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**ZOFJA ZALESKA**

Vice-President of the National Organisation of Women in Poland

**THE WELFARE OF  
MOTHERS AND CHILDREN  
IN POLAND**

**POLISH WOMEN'S COMMITTEE  
FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S  
COLLABORATION.**

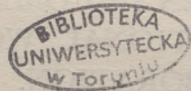
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Printed by  
BARNARD & WESTWOOD LTD.,  
1-8, Whitfield Place, London, W.1.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE ACTIVITIES OF POLISH SOCIAL ORGANISATIONS  
BEFORE THE RESTORATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

In the nineteenth century the public conscience concerning the importance of pregnancy, birth, and infant hygiene was hardly awakened as compared with the public attitude to-day. It was only during the last decades of the nineteenth century that doctors began to investigate the causes of puerperal fever, which in some hospitals spread like an epidemic, attacking thousands of mothers<sup>1</sup>. From this time on, medicine went in the direction of aseptics and antiseptics, while hygiene developed into a science of many branches.

The Polish women doctors, Dr. Anna Tomaszewicz-Dobrska (degree 1880) and Dr. Teresa Ciszkiwicz, were the first to begin the fight against the tragic mortality of mothers and children in Poland. It was they who introduced "Talks on Hygiene" into women's journals, thus completing the education section, and "Talks on Human Physiology," which appeared in these journals from 1840 onwards.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Teresa Ciszkiwicz was at the head of the women's secret organisation which had as its members Polish women from all the three parts of Poland (Russian, Prussian and Austrian), and went under the name of "The Circle of Women from the Kingdom of Poland and from Lithuania." Thanks to this she was easily able to spread her ideas among educated women, requiring that: (1) the greatest possible amount of knowledge concerning maternity and infant hygiene be available; (2) proper care be assured to infants and small children by the setting up of crèches and kindergartens; and (3) a Welfare Society for Poor Mothers be founded with the object of supporting the maternity institutions—crèches and kindergartens, or infant schools, which had been founded by the Sisters of Mercy and certain women landowners about the year 1840<sup>3</sup>. In order to carry on the maternity institutions an organisation was formed, on the lines of the French "Maternité," which ran institutions in Warsaw, Cracow, and other towns, right up to the first World War.

(1) See "Men Against Death," by Paul de Kruif, London.

(2) The first to introduce them was the "Home Daily," Poznan 1840-1848.

(3) See: Hipolit Skimborowicz "Gabriel and the Women Enthusiasts."

Dr. Theodora Krajewska, the third of these young Polish women who were the first to get medical degrees, devoted herself to work among mothers in Bosnia and Hercegovina. At that time these districts were sunk in deep ignorance as a result of age-long slavery under the Turks. Large numbers of their women, surrounded by a wall of Mohammedan restrictions, died at an early age in childbirth, without any possibility of help from a male doctor.

The Orders of the Sisters of Mercy was known not only for its services to the sick in hospitals and to the poor, but also for its service in running the first Foundling Home. This was started in Warsaw by Father Baudoin at the beginning of the last century. In restored Poland the name Foundling Home was changed in 1918 to that of "Home of the Mother and Child," in accordance with the new methods, which aimed at discouraging unmarried mothers from leaving their children. (See the Section on "The Welfare of Unmarried Mothers.")

As the secret organisations united the women political and social workers of all the three parts of Poland, the same efforts were made everywhere to encourage hygiene and the opening of welfare centres. With this object in view, an additional "Health" section was set up in connection with the "Warta" organisation in Poznan. All this work was carried out at the expense of social organisations, without any help from the partitioning governments, who obviously cared very little about the development of Poland. Under these conditions the movement could not assume such proportions as it would have done if it had been helped by the State.

The growing number of Polish women doctors had a good effect on the welfare movement. In 1904, Dr. Wanda Szczawinska founded in Łódź the first "Drop of Milk" organisation, modelled on the French society of the same name. This was an organisation to which all nursing mothers could come for advice, and which distributed milk products (in bottles) for infant nutrition. Another centre was set up by Dr. Szczawinska in Warsaw. The good work done by the "Drop of Milk" organisation was shown at "The Fight against Infectious Disease" Exhibition in Warsaw, in 1915.

In 1914, Polish women had six maternity welfare centres founded by public subscription. In 1920—in spite of the war—there were 39 of these centres run by the "Drop of Milk," "The Child Welfare Association," "The Loenvall Children's Clinic," "The Children's Friends," "The Infant Welfare Society," and other organisations.

In 1914, a "Women's Work Circle" was started in the Warsaw district by the late Josefa Klawer (a well-known social worker in the time of Poland's fight for freedom). This organisation extended its care chiefly to mothers and children recommended to it by the "Warsaw Citizen's Committee for Public Welfare."

The unemployment caused by the decision of the Russian authorities to transfer factories to Russia during the 1914 war, the loss by many families of their bread-winners owing to the call up of army reserves, and lastly the influx of refugees from the western frontiers of Russian Poland, where in the first few days of the war the Germans destroyed open towns—all these disasters meant that immediate help was required for the working population. That is why the Central Citizen's Committee, and the General Welfare Council, with urban and rural committees subordinate to them, were set up. The Women's Work Circle, together with kindred women's organisations in other towns, organised women's work rooms, ran communal kitchens, and set up crèches for the families of reservists. As a result of poverty and misery, infant mortality grew to catastrophic proportions—14 per cent. of the babies died, and many deaths occurred even amongst older children.

Then Josefa Klawer founded a special organisation which went under the name of "Save the Children." The central organisations made collections in order to feed children and their mothers. The slogan "Save the Children" touched the hearts of the country people, who provided food, while the country houses, parsonages, and wealthier farmers provided free homes, as well as food, to numbers of children and young people from the towns.

Besides the above-mentioned institutions, the "Boleslaw Prus Society of Practical Hygiene" (named after a distinguished Polish novelist), did much good in the sphere of maternity welfare. They prepared practical instructions which were distributed in pamphlet and leaflet form. When the Poles, in the Russian part of Poland, succeeded in their fight for Polish schools after the famous school strike of 1905, the teaching of Hygiene was included in the school curriculum.

In 1914, a new institution came into being under the name of "The Young Mothers' League." Its object was to train young girls to nurse infants and to teach them maternity and infant hygiene. The League set up a crèche for children and began courses for professional nurses; a three-weeks' course was also arranged in connection with this

for women about to become mothers, and for girls who wished to look after younger children in their families. In the years 1925-1939, these subjects were taught as part of the hygiene lessons given by women doctors in the elementary schools of Warsaw and other towns.

1918-1939.

## IN THE RESTORED STATE.

### MOTHER AND CHILD WELFARE IN POLISH LEGISLATION.

It was only natural that mother and child welfare should develop more rapidly when Poland regained her independence. In 1921, it was legally recognised as a principle by the Polish constitution (Paragraph 103). In 1920, regulations came into force regarding sickness insurance. These regulations ensured 8 weeks special leave with pay for women during confinement and also free medical and natal care. In 1924, the National Organisation of Women brought a Bill before Parliament concerning maternity welfare amongst working women, and employers were compelled to organise crèches in factories, and to grant two breaks in the day's work for the feeding of infants. This Bill was incorporated in the law concerning the Working Women's Protection. Among other things women were given the right to take six weeks' leave before child-birth and six weeks' compulsory leave after child-birth; a ban was placed on dismissal by the employer during those twelve weeks. It placed upon employers the obligation to run crèches for infants in factories employing more than 100 women, and finally put a ban on women working during the night and under dangerous or unsanitary conditions. Furthermore, it was forbidden to employ pregnant women after six months of pregnancy, in certain kinds of work open to women generally. This ban was imposed where the work involved severe physical strain and also where rapid movement was required.

In the same year (1924) regulations came out defining the rights and duties of wet nurses. These regulations had as their object the welfare of both the woman who fed the child and the child itself. One of the regulations, for instance, forbids a consumptive woman to feed another woman's child.

In 1938, a law came out requiring that every district should maintain at least one midwife whose duty it was to help mothers who came under the social welfare scheme.

In 1939, a law was drawn up which embraced the whole scope of Child Welfare, from welfare at birth to the time when the child reached the age of 15 years.

State and municipal legislation with regard to mother and child welfare came partly under the National Health Laws and partly under special laws regarding Working Women's Protection.

The Municipal Councils also played a great part in Mother and Child Welfare. They set up Inter-Municipal Welfare Associations which had considerable funds at their disposal. They ran sanatoria and larger welfare establishments.

The Social Insurance Centres which were initiated by law in 1920 cared for mothers and children whose families were insured.

### THE PERIODS OF MOTHER AND CHILD WELFARE.

In Poland, child welfare was divided into five periods, after which came Youth Welfare. First Period : pre-natal care or maternity welfare. Second Period : from birth to 2 years. Third Period : from 2 to 4 years. Fourth Period : from 4 to 7 years (before the child begins to attend school); and Fifth Period : from 7 to 14-15 (school age). Social welfare was of three main kinds : Care by the State, by Local Governments, and by Social Organisations. The latter, by paving the way and taking the initiative, did a great service, enabling the law to be put into practice (see later : crèches, mobile stations, etc.). The report of the Ministry of Social Welfare for 1937 describes the help given by these social organisations as invaluable, especially where their pioneer work in many fields is concerned.

### PERIOD I : PRE-NATAL CARE OF THE MOTHER AND CHILD.

This period came under the 1924 law concerning motherhood amongst working women and the 1920 law concerning social insurance (which was renewed in 1933). The Social Insurance Scheme paid mothers maternity allowance during a leave of eight weeks. The law dealing with working

women's welfare gave them the right to twelve weeks' leave. Non-manual workers had special contracts with their employers, providing for three months sick-leave with pay; thus, the pregnancy and confinement leave came under the contractual provision. In view of this discrepancy the majority of women preferred to forego their leave before child-birth and take the compulsory leave after childbirth, enforced by the law, which made it a punishable offence to employ a woman during the six weeks after the birth of her child. Up to 1933 the insurance centres paid a post-natal rate which amounted to 100 per cent. of the normal wage. However, the general unemployment from 1933 on, the collapse of social insurance, and other difficulties of the insurance organisations, resulted in the law being modified in 1933 to make the rate of insurance pay dependent on the financial situation of the insurance organisations. Then the latter themselves lowered the post-natal insurance to 50 per cent. of the normal wage, and it was only in the spring of 1939 that it was again raised to 75 per cent. For this reason, in spite of the clear definition of the law, some women workers were afraid of losing their jobs (especially during the years of mass unemployment), and returned to work earlier, and the women inspectors had to interfere in order to see that the law was kept. According to the reports of the inspectors, however, these offences were not frequent.

Pre-natal care of unemployed and poor mothers consisted in supplying layettes for their children. This was not laid down by law, but was introduced by social organisations and undertaken by the Model Homes of the Mother and Child, even in smaller towns, while it was included in the regulations for working women at the Factory Centres for Mothers and Children.

The provision against loss of wages during the eight last weeks of pregnancy and confinement, the ban on all work which was injurious to health—especially to that of pregnant women—free medical and natal care for the insured, and the control exercised by women inspectors in the factories, eased the situation considerably for mothers working in towns and factory settlements.

The question of welfare for mothers in villages and places far removed from any hospital, was much more difficult. In order to improve this state of affairs, Health Centres were started (see below). A law concerning mothers-to-be in the village communes was passed, and finally, in the last two years, Health Co-operative Societies were begun on the people's own initiative.

## PERIOD II: THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN FROM BIRTH TO TWO YEARS.

The law passed in 1924 concerning the protection of working women laid down that all factories employing more than 100 women were obliged to set up and run a crèche, at which infants could be left while their mothers were at work. All infants up to the age of fifteen months, inclusive, came under this law. In addition, employers were obliged to give all mothers two half-hour breaks in the day's work to feed their children. These breaks were included in the eight-hour working day, and pay could not be deducted for them, nor could they be made up by working overtime.

This regulation was enforced owing to the experiences of the social organisations, which had provided crèches for the children of working mothers. Previously these women had no one to whom they could entrust their children when at work, and in consequence they usually left them without adequate care. This unsatisfactory state of affairs existed, especially in towns, and it is natural that the resolution to rectify it was moved by a woman deputy for Łódź, a town which is almost entirely industrial. The employers held out against the innovation for a long time, and so flagrant was their failure to comply with the regulations concerning crèches, that in 1927 the State had to create a special body of inspectors to supervise female labour.

In 1929, detailed regulations were issued which laid down the number of crèches and facilities that must be provided, and in the same year final orders were issued ordering crèches to be set up immediately by the factories. Naturally enough, State factories were the easiest to deal with, but the private industries, although they at first protested against the "new tax" (as the cost of the innovation was described) very soon became convinced that it was a good thing to look after the children of their women workers.

By setting a woman's mind at rest about her child, the quality and output of her work improved, and she began to feel that she had a co-operative interest in the factory.

We must state here that it was not only the expense to the factory that stood in the way of crèche development, but other difficulties; the distance separating the workers' homes from their work, the old and overcrowded buildings of many of the factories, and in some instances the unhygienic conditions injurious to the children's health. The Women Inspectors were the first to draw adequate attention to the

matter and bring about an improvement. This they did in two ways, by founding crèches as well as Factory Centres for Mothers and Children.

### FACTORY CRECHES.

These were planned and built strictly in accordance with regulations laid down by the Inspectorate of Labour in close co-operation with the Health Services. The number and size of the crèches was dependent on the number of woman workers, since statistics showed that for every hundred women employees there were, on an average, seven infants.

In the crèche, the infants were placed under the care of a doctor and of professional nurses. The child was bathed every day on arrival at the crèche. It was dressed in crèche clothes, and fed while there. There were special rooms for the mothers who came during the day to feed their children. All these services were free of charge.

It was obvious that without careful supervision an epidemic might very easily break out in a crèche. This danger gave those who opposed the innovation a strong argument in support of their case and it also influenced mothers who, at first, by no means regarded the crèche with favour.

Special care was taken to prevent any outbreak of illness. Children suspected of an infectious disease were instantly placed in an Isolation Ward and handed over to the care of doctors from the Insurance Centre. They were, of course, kept away from the crèche until they had recovered and were free from infection.

### FACTORY CENTRES FOR MOTHERS AND CHILDREN.

These Stations for Mother and Child Welfare were organised as external medical centres. Their object was to give the facilities of a crèche in places where crèches could not be instituted, either because of the great distance separating the factory from the workers' homes, or owing to the lack of adequate facilities for their installation.

At the Station a register was kept of all women expecting confinement. Before the birth of the child the Station provided the mother

with a layette comprising all articles stipulated by the regulations. Infants were brought to the doctors for periodical inspection, and in addition, at regular intervals, they were visited in their homes by professional nurses. Every day mothers received food for their children in accordance with doctors' instructions: milk, milk preparations, vegetables, fruit and, if necessary, tonic medicines.

The Stations were controlled either by the factories—and in that case were under their administrative authority—or else by professional Social Organisations, approved by the Inspectorate of Labour, and were paid for out of factory funds. The latter system proved the better, since it made district organisation possible (*i.e.*, organisation on an area basis—in accordance with the locality of the homes of the workers and not the site of the factory).

Social Organisations had branches throughout the country, and often several branches in one town. The Inspectorate of Women Labour organised the station services in the following way: several factories had to join together and finance a Communal Station. These were started by Social Organisations in various parts of the town. This method was adopted, for example, in Łódź, where the "Drop of Milk," existing since 1904, opened eight new branches, in addition to the two it already had in that town, for children of women factory workers. These were financed by the various factories concerned, which were required by the Women's Welfare Law to provide these services. In addition, the "Drop of Milk" organised a daily supply of milk and milk mixtures for children in 50 co-operative shops, and by so doing made it still easier for working women to take advantage of the social welfare services. Thanks to this system some member of the family was usually able to collect the infant's food every day. The Infant Welfare Society performed a great service in helping to set up this type of Station in Warsaw.

As a rule, the Mobile Factory Stations took care of the children for a much longer period than the 15 months laid down by the regulations. The period usually amounted to two years at least. The Inspectorate of Labour brought the factories to acknowledge the fact that a longer period of care must prevail to balance the relatively fewer facilities than those offered by the crèches. But the crèche had this advantage—it ensured professional care during the whole of the period when the mother was at work, and it enabled the mother to feed the child herself, whereas the Station could only provide artificial feeding. In addi-



tion to this the mother benefited from the two half-hour breaks in her work, especially as it reduced her working time to a seven-hour instead of an eight-hour day.

Generally speaking, women's welfare made great progress in the factories after the first difficulties and prejudices had been overcome. A proof of this is furnished by the report of the Chief Woman's Inspector, in which she says that the Stations "often cared for the children until they reached the age of 3, 4, and even 7 years of age," and that "in many crèches the age limits were not observed: if there was room in the crèche, children were often kept up to the age of 2 years."<sup>4</sup>

Some factories, especially those owned by the State, and the tobacco and spirit monopolies ran, in addition to crèches, kindergartens for children between the ages of 2 and 4 years. In some other factories there were even preparatory schools which ensured full care for a child from the time of its birth to the age when it entered school.

Poland had a total of 96 crèches, 32 of which belonged to the factories, and they cared for 456 infants (see note in next chapter). There were Factory Centres for Mothers and Children at 224 different points, and these had 9,687 children under their care. (For Social Centres see Medical Centres.) Thanks to the Factory Centres, children of workers from 40 factories were cared for in Lodz, while in Warsaw the number of concerns which possessed these Welfare Organisations increased from 91 in 1932 to 129 in 1936.

There were 16 Women Factory Inspectors, three of whom were in the Central Office of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

State care of mothers and children in Poland found expression mostly in the formation of an Inspectorate of Female Labour which, at the same time, had control over the welfare of working mothers. The State also ran maternity and nursing schools, hospitals, and clinics for women's diseases, with maternity sections. Finally, all health and social welfare services were under State control.

Local Government centres soon took on greater responsibility for care over the health of the population and social welfare. In 1925 they set up a net-work of Health and Social Welfare Centres, Medical Centres and Nursing Services<sup>5</sup>.

(<sup>4</sup>) See "The Protection of Women Workers and Minors in Poland," published by the Polish Women's Committee for International Women's Collaboration, London, 1941  
(<sup>5</sup>) See the report of the Health Department of the Ministry of Social Welfare.

## WELFARE CENTRES FOR MOTHERS AND CHILDREN.

These, sometimes called "Homes for Mothers and Children," were medical and disinfecting centres, often attached to the Health Centres by ties of organisation, and sometimes housed in the same block of buildings. On the whole, however, the tendency was to set up the "Homes for Mothers and Children" in separate buildings, apart from the other medical centres.

In 1937, there were 557 centres for mothers and children, 288 of which were at the Health Centres. There were 395 centres in the towns, and 159 in the country. 409 were owned by Local Government bodies. The remainder were run by Social Organisations.

In 1938, there were 570 medical centres for mothers and children registered at the Ministry of Social Welfare (Health Department). They looked after 19,902 mothers and 187,871 children. Their nurses paid 437,969 home visits. 3,260,870 litres of milk and 10,330,000 portions of milk preparations were issued to children in that year<sup>6</sup>.

In the Maternity Centres there were 6,377 beds for mothers.

In the Medical Centres there were 4,740 beds for children.

In the Health Centres cases were often discovered where help was needed by a mother and child, but had not been applied for by the mother. Sick people visiting the doctor were asked for details which were entered in his case book, and these helped to acquaint him with their home conditions. They also gave particulars to the nurses regarding their family, their health and their working and living conditions. The nurses then made visits to their homes in order to give (1) advice on the care of the sick, (2) instructions on the precautions to be taken in order to avoid infection and contagion, especially in the case of tuberculosis, and (3) in order to see that the doctor's orders were carried out. These visits helped to introduce several innovations and ensured more rational care. Once in possession of information concerning their patients' living conditions, doctors were able to put their finger on the causes of the disease: poverty, bad housing conditions, drunkenness, etc. They sent their patients to suitable Social Welfare Institutions. Furthermore, when the nurses saw unsuitable homes, they helped the teachers and students from domestic science colleges in their work, by going with them to visit the families who were under their care, and did all they could to improve conditions on

(<sup>6</sup>) See the report of the Health Department of the Ministry of Social Welfare.

## VACCINATION.

Children were vaccinated at all the Health Centres, in the schools, preparatory schools, and Child Welfare Centres, in the State and local Institutes of Hygiene, in the child vaccination Centres, and also in the clinics for children's diseases at the Universities. Every year 2,000,000 vaccinations against small-pox were performed in Poland.

*N.B.*—All serums and vaccines were prepared by the State Institute of Hygiene, which supplied the whole of Poland.

## THE HEALTH SERVICES.

It was only natural that deliberate neglect for over a century on the part of the Partitioning Powers (who aimed at keeping Poland economically embarrassed<sup>8</sup>, the devastation of the country as the result of war, the predatory methods of the German and Austrian occupying armies in the years 1915-1918, the enormous needs of the restored State, and lastly, the economic crisis, all had a deleterious effect upon Polish Social Welfare.

It was only natural that Polish Social Welfare, although often out-distancing other countries in making good these deficiencies, and Polish Health Welfare which, even then, was advancing rapidly, were not, in all districts, of the same standard. The towns were privileged at the expense of the villages, and only in recent years had this state of affairs been changed. Plans worked out in 1938 and 1939 were put into force, and in some cases work was begun before the war broke out.

Dispensing, for economic considerations, with a separate Ministry of Health, the health services were entrusted to a special department of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. One section of the Services supervised the sanitary and hygienic conditions of the entire State, and also controlled activities to check disease. To this section were entrusted all questions of mother and child welfare and also the prevention of social diseases, *e.g.*, tuberculosis, rickets, arthritis, venereal disease, excessive alcoholism, and all the infectious diseases, etc.

In each district there was a Regional Department for Public Health, which had under its control all county departments, with doctors at the

<sup>(8)</sup> Poland under the rule of the Russian Tsars had a clear revenue of 80 million roubles a year. Russia, however, did not make her any grants to help her economy or her health services, and made a special point of neglecting communications. In Prussian Poland not only was the Polish language forbidden in schools and offices, but Polish women were forbidden to run domestic economy schools of their own and also to attend the German ones.

the spot, sometimes by explaining the better use of utensils and articles of household equipment, and sometimes by providing better ones. Thus the mother would find her work easier and the nursing of invalids or children would be improved. Finally the reports made on these homes drew the attention of medical men to (1) social conditions which must be remedied when co-ordinating the work of the Health Centres with the Social Welfare Movement, and (2) the subjects which must be dealt with in the popular talks which were organised in the districts where the Centres existed.

The following statistics will help to give an idea of the progress of these social undertakings.

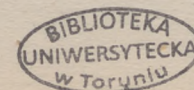
In 1925, when Health Centres were first established, there were only two altogether. By the 1st January, 1939, there were about 600. In 1937, Poland had 482 Centres, with a staff of 1,136 doctors and 804 nurses, and 1,407,272 people took advantage of their services. In addition, the nurses made 25,018 home visits<sup>7</sup>. The upkeep of these Centres cost 5,898,000 zlotys, *i.e.*, more than £220,000.

## CONTESTS ON HEALTH AND CHILDREN'S NURSING.

These contests were introduced in the provinces some years ago by the Women Landowners' Society and by the Association of Country Women's Circles. But it was not until 1936 that Warsaw held a contest of this nature, organised by one of the Health Centres. The object of these contests was to increase the mother's skill in nursing and weaning children, and at the same time to do everything possible to encourage hygiene. The chief object was to help mothers who were encountering great difficulties on account of poverty. Prizes were awarded to those who were most particular in regard to health and to the sensible and healthy upbringing of their offspring.

While the contest was in progress, the nurses and—in the case of the villages—the Health Instructors and Advisors (the latter were the health workers elected to the committees of the Country Women's Circles) visited those families which had entered their names for the contest, and inspected their cleanliness, their methods of feeding their children, and the home hygiene generally. After giving advice and instruction the nurses handed in their report to the Contest Committee.

<sup>(7)</sup> See the Report of the Ministry of Social Welfare, 1937.



head and circuit inspectors who supervised hospitals, hydros, etc. There was also a female nursing instructor who had charge of all the District Nurses.

Under a new law which did not come into operation owing to the outbreak of war, each district was compelled to engage a sanitary engineer.

This law provided that counties had to be divided into groups of several communities, with the object of facilitating the struggle against disease and sanitary and hygienic neglect. At the head of each group was a doctor, who was also Director of the local Health Centre. There were to be 1,000 of these groups.

Figures will illustrate the situation to some extent.

For the upkeep of the Health Services, the State Budget set aside 14,519,000 zlotys in 1935-36, and 17,902,000 zlotys in 1938-39. In the 1935-36 Budget of the Local Government Centres, 48,700,000 zlotys were set aside for this purpose. Therefore the total health budget for 1935-36 was more than 63,000,000 zlotys.

In order to give an idea of the part played by the urban and rural local administrations, the figures for 1922-23 will be cited, for it is difficult at present to obtain the necessary data for every year. The local administration centres set apart 52,505,000 zlotys for the Health Services. Out of this sum, 36,401,000 zlotys (or 69 per cent.) were contributed by the towns, and 16,104,000 zlotys (or 30 per cent) by the country communities<sup>9</sup>.

The extent of the work of the Social Organisations can be estimated when we give the following figures :

In 1935-36, we possessed 407 officially recognised welfare societies for mothers, children and young people. Their aggregate income amounted to 11,488,700 zlotys, of which 5,927,300 zlotys came from their own sources, 1,958,100 from fees paid by families, and the rest was provided either by the State, by local Administrative Bodies, or by the Social Insurance Associations. On the advice of these bodies numerous activities, such as summer colonies, communal feeding, etc., were carried on<sup>10</sup>.

These associations ran crèches, kindergartens, centres for mothers and children and similar institutions, homes for convalescent children, etc.

Still more eloquent are the statistics for 1937, for boarding institu-

tions which cared for children and young people. Out of a total of 881 establishment, 499 (with 20,280 children) were run by the associations, 142 (with 7,107 children) by religious orders, 98 (with 4,503 children) by local administrative bodies, and 56 (with 2,119 children) by religious societies.

#### MOTHER AND CHILD WELFARE IN WARSAW.

Medical advice centres for mothers and infants were run in the capital by all the Health Centres (*i.e.*, those belonging to the City Council), and by the following Social Organisations: The Society of Infant Welfare, The Polish Committee for Child Welfare, The Society of Children's Friends, the "Drop of Milk" Society, and the Loenvall Society. These Associations ran altogether 14 stations.

In 1937, there were 9,380 children up to 2 years of age, under the care of the City medical advice centres, and 5,700 children in the 14 centres belonging to Social Organisations. On an average, 15,000 children were born every year in the capital, so the average number of children up to the age of two was 30,000. In 1937 half of this number were under the constant medical attention of the above-named institutions.

All help given by the Health Centres was free of charge to unemployed and others who were entitled to this service. In the medical centres belonging to the organisations, the unemployed received free help, while others paid only from 1 to 2 zlotys monthly. If the help also included a supply of milk preparations, then, for those who were working, the fee was 5 zlotys a month at the "Drop of Milk"; 2 zlotys at two of the stations belonging to the Society of Infant Welfare, and 3 zlotys at the third; 3 zlotys at the Loenvall Society; 2 zlotys at the Society of Children's Friends. At one station belonging to the Polish Committee for Child Welfare, the charge was 1 zloty, and at the other 3 zlotys.

The cost of the fees depended on the amount of the subsidy allowed for food by the municipal authorities.

Warsaw had 24 crèches for infants; eight of them were owned by the factories. Public crèches were run by the "Father Baudoin Home for Mothers and Children"; "Motherhood," a Society for the Welfare of Poor Mothers, by the "Little Mothers' League," by the "Save the Children" Society, by the "St. Stanislas Institute," by the "St. Louis

<sup>(9)</sup> 25 zlotys = £1.

<sup>(10)</sup> The numbers quoted are from the Report of the Health Dept. of the Ministry of Social Service.

Educational Society" (for children above the age of one), by the "Society of Children's Educational Establishments" (for children above the age of 1½), by the "Children's Welfare Society, by the "Protestant Parish," by the "Settlements Committee" (five crèches), by the "Loenvall Society," and by the "City Home for Jewish Children."

Factory crèches were run by the State Spirits Monopoly, the Tobacco Monopoly, the State Security Bank, the Ammunition Factory, the State Tele- and Radiotechnical Establishments, by Franaszek's Wall-paper Factory, and Wedel's Chocolate Factory.

### PERIOD III.—WELFARE OF CHILDREN FROM 2 TO 4 YEARS.

*Kindergartens.*—For the same reasons which caused the introduction of the crèche regulations into the Women's Welfare Law, there was in existence—although the law did not demand it—a large and yearly increasing number of kindergartens. These establishments looked after the children of working women from the time when they left the crèche—when the period of feeding by mothers ended—to the time just before school, *i.e.*, up to the age of 4 years. Kindergartens were being run at the end of the last century by the Religious Orders in the towns, and by Country Women's Organisations in the villages. During the Great War, 1914-18, they were started by Children's Welfare Organisations, such as "The Society for the Education of Children," the "Save the Children" Society, and others.

After 1929, when the Factory crèches began to be introduced, factory Kindergartens also appeared. Statistics of kindergartens, however, were only kept for the City of Warsaw, but they were also established in Łódź, Zyrardów, Poznan, Cracow, Wilno, Kalisz, Tczew, Grudziadz, and many other towns.

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(The data given above are taken from the public records and are for 1936. At the same time, in the City of Warsaw itself, there were 16 crèches run by Organisations and 8 run by Factories. They are mentioned above in the order in which they were founded, together with the names of the Institutions which ran them. This information is given on the basis of the "Official Handbook," which was compiled according to a District Register made by a group of officials of the Social Welfare Department of the Warsaw City Administration. This was done with a view to co-ordinating all services offered to the poor and unemployed by the Social Organisations and City Welfare Services.

(Continued at foot of page 21)

*Centres for Mothers and Children.*—Centres for mothers and children were organised in the country either for the whole year, or for the summer working season, so that mothers could leave their children to be cared for while they were at work in the fields. The registered number of these centres was 336, and they had 11,439 children under their care. There were 1,324 summer kindergartens, with 47,631 children. Both in the Centres and the Kindergartens, the children were provided with all their meals.

Of recent years, women office workers also had begun to take advantage of the town Kindergartens, and paid a fee for the services offered by these establishments. The Kindergarten gave greater guarantees that the children would be properly cared for than the "maid of all work" in a middle-class home; servant girls, in fact, often refused to work for families with small children, while the poor financial position of middle-class office workers in Poland often meant that the lady of the house had to do without help altogether. The crèches, on the other hand, employed a fully qualified staff for looking after the children.

### PERIOD IV.—THE AGE BEFORE SCHOOL. CHILDREN FROM 4 TO 7 YEARS.

Preparatory Schools were already in process of development before the Restoration of Independence, when the so-called infant schools were run by Religious Orders, Women's Landowners' Associations, the "Warta" Association, the "Society for People's Schools," and the secret "Organisation of Women Teachers," with Aniela Szyk and Jadwiga Chrzaszczewska at its head. These two women were the pioneers of preparatory school education. After the restoration of Independence, enormous progress was made in this field. Women

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Similar Registers were begun in other places. Data which were collected during tours of the country, as material for a Treatise on Mother and Infant Welfare in Poland, gave the number of crèches as 96 and not 42 (the number quoted by the "Concise Statistical Year Book"). The reason for the difference is that the Statistics Bureau gave—as it obviously would—only the registered figures, and disregarded the fact that only a certain number of the associations were registered, namely, those which were subsidised by the State. Those which ran establishments from their own funds did not register them. There was no compulsion in this respect.)

teachers who had been trained in the State Seminary of Preparatory School Education were sent abroad and brought back new ideas from those fortunate countries which had not known the wretchedness of slavery. Model preparatory schools were set up in modern buildings constructed specially for the purpose, and supplied with all modern aids to teaching.

As a result of the reform of Preparatory School teaching, not every Infant School was recognised as a Preparatory School, but only those which satisfied the requirements of the education authorities. For this reason there was a fall in the figures. In 1934-35, 1,876 Preparatory Schools with 96,000 pupils were registered, while in 1937-38, the number was only 1,651 schools with 83,100 pupils. The remainder were—until they reached the required standard—only considered as unofficial Preparatory Schools, where children could be cared for until they reached school age. Their teaching curriculum was of a much lower standard.

Of all the Preparatory Schools in 1934-35, 636 were run by the Organisations and Social Institutes, 373 by Institutes and Religious Organisations, 358 by Local Government Bodies (of this number, 232 by Municipal Authorities), 260 by Religious Orders, 220 by private persons, 207 by the State, 70 by private Institutions, and 11 by private funds<sup>11</sup>.

#### CHILD FEEDING.

There are three different arrangements for child feeding: The arrangements made by the crèches and Mother and Child Welfare Centres, those made by the Kindergartens, and those made by the Preparatory Schools, Schools and Youth Houses.

In the Kindergartens the children were fed by the Organisations which ran these establishments, either at their own expense or with the help of contributions made by the parents for this purpose; the unemployed and the poor were not expected to pay anything.

In the Preparatory Schools, Schools and Youth Houses, the feeding of children was chiefly organised on a mass basis by the General Committee for winter help to the unemployed; this was done on subsidies from the State and Local Government Bodies. The feeding began in

(<sup>11</sup>) In 1937-38 there were 4,851,000 pupils in the elementary schools.

September, when requests for help were made by the heads of schools and preparatory schools; it reached its maximum in winter, and gradually decreased from the spring to the summer, when seasonal work began, such as agriculture, road-making and house-building, etc.

In September, 1936, 8,282 families received winter help, while in the month of maximum needs, March, 1937, 375,994 families benefited by it. In September, 14,824 children were fed; in March, the number was 555,874. This figure naturally does not include all organisations for feeding the children, for in March, 1937, the total number of children fed was 652,776. Of this number 129,946 were from the preparatory schools, 471,715 from the ordinary schools, and 51,115 were young people above the age of 15, *i.e.*, over elementary school age. The annual cost was then 9,997,000 zlotys<sup>12</sup>.

The difference between the figures given for children fed by the Committee for Winter Help, and the figure of 652,776, is accounted for by the number of children fed by organisations and by private initiative. The greatest number were looked after by the Catholic Society "Charitas." This was assisted by the Catholic Organisation of the High School Youth, "Charitas," which organised a general collection in the high schools of "second lunches" for poor school-fellows and for children in the elementary schools. At the request of "Charitas," every high school took an elementary school under its care. Every day each pupil, whose home conditions enabled him to do so, brought with him one or two rolls, or bread and butter, with meat, cheese or marmalade. They gave this to the school matron on duty (the latter being chosen from amongst their own mothers, all members of the School Parents' Circle), who either sent it to the "adopted" school or shared it out amongst poor scholars in the same high school when issuing the mid-day milk, cocoa or tea. The "Let Us Share" organisation, which also came into being during the period of general unemployment, made a collection in the homes of its members, in the interests of social welfare. On the whole there was in this work a new principle which had nothing in common with the so-called philanthropy, the principle of the helping hand or social solidarity. There were many organisations of the new type; amongst them the Academic Catholic Association "Help Your Neighbour," which specialised in child welfare, and ran Youth Houses and part-time colonies for children.

(<sup>12</sup>) All figures, beginning with those given for the Mother and Child Centres, to the end of the pamphlet, are taken from the "Concise Statistical Year Book for 1938."

## YOUTH HOUSES.

At a time when it was exceedingly difficult to obtain housing accommodation, after the first World War which, like the present one, was waged on partly Polish territory, a new Social Institution, the Youth House, came into being. At the beginning these were simply halls, usually in the same building as the Social Organisation, which during the afternoons were put aside for the use of those children who were unable to prepare their lessons in peace in their small overcrowded homes. Those in charge of Youth Houses (usually University students) were able to help children who could not understand their lessons or who did not possess the necessary books. Gradually, certain principles were formulated concerning the running of Youth Houses, and dealing with lessons, play, and the combination of the two. In recent years every school and every preparatory school had its own Youth House. If a school had no rooms free in the afternoon (as in many schools teaching went on in morning and afternoon sessions), extra classrooms were lent by a social organisation or another school which happened to be housed in a modern building in the same district.

Youth Houses for children from preparatory school age upwards were run by municipal authorities, the Association of "General Care for the Children of Town Preparatory Schools," the Catholic Society "Charitas," the Academic Association of "Help Your Neighbour," the Federation of Polish Societies of the Fatherland's Defenders (those who took part in the last war), the Michalina Moscicka Association for Children's Welfare, the Polish Society for the Promotion of Education—Macierz Szkolna, the Polish Young Women's Association (for all girls above the age of 10), the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the Sisters of Mercy, the Sisters of Our Lord's Resurrection, the Nazarene Sisters, etc. In addition, the Agricultural Academy Association and the "Stefan Zeromski Society" ran a Youth House for the children of their members. It was only natural that such organisations as the Polish Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, the Youth of the Polish Red Cross, and the Young Workers' Association, also had their Institutions.

Thanks to the Youth Houses, it was easier to get to know the needs of the children, who would for reasons of pride conceal their poverty from the school authorities. It is also due to the Youth Houses that school libraries and lending libraries of school text books developed more rapidly.

## CHILDREN'S FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME COLONIES.

Summer colonies became popular in Poland round about 1890, when the first Summer Colony Society was founded. Its initiator was Dr. Markiewicz, a great friend of children, and the first to arrange the evacuation of city children into the country during the summer. In restored Poland this became a mass movement, the natural consequence of the whole service of child welfare.

The following statistics show its growth:—

In 1924 there were 26,500 children at the colonies.

In 1937 there were 418,500 children at the colonies.

In 1924 the total cost of the colonies was 2,300,000 zlotys.

In 1937 the total cost of the colonies was 10,258,000 zlotys.

In view of the inability—owing to lack of funds—of the colonies to cope with all town children, a new system of part-time summer colonies was introduced. With this object in view, the associations took over almost all free Government, Council or public land near the towns, suitable for setting up day-time colonies, and here the children were taken out every morning by tram and brought back home again in the evening. Except for the fact that the children did not spend the night at these part-time colonies, the methods of education, games, occupations, etc., were the same as those of the full-time colonies. The food consisted of a late breakfast, dinner and supper.

So many organisations ran both these types of child recreation centres that it is impossible to name them all here.

In 1937, there were 247,000 children at the part-time colonies.

The total cost of the full-time and part-time colonies was 10,258,000 zlotys. Of this sum, 1,978,000 zlotys were provided by State subsidies, 1,068,000 zlotys by Local Government Bodies, 896,000 zlotys by the Labour Funds (for the building of pavilions), 1,013,000 zlotys by the Social Insurance Companies and the Federation of Social Insurance Companies, and 5,303,000 zlotys by public subsidies and parents' fees.

In 1938 as many as 620,000 children were sent to full-time and part-time colonies.

About 1933, the children began to be sent to Winter Colonies in the mountains and hilly districts. Here the children could lie for half the day, well wrapped up in rugs, in deck-chairs on the verandah, and also go for a few hours ski-ing.

## JORDAN GARDENS.

The first garden for the use of children only was founded in 1888 in Cracow by Dr. Jordan, who saw how essential it was for children to be able to play in the open air with others of their own age without any of the hampering regulations in force in public parks. (In Poland it was forbidden to walk on the grass in public parks, for owing to the Polish climate this had a very bad effect on the grass. In addition to this, older people prefer quiet, so children were not allowed to play "noisy" games, but had to walk quietly by the side of their parents.) Dr. Jordan, at his own cost, laid out a park which covered 20 acres. It had five playgrounds, a croquet field and gymnastic apparatus (ladders, helter-skelters, climbing bars, etc.). In the pavilions there were shower-baths and dressing-rooms. Between the trees which overhung the paths, Dr. Jordan placed busts of famous Poles—Copernicus, Dlugosz, Kosciuszko, Skarga and Czarniecki. In breaks between play, the children listened to educational talks given by Dr. Jordan.

In Warsaw, Dr. Jordan's idea was adopted by Mr. Rau, an industrialist and philanthropist, who made provision in his will for the laying out of 14 "Rau Gardens." Before the present war all which remained of these gardens were five playgrounds for children from the schools and Youth Houses. The rest of the land had been incorporated into new gardens. The Rau playgrounds were under the control of the Rau Committee of the Hygienic Association.

When Poland regained her independence, Dr. Jordan's ideas were adopted by the State Institute of Physical Training, which carried out research work on the management of children's gardens in Europe and America, and then set up the first model Jordan Garden in Warsaw. With the help of the city authorities and the Institute of Physical Training, the Jordan Gardens Society, which was founded thanks to excellent Press propaganda and to the Mothers' Circles, laid out nine children's gardens in Warsaw, fully equipped with the necessary apparatus and buildings. In Łódź the Local Authorities laid out several playgrounds, but only for the summer. In Poznan, where there were many more parks and family allotments, a town park for children was laid out which covered 20 acres. In Katowice, all the green spaces in the town were given over for the use of children. In Wilno, Bialystok, Cracow, Grodno, Lublin, and Czestochowa, Jordan gardens were set up by the Local Authorities. Before the 1939 war, there were

200 of these Gardens, not counting the ever-increasing amount of State and private property which was given up for summer part-time colonies. These, after the summer, became playgrounds for the children who lived near them.

Furthermore, there was an increase in propaganda to encourage the provision of gardens for schools and preparatory schools. The so-called model schools, for instance, the Batory High School in Warsaw, some of the elementary schools, and the newly-founded town and village schools, all had their own gardens.

## EDUCATION ADVICE CENTRES.

These developed on the same lines as the preparatory and elementary schools. The first was opened by the General Association for the Welfare of Children in the Warsaw Preparatory Schools. It was run as an experimental Station by women doctors and school psychologists, for Preparatory and Elementary school-children who caused trouble to their parents and teachers on account of obstinacy, laziness, unruliness, truancy, etc. The parents' attention was directed to the Advice Centre by the teacher.

The Advice Centres fulfilled a great task in clearing up many misunderstandings between parents and children. These were often caused by the parents' complete ignorance of child psychology and the child outlook, and by the impossibility of individual attention in the schools.

Later on, Advice Centres were set up by the Society of Children's Friends, with the same object.

The Advice Centre of the State Institute of Special Education, the so-called Psychological Laboratory, was of a different type. It examined children who were suspected of stunted mental growth and development, and when this was the case, they were sent to special schools.

## ADVICE CENTRE FOR CHILDREN REVEALING CRIMINAL TENDENCIES.

This was founded by the Patrons of the Prisoners' Welfare Society. The director of the Centre was Professor Stefan Baley, of the Warsaw University. Young people were sent there by the Juvenile Courts.

### ADVICE CENTRE FOR CHOICE OF CAREERS.

The development of psycho-physical study resulted in the appearance of Psycho-Technical Research Centres, which were able to advise young people as to the trade for which they were best suited, both physically and psychologically. Advice Centres of this type were attached to the Psychophysics Institute, the Juvenile Artisans' Welfare Society, and in some towns to the Association of Headmistresses and Professional School Teachers. They were to be found in Warsaw, Cracow, Wilno, Poznan, Lublin, and Lwów.

In addition, from 1930 onwards, the Association of Parents' Groups gave a yearly series of public lectures on the choice of careers, just before the end of the school year. Their lead was followed by other parents' and teachers' organisations, and also by the Association of High School Headmasters.

However, these questions are not strictly within the scope of this pamphlet.

### CENTRES FOR CHILDREN WITH NERVOUS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS.

The mass of impressions received by children from the crowded areas in which they spend their early life, the hereditary disorders caused by drunkenness, venereal disease, and the weakening of nervous resistance, have presented the education authority with many new problems of psychological hygiene. Before the restoration of Polish Independence, research was carried out on certain problems of this nature by the Boleslas Prus Society of Practical Hygiene, the Society for the Care of Those Suffering from Nervous and Psychological Disorders, and by the Child Research Society. After the war this branch of hygiene was looked after by the State Institute of Special Education, which trained teachers and tutors who had the care of children mentally deranged, abnormal, and in general, difficult to bring up. In addition to the above-named Institutions, the Polish Eugenics Society carried on its own work in this field. In its struggle against human degeneracy it had to deal not only with the problem of venereal disease and drunkenness, but also with their results—various hereditary disorders. There was a special Psychiatric Department at the Ministry of Social Welfare.

The pioneers of these new methods were young doctors in close touch with school teachers and school-children. On the one hand, the Education Advice Centres, and, on the other, public lectures given by doctors and psychologists at parents' meetings, brought to light many causes of the difficulties in education. There are certain symptoms associated with psychological or inherited disorders which are easily recognised by specialists but which pass unnoticed by parents and teachers, who do not realise their true importance. There are more abnormal children than is commonly supposed. This obvious need resulted in special Centres being set up for children with nervous and psychological disorders. The first was inaugurated by Dr. Wladyslaw Dabrowski, with the approval of the Health Department of the City of Warsaw. In 1933, the psychological hygiene section of the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Polish League of Psychological Hygiene, and the psychological hygiene section of the National Health Council began work on a larger scale. Finally, in 1935, an Institute of Psychological Hygiene was opened at the State Hygiene Institute, which centralised and organised all research work in this new field, carried on propaganda and teaching, and set up clinical Centres.

Shortly afterwards the Institute of Psychological Hygiene set up six centres for children, young people, and adults, and also a child observation centre with sleeping accommodation. In addition, it looked after orphan children who suffered from psychopathic disorders, and who had been put up with so-called foster families in the country. In 1937, the Institute dealt with 1,839 children and 302 adults. The Institute published its own Quarterly, and many popular educational works. It arranged courses for doctors, psychologists, social welfare nurses, teachers, ran a series of parents' lectures, etc.

At the Centres of the Institute, psychopathic, mentally underdeveloped and difficult children were subjected to examination. The poor and unemployed received help free of charge, while for others the fee for examination and advice was from 2 to 4 zlotys (approximately 2 to 4 shillings). In the Medical Section, daily board cost 6 zlotys. All patients sent by the Social Insurance Centres, by the State Medical Aid Services, and by the Municipal Health Departments, received treatment free of charge.



### CENTRES FOR CHILDREN SUFFERING FROM SPEECH AND HEARING DISABILITIES.

These Centres were run by the Institute of Psychological Hygiene and the Health Department of the City of Warsaw. Advice and treatment for children of the unemployed and children sent by school doctors were free of charge. The Warsaw City Centre for the Correction of Speech Defects, which was founded in 1932, had a yearly average of 200 young patients.

### EDUCATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTES FOR CHILDREN WITH MENTAL AND PHYSICAL DISORDERS.

The Institute of the Blind, Deaf and Dumb in Warsaw (the oldest of its type in Poland, founded over 100 years ago) received children from all over the country between the ages of 4 and 14, for the normal programme of preparatory school, school and professional training. Young people from the age of 14 and adults up to 30 were received for "post-school" studies. In addition, Education Institutes were run in Laski by the Franciscan nuns (the first Institute was founded by the blind Mme. Czacka, who entered a convent and trained large numbers of sisters in the work of educating the blind).

By a census taken on 31st March, 1936, the total number of blind, deaf and dumb children in the Education Institutes was 725.

Institutes for Epileptics were run by the Society for the Care of Epileptics in Warsaw and Brwinów. In 1936 there were 100 epileptics under their care.

For children with mental and physical disorders, four Education Institutes were run by the Benedictine-Samaritan Sisters. These Institutes took children from the age of two years upwards. The Protestant parish in Warsaw cared for them from the age of three.

In 1936, there were 689 mentally deficient children in Institutions of this kind throughout the whole of Poland.

### SPECIAL SCHOOLS FOR DIFFICULT CHILDREN.

Difficult children who could not be taught in the ordinary course of school work had to be separated from normal children and given more individual attention, and were placed in special schools after

examination by the Psycho-Pedagogical Laboratory. These schools were run by the State Institute of Special Education and the Town Councils. In Warsaw there were five special schools, one run by the Institute, and another a "Working Home" for children who had finished their elementary school training.

In 1936 there were 2,250 children in these special schools.

### CHILDREN'S RESCUE CENTRES.

In some towns, above all in Warsaw and Łódź, special centres were set up for the care of children who were lost, abandoned or found wandering about the country, as sometimes happens in this age of search for extraordinary adventure and longing for travel. The Child's Rescue Centre was an Institute to which children were brought by the police and where they could remain temporarily until their case was investigated by the police and the Centre's Welfare Authorities. While there, the children were placed under observation; investigations were made about their home conditions, and they were then either restored to their family or sent to Educational Institutes.

In 1935-36, 201 children were looked after by these Centres.

### WELFARE OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS.

The oldest foundling home in Poland, the so-called Father Baudoin Home in Warsaw, which was over 100 years old, was run by the Sisters of Mercy. After 1918, many reforms were carried out. At first this Institute had a specially constructed turnstile, with chairs on which mothers could leave their children without themselves being seen. Changes in the regulations for this type of institute were made after the first World War, when there was an enormous increase in the number of illegitimate children throughout the whole of Europe.

In 1918, a special section for the care of unmarried mothers and their children was opened at the Women's Working Circle. After the war, this was turned into a separate organisation—"Save the Children," a name borrowed from the children's rescue movement in the Great War. The main principle of this welfare service was "to save the mother for the child," or rather, to see that mother and child were not separated. This was also the main idea of municipal social welfare,

which tended to change the rules of Foundling Institutions, so that unmarried mothers could feed their own children and look after them. It is well known that most of the infant mortality at the Institutes was caused by the impossibility of feeding the children with mothers' milk. With the new system, wet nurses, paid by the Institute, were recruited from amongst the unmarried mothers, and received their board at the Institute and a certain amount of pay for feeding another woman's child as well as their own. The Women's Associations which looked after unmarried mothers received lists of the latter from the maternity homes and took them under their care. Homes and work were found for them. The local Social Welfare Department paid the mothers 30 zlotys a month until their children could be sent to kindergartens, while the mothers were at their daily work. When a mother obtained work she received 15 zlotys (approximately 15 shillings) a month for her child on condition that she did not send it to a Foundling Home. The special juridical and social department of the Father Baudoin Home sought out the father and either saw that he married the mother or paid her alimony.

1,000 children were under the care of the Father Baudoin Home. Unfortunately, owing to the lack of necessary data, figures cannot be given for other establishments, such as the City Home for Jewish Foundlings, the orphanages of the "Save the Children" organisation, etc.

#### FOSTER-FAMILIES AND THE ADOPTION OF ORPHANS.

Apart from the normal method of adopting orphans which is the same all over the world, a special propaganda movement was started to encourage "family care." This followed closely those principles which, in Partitioned Poland, caused the Society of Orphans' Homes (based on the foster family idea) to be founded. This Society, which was left large funds and had much property at its disposal, set married couples up in farms on condition that they looked after orphans (up to the age of 10) and treated them as their own children. These orphans were given a general education at school, and were also trained in agricultural work on the farms of their foster parents.

After 1918, a similar movement was begun by the Committee for Finding Homes for Orphans. They preferred placing orphans in agricultural families, for in this way they ensured that the children received a definite form of training.

The Social Welfare Department of the Warsaw Authorities began propaganda on a wide scale to encourage the adoption of orphans, working on the sound assumption that every child needs a family—even though only an adopted one—and that the upbringing in a family gives better results than in Social Welfare Institutes. With the strong backing of the Press, Welfare Circles were set up at the Infants' Homes (the name of "Foundling" was avoided); their members were mostly people without children or with only one child, who took another child from the Institute into their charge. This often ended in adoption.

In addition, the Town Authorities encouraged the finding of foster families for orphans. The social welfare services sought out agricultural or working families who, for 30 zlotys a month, would undertake to bring up a child. Control was kept over their upbringing by systematic visits from the Council Welfare Officers.

As a result of this movement, which had as its motto "Give Every Child a Family," an interesting legal dispute arose in 1938. Hundreds of applications were sent in to the Local Authorities and to the Ministry of Justice by foster parents, requiring that changes be made in the adoption regulations to the effect that no mention should be made, in the children's papers, of their unknown extraction. This necessitated a change of their birth certificates, and therefore, of the births' register. The question was still unsolved at the outbreak of war.

In 1936 there was a total number of 6,491 foster families, who cared not only for orphans, but also for the children of unknown parents. The number of children cared for was as many as 8,173. Out of this number there were 3,380 families with 4,257 children in the towns, and 3,101 families with 3,916 children in the country.

By mutual agreement, both France and Poland looked after the welfare of Polish unmarried mothers in France. Here Polish emigrants, employed chiefly in mining and on the land, reached the number of half-a-million after the Great War. Polish unmarried mothers had exactly the same rights as French unmarried mothers. The Polish Welfare Society received a list of the Polish mothers in Maternity Homes and took them under its care. According to French custom, the child was given to a wet nurse. The mother herself paid the wet nurse 100 francs a month, while the Polish Government paid the rest, 40 francs a month, for a period of 18 months after birth. The Polish Welfare Society's care in France went further; arrangements were made regarding work for the Polish women workers, who would

otherwise have been pitilessly exploited by their employers—this was especially the case with agricultural workers. In addition, the Polish Welfare Society saw that the mother made regular payments for her child and visited it frequently. Finally, it helped her to take the child away from the care of the nurse when she was able to keep the child herself. This was no easy matter, since the French social welfare authorities only allowed a child to be given up when all the costs of State care had been refunded: expenses for the hospital, the nurses, etc. These costs amounted to 300 francs for every 14 months that the child was away from its mother. This often represented a large sum for a working woman's pocket.

### SUMMER COLONIES FOR WORKING MOTHERS.

The law about workers' holidays in Poland, introduced in 1922, provided for eight days' paid holiday after a year's work, and 15 days' paid holiday after three years' work with one firm. Young people were to be given 14 days' holiday after a year's work.

In this connection the Social Insurance Centres began, in the years preceding the 1939 war, to perfect the organisation of rational holidays. In 1938, and especially in 1939, tens of thousands of working families went to the mountains, to the sea, or into the country, where they stayed in colonies, country houses or country cottages, which were supervised by and under the control of the Social Authorities. By fitting the villages out to receive their "summer visitors," and by adapting the cottages to meet the needs of the townspeople, the standard of village hygienic arrangements was raised. At the same time the sale of vegetables, fruit, milk, etc., on the spot increased the villagers' income by cutting out trade intermediaries and cost of transport. Furthermore, mutual contact between the town workers and villagers was of general national importance. When two worlds of thought meet in this way, the impressions made are sometimes good, sometimes bad. In any case, the movement was on a large scale, and its material result was on the whole good for both sides. The Women's Organisations tried to organise holidays in the country for those mothers who were able to spend their "holidays" away, and for the unemployed and occasional workers who had no chance of a paid holiday. Here many difficulties had to be overcome, especially the difficulty of caring for the rest

of the family when the mother was not at home. After having arranged for substitutes, the first "holidays for mothers" were organised by the St. Vincent de Paul organisation.

Colonies were also run for women office workers by the Society of Summer Colonies for Working Women. The oldest of this type of colony dates from before the last war. Summer colonies run by the Polish Women's Circle and the Polish Young Women's Association were attended for the most part by unmarried women.

The Young Women's Association added to the popularity of the colonies by organising gymnastic exercises, games, etc., in its camps.

Special mention should be made of the camps run by the Women's Society for the Encouragement of Physical Culture, and of the Rest, Travel, and Medical Camps. Physical exercises and sports figured largely on their programmes.

Colonies for working women were also run by the Women Workers' Clubs and the Workers' Social Service Society.

### EDUCATIONAL COURSES FOR PARENTS.

#### I. FOR PARENTS AND MOTHERS.

The educational and social organisations ran education courses for parents, training them in the rudiments of psychology and pedagogy, and discussing various questions in a series of lectures of different standards, beginning with popular talks and finishing with lectures given by university professors. The chief organisations in this movement were the Association of Parents' Groups, the Parents' Association (which published a very good journal for parents), the Association of those who took part in the struggle for Polish schools in Partitioned Poland, and the Catholic Action. In addition, some of these questions were discussed at the monthly meetings of the parents' groups. These meetings were held on the initiative of various teachers. A special branch of this service was the organisation of talks by doctors from the Health Centres or by nurses from the Mother and Child Centres. At these talks attention was given especially to questions of hygiene and physical training for infants and children. Courses were also conducted on the upbringing of children by the Country Women's Circles and Parish Mothers' Groups belonging to the Catholic Action.

Special courses for parents were started in 1936, the programme of which covered questions of education, psychology and hygiene for

children from infancy to school age (7), and instruction on children's diseases and on methods of upbringing.

2. FOR ENGAGED COUPLES.

With the object of preparing engaged women for the duties of a wife and mother, special courses were begun by the Catholic Women's Association. The courses were held at the Young Women's Home in Brnin. The building was so constructed as to have even the external appearance of the traditional Polish home; the architecture of the house was typically Polish, and inside it was richly decorated with motifs from Polish folk art. The programme of the courses comprised: training in household economy, hygiene, the upbringing of children and nursing of the sick. The inaugurators of the courses hoped to make girls understand "the holiness of matrimony and family life," the worth and importance of the woman-mother, wife, teacher and mistress of the house, so that she could prepare herself for the role of "the most important member of society, on whom the existence and development of national life depends." The girls attending the course, all members of the Association, came from very different walks of life. Amongst them were factory workers, daughters of poor peasants and of wealthy farmers, unemployed girls from poor town families, and orphans. The first courses were held in 1936.

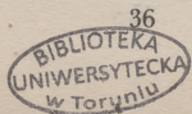
3. "WOMEN IN THE FAMILY" COURSES.

These were started in Warsaw in 1936 on private initiative. Their programme comprised: hygiene, first aid, infant and adult nursing, and also knowledge of the usual children's complaints; nutrition of healthy people and of invalids (dietetics), psychology, physical training, organisation of household occupations, artistic home decoration, and household book-keeping.

NOTE.

The above sketch describes the welfare movement for mothers and children only up to the age of seven, and therefore other welfare institutions for children and young people are only mentioned when their care extends to preparatory school children.

In view of the extremely limited data at her disposal while living abroad, the writer has not been able to deal with many Institutions with which she was but little or not at all acquainted in her fifteen years' work as Editor of the Social Welfare Section of the *Warsaw Courier*.



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