The soldiery began by uttering a hail of curses and insults against the Poles. After that they ordered every one to face the wall and lie down on the ground, and then fired the machine gun over their heads. About 300 rounds were let off, after which the terror-stricken folk were taken to prison at Zawodzie and shut up there. The nerves of some broke down under this monstrous torture; five died of heart failure, three under the wall of the municipal building, and two in prison.

In the prison they were given no food or drink for two days. No one was allowed to bring them anything, or if permission was obtained, it was with great difficulty, by relations or near friends. A German soldier, of Polish origin, from the neighbourhood of Opole (Oppeln) in German Silesia, who allowed food to be taken in to the prisoners, was shot on the spot.

September 5th.—As the German authorities had issued an order the day before that all arms were to be handed in before 2 p.m., there was a general search for arms. In the institute of the Order of the School Brethren an old gun and several scouts' caps were found in the theatre wardrobe. Under the false pretext that they had been

"keeping arms" two of the Brethren and the father of one of them were taken out and shot on the barrack square of the 27th Infantry Regiment; their bodies were buried in the barrack garden.

Many persons were shot simply because toy pistols were found in their houses, or old sabres, thrown away somewhere amid lumber.

In one of the places in the neighbourhood of Czestochowa they pretended that the local priest was going to be shot simply because he did not at once open his gate for a German car. He was made to kneel down and was kept thus between life and death for forty minutes; the soldiers were changed, and each one made as though he were going to shoot. The priest's hair turned grey during this experience.

THE MURDER OF FATHER ROMAN PAWLOWSKI OF CHOCZ

Report of November, 1939

Fr. Roman Pawlowski, the seventy-year-old vicar of Chocz, near Kalisz, was arrested on the charge of concealing arms. The Gestapo searched his house at 2 o'clock in the morning and found two old cartridge cases from a double-barrelled gun, Fr. P., though old, having liked to go partridge shooting before the war.

Thereupon he was cruelly beaten, so that his shirt was soaked with blood, and his face was so disfigured as to be scarcely recognizable. After that he was made to walk twenty miles through the night to Kalisz, barefoot, in his trousers and shirt.

Next morning the inhabitants of the place were driven to the public square. Agents of the Gestapo forced local Jews to tie Fr. Pawlowski to the post, after which he was shot in front of the assembled multitude.

Then the Jews were made to kiss the feet of the corpse,

unbind it, put it on a cart, and take it to the Jewish cemetery and bury it according to the Jewish rite.

Mgr. Florczak, of Turek near Kalisz, was arrested and beaten by the Gestapo until the blood ran. The Germans pillaged the church at Turek, carrying off, among other things, the stained-glass windows executed by the talented modern Polish painter, Mehoffer, just as they pillaged hundreds of other churches in Poland.

THE SHOOTING OF THE LEADERS OF THE CATHOLIC ACTION IN POZNANIA

From a Report of November 10th, 1939

In Poznan a whole number of lay leaders of the Catholic Action were shot by the Germans without the least pretext.

The National President of the Catholic Youth Association, Edward Potworowski, of Gola near Poznan, Private Chamberlain of Cape and Sword to His Holiness, was publicly shot in the market square of Gostyn.

Another to be shot was Mr. Mieczyslaw Chlapowski of Kopaszewo, who was well known for his religious and patriotic activities, and was chairman of different agricultural organizations in Posnania. He was a cousin of a former Polish Ambassador to France, Mr. Alfred Chlapowski.

The execution of Mr. Mieczyslaw Chlapowski made a profound impression. Carried out as usual without benefit of court procedure, it took place in the marketplace of Koscian, a town of 10,000 inhabitants, south of Poznan. The Gestapo agents had caused the square to be packed with spectators.

Mr. Chlapowski knelt down with his rosary, saying a prayer. Then he made the sign of the Cross over the crowd and cried: "Poland is not yet lost! Long live

France ! Long live England !” At that moment he fell, struck by the bullets of his assassins.

So fell many other leaders of Catholic life in Western Poland also.

THE PERSECUTION OF THE CLERGY AND POLISH
POPULATION AT BYDGOSZCZ

Report of November, 1939

Upon entering the city, says one of the reports, the Germans arrested an important part of the civilian population and the clergy. The prisoners were lined up in the town square and ordered to remain motionless with their arms raised for four hours. When the narrator, a member of the group, felt that his strength was failing, he asked a priest to give him absolution. At this moment the prisoners were accorded a little rest. But when our informant crossed his hands on his breast he heard the exclamation: “ You ass, you can pray, but that won’t do you any good.” One of the victims, a woman, unable to endure this torture any longer, attempted to escape. She was immediately shot.

There were already seven corpses in the square, including those of Frs. Szarek and Wiorek. The former’s eye-glasses had first been knocked into his face by the Germans and his nose broken by blows from the butts of their guns; his jaw was broken, his eyes knocked out, his collar-bone broken, and at last he was killed.

To a corpulent priest the Germans called out: “ You ass, why aren’t you married ?”

After ill-treatment such as this, some of the prisoners were shut up in the cellars of the Lazarist monastery, and another part in barracks and stables. Often they were lined up and their tormentors struck them. Seeing a venerable priest misused in this way, one of the prisoners, a dean, interceded on his behalf, adding: “ This does

not reflect honour upon the German name." For this he was struck with the butt-end of a rifle, which knocked out several of his teeth.

The vicar, Fr. Jakubowski, was ordered to watch a mass execution in the market-place. When he got a nervous shock and began to cry out in horror, he was struck with rifle butts and then shot.

There followed further mass executions of Poles; in this way the Germans murdered about ten thousand people in Bydgoszcz alone, including many women and children of under fourteen, and a whole group of young Polish Boy Scouts. There were similar massacres in almost every town of Western Poland.

THE MASSACRE AT CHELM

Report of Father D. R. of February 3rd, 1940

In the town of Chelm there is a modern building, a hospital for mental diseases, which the German authorities had decided to requisition. On February 1st, 1940, the agents of the Gestapo compelled the doctors and sisters of charity to leave the building, threatening those who hesitated with their revolvers.

They then shut themselves in the hospital and shot with their revolvers all the 428 patients, including many children. The hospital personnel, gathered in the street, heard the cries of distress and the sobs of the unfortunate patients, pursued by their murderers.

Their work accomplished, the assassins came out and gave the following order: "The hospital is empty. Carry out the corpses immediately, for in two hours we shall occupy the building."

The Germans carried out similar massacres in other mental hospitals in Poland—for example, at Koscian and at Owinska in Poznan.

THE ILL-TREATMENT OF THE CLERGY IN THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS AT RADOGOSZCZ, NEAR LODZ, AND AT OPAVA (TROPPAU)

Report of March, 1940

In the concentration camps at Radogoszcz, near Lodz, and at Opava (Troppau) in Sudetenland there are hundreds of Polish clergy who are treated in an inhuman manner.

They have to sleep in old wooden unheated huts, on unchanged, mouldy straw, swarming with lice. They are compelled to clean out the latrines with their bare hands. They are continually beaten, and their wounds washed with salt water, so that they become gangrened and the flesh and muscles fall off. Their wounds allow them to sleep only on their stomachs. Fr. Wycislik from Zyglin, near Tarnowskie Gory in Silesia, was especially tortured; he was made to lie on the threshold so that all who came in had to tread on him. While the Germans were thus enjoying his sufferings he said his prayers aloud.

THE SUFFERINGS OF THE POLISH CLERGY

Report of March, 1941

Mgr. Adamski, bishop of Katowice, and his auxiliary, Bishop Bieniek, have been deported by the Germans into the Government General area of Poland. This leaves the diocese without a bishop.

Mgr. Nowowiejski, eighty-three-year-old bishop of Plock, has been expelled; no one knows his present whereabouts or even if he is alive.

Four Polish priests from Danzig—Frs. Komorowski, Rogaczewski, Wiecka, and Hoeft—have died in the concentration camp at Stutthof, near Danzig. They were taken to this camp immediately after the German invasion and were treated very brutally, being beaten and maltreated. It is not known whether they were murdered

by the Gestapo men, or whether they died as the result of the torture they had suffered.

The Germans have now established themselves in the famous Polish monastery at Czestochowa. The Gestapo took over the monastery and made a number of searches for the precious votive offerings which formerly adorned the walls of the church. The Gestapo men quickly began to terrorise the priests, and people who went to pray before the famous picture of the Madonna.

Fr. Roman Klaczynski was arrested in the sacristy after preaching a sermon in which he urged the people to "build Poland in your hearts." He was sent to the concentration camp at Oswiecim. Thirty other priests were also arrested at Czestochowa. Of these, three were shot, including the distinguished astronomer and director of the Observatory, Canon Bonaventura Meller.

Two hundred priests of the Lublin diocese, including many Jesuits and Franciscans, have been arrested. One has died in prison, and ten were shot.

Fr. Adam Rozalski, of Kielce, was shot at by a military patrol in the street for no obvious reason. He took refuge in a house. An agent of the Gestapo followed him and killed him with a bayonet.

In the diocese of Sandomierz seven priests have been killed recently. They were five Franciscans from Skarzynsko-Kamienna, Fr. Paul Koppa, the dean of Drzewica, and Canon Stanislas Klimecki. Some of these victims were thrashed and treated in the worst possible way by the Germans before death. This was the fate of Fr. Klimecki: on the way to the place of execution they tore his cross from him and beat him in the face with it.

In Cracow diocese eighty-seven priests have been banished to concentration camps; thirty-seven Conventuals, Jesuits, Missionaries, Carmelites and Albertines are working in stone quarries at Mauthausen, near Linz in Austria.

Altogether it is estimated that some seven hundred

Polish priests have been shot or have died in concentration camps, throughout the German-occupied area. Some 3,000 Polish priests are held in concentration camps at the present time.

The Nazis have paid an unintentional tribute to the devotion of the Polish Catholics by arresting priests in many dioceses because the peasants failed to declare the full results of their harvests. The peasants were punished for this "crime" by being deprived of spiritual ministrations. In the districts where peasants produced the grain which the Germans alleged to be missing, the priests were set free. But before being released they were forced to sign a statement that they would remind their parishioners to hand over the quantity of grain demanded by the Germans.

The treasures of Poland's most ancient cathedrals have been plundered. Among the relics carried off from the Wawel Cathedral at Cracow is the spear of St. Maurice, a valuable relic of the tenth century, which was a gift from Kaiser Otto III. to the Polish King Boleslav the Brave. It had been preserved in the Wawel for a thousand years. The Germans have taken also twelve chalices which were presented to the church by the Polish Kings, a beautiful old chasuble and other treasures.

Four pictures by Hans Suess of Kulmbach, dating from the beginning of the sixteenth century, giving scenes from the life of St. John the Evangelist, have been carried off from St. Florian's Church in Cracow.

From St. Mary's Church, Cracow, the Germans have taken a beautiful fifteenth-century altar-piece, the work of Wit Stwosz, nine paintings by Kulmbach, and six chalices.

The seminary at Kielce has been closed down.

Polish papers have been shot or have died in German
 nation camps throughout the German occupied zone.
 Some 2000 Polish papers are held in concentration camps
 at the present time. The German papers are
 The Nazis have paid an enormous price to the
 Jewish of the Polish Empire by extending credit in
 many places because the Germans tried to destroy the
 all details of their assets. The papers were published
 for the "crime" by being deprived of editorial manage-
 ment. In the future when a small portion of the grain
 which the Germans asked to be granted, the price was
 set free. The Polish being released they were forced to
 sign a statement that they would renounce their political
 to hand over the quantity of grain demanded by the
 Germans. The papers are now in German hands.
 The papers of Poland's most notable publishers have
 been published. Among the titles named are from the
 "Kurier" published at Cracow; the paper of St. Marynia,
 a valuable title of the main country, which was a full
 from Warsaw. One of the Polish Press Bureau the
 direct it had been preserved in the West for a
 thousand years. The Germans have taken also the
 others which were preserved in the zone by the
 Polish King's beautiful old estates and other works.
 The papers by Maria Kossak at Krakow, during
 from the opening of the nineteenth century giving news
 from the life of St. John the Evangelist have been carried
 off from St. John's Church in Warsaw.
 From St. John's Church, I know, the Germans have
 taken a beautiful fifteenth-century altar piece, the work
 of the Swedish mine painter by Kucharski, and six
 others.
 The work of St. John's has been given away.
 The work of St. John's has been given away.
 The work of St. John's has been given away.
 The work of St. John's has been given away.

WHEN HITLER GOES CRUSADING . . .

WHEN HITLER GOES CRUISING

WHEN HITLER GOES CRUSADING . . .

Report of July 15th, 1941

JUST as Hitler has proclaimed his crusade against Russia in defence of Christianity, the Gestapo has arrested the local bishop of Lodz, Bishop Włodzimierz Jasinski, as well as the suffragan bishop Kazimierz Tomczak and five canons, and carried them all off from the city. It all happened so swiftly that Bishop Jasinski had no chance of appointing any vicar-general. The report of this act of violence has just reached the Apostolic See.

At the same time, under the pretext that there were no priests to officiate, three parish churches in Lodz have been closed by the Germans. Actually, the shortage of priests is due to the fact that the majority of them have been imprisoned or sent to concentration camps. In other churches services can be held only on Sunday between the hours of 7 and 11 a.m., and all offertories have been prohibited. The priests left in Lodz have to wear civilian dress, for fear of being arrested in the streets.

The Gestapo carried off the furniture, archives and the bishop's library from the Episcopal Palace. The city of Lodz, which the Germans now call *Litzmannstadt*, is the Polish Manchester, and has some 750,000 inhabitants, the great majority of whom are deprived of their churches and priestly ministrations.

In the deanery of Kutno and Zychlin in the archdiocese of Warsaw, fifty-two parish priests, curates and vicars were arrested recently. These are the largest deaneries in the archdiocese and the most thickly populated. They are populated by one hundred per cent. Polish people. These priests have been separated and deported to a number of concentration camps in Germany.

country recently gave such magnificent evidence; that the Catholic press, institutions of charity, social works, and the teaching of religion will enjoy the liberty which is their right."

These modest hopes of the Holy Father for the Polish people he tenderly loves have been grossly deceived, we regret to announce, and the misgivings which accompanied them abundantly justified. The new year with its frail but refreshing promise of peace brings us from Warsaw and Cracow, from Pomerania, Poznan and Silesia almost daily the tale of destitution and destruction and infamy of all descriptions, which one is loath to credit until it is established by the unimpeachable testimony of eye-witnesses to the horror and inexcusable excesses committed upon a helpless and homeless people, as peaceful and unpretentious as any in Europe, and not confined to the sections of the country under Russian occupation, heartrending as news from that quarter has been. Even more violent and persistent is the assault upon elementary justice and decency in that part of prostrate Poland which has fallen to German administration. The richest part of Western Poland is being unceremoniously stolen from the Poles and deeded over to the Germans, as the real proprietors are packed off in foul-smelling trains to the war-torn region of Warsaw, which the Holy Father only last week described as "a desert where once the smiling harvest waved."

A system of interior deportation and zoning is being organized, in the depth of one of Europe's severest winters, on principles and by methods that can be described only as brutal; and stark hunger stares 70 per cent. of Poland's population in the face, as its reserves of foodstuffs and tools are shipped to Germany to replenish the granaries of the metropole. Jews and Poles are being herded into separate "ghettoes," hermetically sealed and pitifully inadequate for the economic subsistence of the millions destined to live there.

But the crowning iniquity in an administration that has never ceased to claim it had no claims against religion lies in the cynical suppression of all but the merest suggestion of religious worship in the lives of this most pious and devotional of the peoples of Europe. An administrative decree, applied with varying effectiveness throughout the Government General Protectorate, restricts public religious services to a bare two hours on Sunday. The thousands of churches in Poland, second homes for old and young from morning till sunset ever since the nation was born and baptized in the Catholic faith, are deserted and closed for six and a half days of the week, separating an afflicted people from the altar of its hopes and sacrifices.

It adds up to a fearful total and a tremendous responsibility: one more grievous affront to the moral conscience of mankind; one more contemptuous insult to the law of nations; one more open thrust at the heart of the Father of the Christian family, who grieves with his dear Poland, and begs for peace with decency and justice from the throne of grace.

Vatican Broadcast on the situation of the Catholic Church in Poland in November, 1940

On November 16th and 17th, 1940, the Vatican radio in its broadcasts in various languages categorically denied the reports of some Spanish journalists, inspired by German sources, according to which the situation of the Catholic Church in the districts of Poland occupied by the Germans had undergone a change for the better. It asserted that in those districts, inhabited by many millions of Catholics, their religious life continued to be brutally restricted. Among other things, in the course of the last four months (from the middle of July to the middle of November, 1940) at least 400 clergy had been deported from those districts to Germany.

On November 29th, 1940, the Vatican radio issued a further communiqué, in French, on this subject. It said:

“ A statement which has appeared in one of the Breslau journals must be corrected. It referred to signs of the revival of religious life in Poland, and to the protection which the faithful in that country enjoy in the performance of religious practices. The German journal mentions the close relations alleged to exist between Catholic associations and the Polish Red Cross on the one hand and the German State authorities on the other. But the author did not mention that a large part of five dioceses is situated in Polish territories unceremoniously incorporated with the Reich. In view of this, the author's conclusions cannot be recognized as a criterion of the general development of religious life in Poland, but can only refer to the Government General. Undoubtedly the churches in this part of Poland are filled to overflowing with the faithful, but the Catholic associations in the General Gouvernement also have been dissolved, the Catholic educational institutions have been closed down, and Catholic professors and teachers have been reduced to a state of extreme need, or have been sent to concentration camps. The Catholic press has been rendered impotent.

“ That is the real situation in that part of Poland which is the most favourably treated by the Germans. The Breslau journal makes no mention of what is happening in other parts of Poland. In the part incorporated with the Reich, and especially in Poznania, the representatives of the Catholic priests and orders have been shut up in concentration camps. The number of priests sent to camps from the Poznan area alone exceeds 200. Certain of them have died in these camps. In other dioceses the priests have been put in prison. Entire areas of the country have been deprived of all spiritual ministrations, and the church seminaries have been dispersed.”

A proposito di una pubblicazione

È stato stampato, a Ceprano, dalla Tipografia Antonio Corsetti, e viene ora largamente diffuso un opuscolo: « La Germania e il culto cattolico in Polonia ». Vi si afferma che le autorità non hanno preso e non prendono alcuna iniziativa per limitare l'attività religiosa dei polacchi; che le chiese dalle prime ore del mattino fino a tarda sera rimangono aperte; che si stanno costruendo alcune chiese, grazie anche al favore delle amministrazioni civili le quali finanziano e forniscono gratuitamente materiale da costruzione.

Questo opuscolo ha bisogno di qualche parola di commento, perchè l'impressione ch'esso può lasciare — ci dispiace di doverlo rilevare — non corrisponde alla realtà dei fatti.

Notiamo anzitutto che la pubblicazione non porta il nome dell'autore e che, quando nell'opuscolo si parla di « Polonia » non si intende tutto il territorio che fino all'inizio del conflitto tedesco-polacco ha costituito la Repubblica Polacca, ma una parte soltanto di esso. È noto che la Polonia è in parte occupata dai Germanici, in parte dai Russi. Il territorio tenuto dai Tedeschi — una metà circa della Repubblica Polacca — è stato diviso ancora in due: le provincie occidentali e le rimanenti regioni, chiamate « Generalgouvernement », rette da un Governatore, residente a Cracovia.

Sono comprese nelle provincie occidentali le Archidiocesi di Gnesna e di Posnania, parte di quelle di Varsavia e di Cracovia, le diocesi di Katowice, Culma, Vladislavia e Plock, e parte di quelle di Lomza, Łódz, Czestochowa e Kielce; sono incluse nel « Generalgouvernement » la maggior parte delle Archidiocesi di Varsavia e Cracovia, le diocesi di Siedlce, Lublino, Tarnovia, Sandomir, e parte di quelle di Premisla, Czestochowa, Kielce, Łódz, Lomza ed una piccola parte dell'archidiocesi di Lublino.

L'opuscolo, edito a Ceprano, quando parla di « Polonia », intende soltanto il « Generalgouvernement »; nel quale, in verità, la situazione non è così buona, come parrebbe alla lettura di quella pubblicazione. Il Vescovo di una diocesi si trova esiliato fuori del territorio di sua giurisdizione, mentre il suo Ausiliare è detenuto, in Germania, in un campo di concentramento. Non pochi ecclesiastici, soprattutto reli-

giosi, sono in prigione; gravi limitazioni ostacolano il normale funzionamento dei seminari e le vocazioni religiose.

La stampa religiosa, già fiorente, è sottoposta a fortissime restrizioni: molte pubblicazioni di libri di pietà sono proibite e sospese, e proprio la Rivista mensile « Messaggero del Sacro Cuore » che l'autore afferma pubblicarsi come prima della guerra, è invece sospesa, e lo era già nell'ottobre scorso, data della stampa dell'opuscolo. Rimangono pochi bollettini diocesani, e questi sottoposti a censura.

L'Università cattolica di Lublino è chiusa, e, in generale, sono chiuse le scuole medie e superiori tenute da Ordini e Congregazioni religiose. L'Azione Cattolica Polacca non può più funzionare.

Si legge nell'opuscolo che « vivono in piena libertà di culto milioni di cattolici tedeschi, appartenenti sia alle antiche che alle nuove provincie del Reich ».

Se tra queste nuove provincie si devono comprendere anche le regioni della Polonia occidentale — e si è detto sopra che si tratta di due archidiocesi e di parecchie diocesi — quell'affermazione non corrisponde alla realtà, neppure nei riguardi dei cattolici *tedeschi*, ai quali, in certi luoghi almeno, è stato proibito di assistere alle funzioni di culto celebrate da sacerdoti polacchi.

In queste regioni vivono più milioni di cattolici, i quali versano nelle più gravi difficoltà religiose. Un certo numero di chiese, tra le quali anche cattedrali, è stato chiuso; in moltissime altre chiese l'accesso ai fedeli è permesso in poche ore dei giorni festivi, e in pochissime ore dei giorni feriali. Centinaia e centinaia di sacerdoti, del clero secolare e regolare, sono stati mandati in esilio o confinati in campo di concentramento: ove non pochi già sono morti. Molte parrocchie sono sprovviste di clero; quello rimasto non ha sufficienti mezzi di sussistenza perchè non riceve gli stipendi che già percepiva dalla Repubblica Polacca. Quasi tutti i seminari sono chiusi. L'autorità diocesana non gode della necessaria libertà per governare i fedeli: a qualche Vescovo è stato negato il permesso di ritornare in diocesi: altri Vescovi sono internati o confinati.

Da questi brevi accenni si può vedere come la vita religiosa dei polacchi non trascorra in quella normalità che si vorrebbe far credere. Piuttosto i cattolici polacchi hanno grandemente bisogno delle preghiere dei cattolici di tutto il mondo per sostenere la prova cui sono sottoposti.

A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE ARTICLE OF THE " OSSERVATORE ROMANO " OF DECEMBER 12TH, 1940, ON THE PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH IN GERMAN-OCCUPIED POLAND.

THE "OSSERVATORE ROMANO"
ON THE PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH
IN GERMAN-OCCUPIED POLAND

*The Vatican organ " Osservatore Romano " in its issue for
December 12th, 1940, published the following article.**

THE printing establishment of Antonio Corsetti at Ceprano has printed a brochure entitled *Germans and the Catholic Faith in Poland*, which is now being extensively distributed. The brochure maintains that the authorities have not taken and will not take any initiative to restrict Poles' religious activities, that the churches are open from early morning till late in the evening, that owing to the friendliness of the civil administration, which has financed and provided building material gratis, certain churches have been built.

This brochure calls for a few words of explanation, since the impression it may leave—we have to say it regretfully—is not in accordance with the reality.

First and foremost we note that the publication does not give the name of the author and that, while using the name of " Poland," it does not have in mind the whole of the territory which constitutes the Republic of Poland at the beginning of the German-Polish conflict, but only a part of it. It is well known that Poland is partly occupied by Germany and partly by Soviet Russia. The territory held by the Germans, approximately half the Republic of Poland, was further divided into two parts—namely, the Western Provinces and the rest, called the Government General, administered by a Governor residing at Cracow.

The Western Provinces embrace the Archbishoprics of

* See photograph on opposite page.

Poznan and Gniezno, parts of those of Warsaw and Cracow, the dioceses of Katowice, Chelmino, Wloclawek, and Plock, and part of the dioceses of Lomza, Lodz, Czestochowa, and Kielce. The Government General includes mainly parts of the Archbishoprics of Warsaw and Cracow, the dioceses of Siedlce, Lublin, Tarnow, Sandomierz, and part of those of Przemysl, Czestochowa, Kielce, Lodz and Lomza.

The brochure published at Ceprano has only the Government General in mind when it speaks of Poland, although there also, to tell the truth, the situation is not so good as it would seem on reading this publication. The bishop of one of the dioceses, and possibly others also, has been exiled from the area of his jurisdiction, while his suffragan has been held in Germany in a concentration camp. Numerous members of the clergy, most of all monks, are in prison; many restrictions hinder the normal functioning of training colleges and orders.

The religious press, which once was flourishing, has been subjected to very severe restrictions: many publications of prayer-books are prohibited and suspended, and the monthly, the *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, which the author maintains is being published just as it was before the war, is suspended, and was suspended in October, when this brochure was published. Only a few diocesan bulletins are published, subject to censorship.

The Catholic University in Lublin has been closed, and, for that matter, all secondary and higher schools conducted by orders and religious congregations have been closed down. The Polish Catholic Agency can no longer function.

In the brochure we read: "The German Catholics, of whom there are millions, living both in the old and in the new provinces of the Reich, live in complete freedom of religious observance."

If among these new provinces the districts of Western

Poland are also included, and if, as we have said, it is a question of the two archbishoprics and several dioceses, that statement is not in accordance with the reality even in regard to the German Catholics, who, at least in certain areas, have been forbidden to take part in services conducted by Polish priests.

These areas are inhabited by millions of Catholics, who are living in the worst of religious conditions. A certain number of churches, including the Cathedrals, have been closed. The entrance of the faithful to many other churches is allowed only during a few hours of holy days and on very few ordinary days. Hundreds of priests, monks, and nuns have been sent into exile and shut away in concentration camps, where not a few of them have died. Many parishes are deprived of clergy; the priests who are left have insufficient means of existence, as they do not receive the salary which they formerly received from the Republic of Poland. Almost all the seminaries are closed. The diocesan authorities have not got the necessary freedom to govern the faithful; certain bishops have been refused permission to return to their dioceses, other bishops are interned or exiled.

From the foregoing brief information it is evident to what an extent the religious life of the Poles is not taking such a normal course as one would like to believe. The Polish Catholics to a large extent need rather the prayers of Catholics all over the world, that they may endure the tests to which they are subjected.



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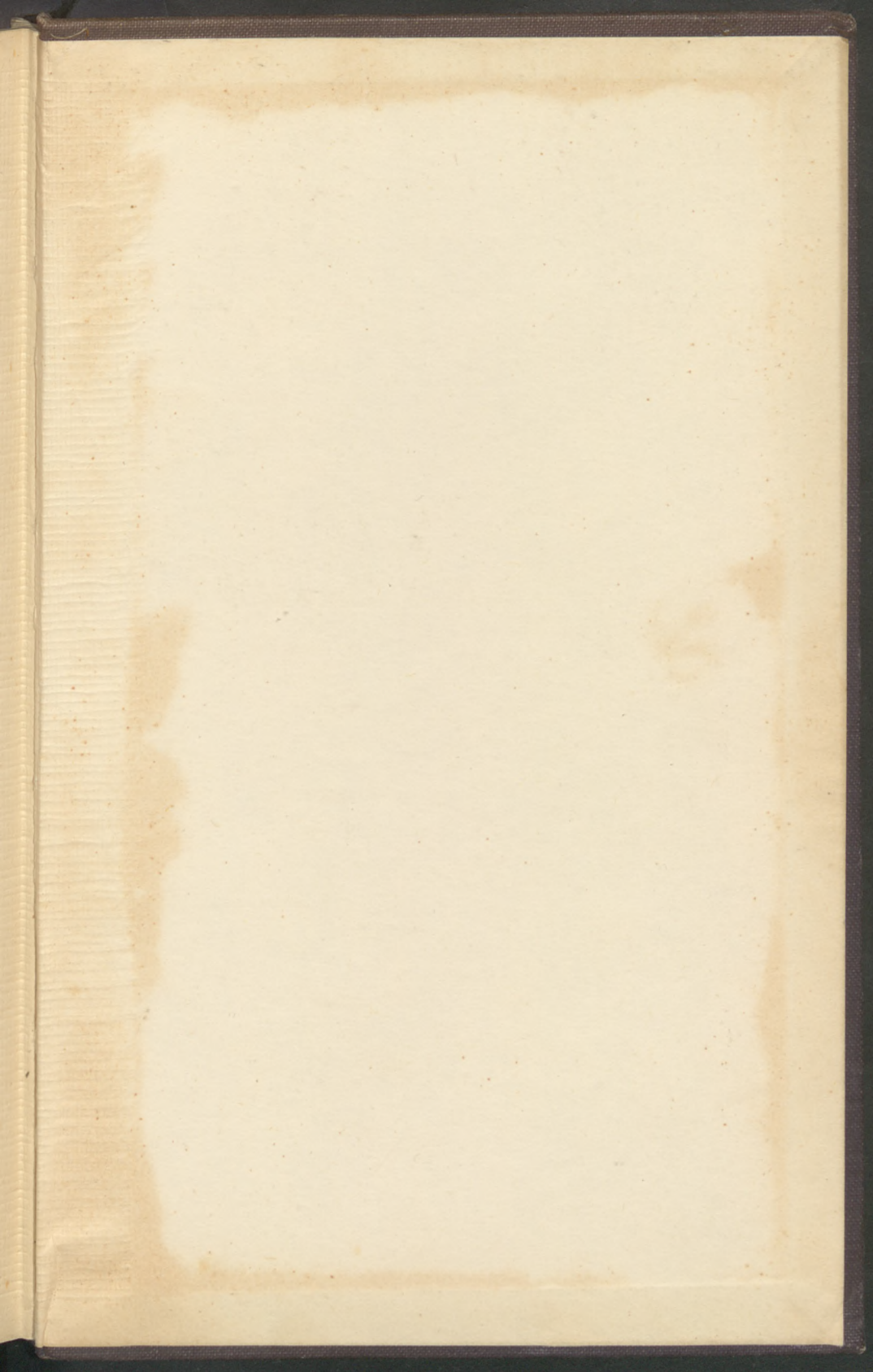
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