

# New Poland

A MAGAZINE OF BRITISH-POLISH INTERESTS



*More Polish goods  
for U.K.? — see Page 2*

*Bound for Britain:* s.s. Boryslaw loading coal in Gdynia harbour

**IN THIS  
ISSUE**

- ★ *Trade with Poland* — Maj. D. Bruce, M.P.
- ★ *Fight against speculation*—G. D. H. Douglas
- ★ *Polish visitors to Britain* — interviews

**OCTOBER**

**1947**

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MONTHLY

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ON behalf of the Editorial Board of *New Poland*, the following message has been cabled to M. Hilary Minc, Polish Minister of Industry:

THE PEOPLE OF BRITAIN WARMLY WELCOMED SIGNING OF THE BRITISH-POLISH TRADE AGREEMENT. "NEW POLAND" IS SEEKING TO STRENGTHEN AND WIDEN THIS GROWING CO-OPERATION BETWEEN BRITISH AND POLISH PEOPLES AND IS URGING THE EXTENSION OF TRADE AGREEMENT. IS POLAND IN A POSITION TO INCREASE HER EXPORTS TO BRITAIN? WE WELCOME A STATEMENT FOR PUBLICATION ON THIS VITAL MATTER. —STEWART VALDAR, EDITOR, "NEW POLAND," LONDON.

The British-Polish Trade Agreement signed in June this year provided for the exchange of some £60,000,000 worth of goods during the next three years. Capital goods (up to the value of £15,000,000) raw materials (wool, jute and ferrous alloys, etc.), chemicals, tools and other industrial articles from Britain are beginning to flow into Poland under the terms of the Agreement. Meanwhile eggs, sugar, furniture, porcelain and glass from Poland are finding their way into British shops.

During the first six months of this year, Poland sent us 12,000,000 eggs. By the end of the year the total will reach 28,000,000. Polish fish, fruit and vegetables are also arriving in Britain.

Unquestionably this trade is vital to both countries. Poland urgently needs industrial equipment from us, and we welcome food and furniture which do not require the expenditure of precious dollars.

Credits are being granted to British firms to assist them to deliver mining installations, and equipment for ports and industrial plants.

These are all encouraging beginnings, but with the planned expansion of our export trade outlined by Sir Stafford Cripps it is clear that Poland has an important place in the scheme of things. Before the war Britain was one of the principal Polish export markets,

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Vol. 2

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while imports from Britain were second only to Germany on the Polish supply list.

It would be idle to deny that there are obstacles to the immediate expansion of British-Polish trade. Poland's grain deficit of 600,000 tons for this year may well affect her ability to increase bacon exports. On the other hand, increases in the production of British machine tools for the East European markets may take some months to materialise. It is known that Poland has a considerable surplus of exportable sugar—thanks largely to the resources of the Regained Territories. Britain is a large-scale importer of sugar and, provided that prices can be agreed upon, it is possible that agreement could be reached in this sphere. Again, Poland needs raw cotton, wool and leather. While Britain may not be able to supply these commodities it is possible that a

tri-angular trade arrangement among Britain, Australia (India or New Zealand), and Poland could be worked out.

Britain's dollar shortage and the extreme difficulties of trading in the dollar area have made us look to the Eastern European countries for fresh markets. Already Britain has negotiated (or is in the process of doing so) a series of food agreements with such countries. The growth of this trade is no accident: in many respects the economies of Britain and Eastern Europe are complementary. Due to war-devastation and the economic planning in Europe the demand for capital goods (particularly heavy engineering products) is tremendous. These goods are precisely those which Britain is equipped to supply. We, in Britain, need raw materials and food and to an increasing extent the countries of Europe, such as Poland, are able to supply them.



Poznan Fair demonstrated Poland's desire for trade.

## Trade with Poland: Britain's opportunity

by Major Donald Bruce, M.P.

THE world shortage of dollars, thrown into sharp relief by Britain's action in suspending the convertability of sterling into dollars and in drastically reducing her dollar imports, is no new problem. The world economic crisis of 1929 has never in fact been resolved, however much the diversion of productivity into war purposes and the free dissemination of supplies from the U.S. during the War may have concealed its continuance. Even prior to the War the U.S. was exporting far more than she was importing; and the fact that her export surplus is now accumulating at a rate of something like 12 billion dollars per annum must not be allowed to obscure the existence of an export surplus of some 548 million dollars as long ago as 1939.

Within a planned world economy America's great productive capaci-

ties would cause no problem. On the contrary they would be a blessing to mankind. But in circumstances where the U.S. administration is concerned principally for the fate of the capitalist ruling class this surplus confronts all non-self-supporting countries outside the dollar area with the necessity of protecting themselves against the disastrous consequences of the crisis conditions created by it.

It is popularly assumed that Europe, without the export resources of the U.S., could not stand on its own feet. This is not true. As R. W. G. MacKay, M.P., pointed out in a letter to *The Times* on June 17 last, of the world trade in manufactures in 1939 amounting to some 10 billion dollars, nearly 7 billion came from Europe; and in 1938 the production of raw materials in metals and other minerals, textile

fibres and rubber, vegetable oils, seeds and nuts and foodstuffs was greater in Europe than in the United States.

Moreover this was the position with a Europe divided into nearly thirty states each striving to secure an economic independence for itself with the aid of a multiplicity of tariff barriers which hampered a trade demand for productivity on an even wider scale; and without regard to the really economic development of individual national resources to meet general European needs. But at the very time when Europe had received more than one danger signal as to the consequences of the export expansionist aims of the U.S. fascism and its even more intense national racialism was in the zenith of its career. And the political and social aspects of its course which, on the basis of economic nationalism, culminated in war, obscured the already discernible necessity for united economic action in Europe to raise European productivity and extend mutual trade, both as a safeguard against a further U.S. slump and as a sheet anchor for the world at the time of its occurrence.

The economic integration of Europe has consequently now to be achieved not on the basis of a normal peacetime productivity, however restricted in relation to its potential development, but from a point which, owing to tremendous war devastation, is considerably lower. On the credit side of the picture, nevertheless, it must be remembered that the social revolution in Europe, in sweeping away some of the most reactionary elements formerly committed to narrow nationalism, has resulted in the formation of new governments in Europe, largely Socialist and Communist in character, to whom mutual co-operation and joint planning should come more easily. Indeed the network of Trade Agreements now in existence and the extent of the consultations continually in progress are already an excellent

(continued on next page)

NEW POLAND

(continued from previous page)

portent of the possibility of realising the wider necessities of European unity.

Particularly encouraging in this trend is the whole series of Trade Agreements concluded in the last eighteen months by the Polish Government. While many of these, including the valuable Anglo-Polish Trade Agreement, have confined themselves to provision for specific exchanges of goods and services appropriate to the respective countries' economic capacities to produce and absorb, others have gone a good deal further—as for example the Polish-Czechoslovak Cultural and Economic Agreement signed in July.

Here there are signs of some far reaching attempts at co-operation in a manner which may well serve as a guide to other European countries. For the Polish-Czechoslovak Council of Economic Co-operation set up under the Agreement was specifically charged with co-operation in production planning in the two countries. And the sub-commissions dealing with transport, finance, agricultural and technological problems affecting the two countries, together with a planning commission also established, are a significant indication of an intention to break away from the nationalist conceptions of the past. Planning as to function in the various countries in Europe is an indispensable condition of the economic integration which Europe must achieve, and Agreements of this particular type, though but small beginnings, are firm steps in that direction.

They are of course possible only where the nations themselves are able to plan and control the basic essentials of their own internal economies. And the rapid progress of Socialist and Communist Governments in Europe—including Britain's Labour Government—in this direction will facilitate co-operative planning on a wider scale. They must be accompanied by internal rationalisation of industrial

## POLISH JOURNEY

by F. Elwyn Jones, M.P.

I HAVE just returned from a tour of Poland. I travelled thousands of miles through the highways and byways of the Western Territories. It was a most encouraging experience. The forgiving plough has cleared the battlefields. 5,000,000 land mines have been removed. The harvest is gathered—not a good one, unfortunately, because of the winter's ravages of frost and flood. Livestock is being rapidly rebuilt, and this winter there will be Polish bacon and eggs on British breakfast tables.

Industrially, progress has been even more impressive. 60,000,000 tons of coal will come from the mines this year—and as much as 18,000,000 tons of it will be available for export. This is a notable contribution to Europe's recovery. 250,000 tons of coal will come to the United Kingdom. In the rebuilt ports of the Baltic I saw colliers leaving for all parts of Europe.

Poland, of course, is not yet out of the red. She faces a grain deficit of 600,000 tons. She needs leather, cotton and wool to clothe her ill-dressed people. Her long-term prospects are bright. But the extent of war devastation and Nazi pillage has been so great that Poland still needs considerable outside help. In agriculture she needs tractors, machinery, seeds, fertilisers and livestock. In industry she needs machinery, equipment and raw materials. She is still short of transport.

Meanwhile, Poland is going all out to produce as much as she can out of her own resources. Her recovery from war's wounds has been remarkable. Although they are short of many of the essentials of good living—housing conditions are appalling—the Polish workers are working apace.

Everywhere I found a warm desire for closer and more friendly relations with Great Britain. To give one example—I visited the Law Courts in a small town of Slupsk, near the Baltic coast. In honour of my visit, the Union Jack had been hung alongside the Polish flag at the entrance to the court-house. Anglo-Polish relations are on the mend. Their betterment will benefit both our countries.

processes, by the development of narrower standardisation to enable mass production for Europe's overwhelming needs, and by a productive enthusiasm from the workers themselves.

Over wide areas of Europe all these trends are already discernible, even to the most jaded political eye. And unless outside interference, or the threat of it, engenders a blinder nationalism from the proud national spirit now emergent after the sham patriotism of the fascists, the portent is of great prospects for Europe. More profound and sympathetic political understanding between the east and west of Europe there will have to be, particularly in the years of trial that lie before Europe. But the signs are now there that this under-

standing is gradually and laboriously being achieved. Britain, occupying as she does the pivotal political position in Europe (or for that matter in the world) is now showing an ever increasing willingness to conclude Trade Agreements with other countries in all parts of Europe. She has already ratified the Anglo-Polish Trade Agreement, and will undoubtedly conclude others as time passes.

Provided that these are regarded as means towards the larger ends of European unity instead of ends in themselves, and are used as such, the darkening horizon in the Western hemisphere can portend more of a thunderstorm than a catastrophe to the standard of life of millions of people everywhere.

(See Editorial—Page One)

# The fight against *Speculation*

by G. D. H. Douglas

Our Warsaw Correspondent

THE leaders of new Poland share with Mr. Churchill and with the Japanese a taste for giving names to the various periods through which their country is passing.

It must be conceded that the Polish names are neither as poetic as those of the Japanese nor as succinct as those of Mr. Churchill, but they have the advantage of being apposite.

Thus at present in Poland we have not the "Epoch of Radiant Peace," nor scarcely "The End of the Beginning." We are living in "the period of political stabilisation and concentration on the tasks of economic reconstruction." In addition, 1947 is the Year of the Fight against Speculation (just as 1946 was the Year of the Fight against the Fascist Underground) and we have just passed through the Month of Workers' Education.

The full fruits of the Fight against Speculation and of the Month of Workers' Education have yet to be gathered.

The new laws on price control, on taxation, on opportunities for investment, have only just been passed on to the Statute Book. Only the first twenty of the new State Department stores which will try by competition to bring down prices are so far in operation.

The plan for remodelling the Polish educational system is still under discussion, though one effect of the Month of Workers' Education may be seen in the budget figures which allot 10.5 per cent. of the national expenditure to edu-

cation (as against 3 per cent. in England and 1.5 per cent. in America).

But the Stabilisation is here and now. You see it all around—in the streets and squares where new flower-beds have been planted and fresh young grass is beginning to show, in the dozens of freshly restored buildings with their glossy glass windows and bright red roofs.

You can't take a walk without saying: "Was *that* here when I came by last?" The other day, for the first time in months, I walked through the residential suburb up by the Filtrowa. The last time I was here Warsaw was deep in snow. The little houses where the Ukrainians of the SS Division "Galizien" had been let loose in 1944 looked forlorn and ghostly, their windows gaping, their walls still blackened with fire, their gardens running wild.

But since the winter the change is extraordinary. The majority of the little houses are inhabited again. Children were playing in the roads and men in shirtsleeves were weeding flowerbeds and pruning fruit trees. From other houses resounded the hammers of workers, while piles of new bricks and builders' timber stood on the pavements.

Along the farther bank of the Vistula a whole row of new swimming places has sprung up, with wooden huts used as changing cabins, and others as restaurants and dance halls. There is one for each of the major youth organizations, two big ones of the Warsaw Municipality, one for the Army

and others belonging to different clubs. Further upstream is the new white pavilion of the Warsaw Yacht Club and, a little way back from the river, the green expanse of the Warsaw Aero Club's aerodrome, where all day long the little training planes take off, buzz around and land.

Sunday morning on the Vistula is a scene that would have delighted Seurat. The placid waters, running between sandbars and islets tufted with coarse grass, are dotted with canoes and yachts, with swimmers, paddlers and wading fishermen, while on the banks the workers of Warsaw sit and picnic or knit or read or scuffle or simply sit.

Sport is the plainest barometer of normality.

The crowds, for instance, that fill the trams bound for the Sluzewiec racecourse on Sundays exude normality. They have an air of cheerful intensity. Racing for them is a serious business; it is not a picnic or a fashion parade.

The grandstand at Sluzewiec is a monstrous construction of steel and glass. Inside there is a hall lined by about a hundred ticket offices, all polished glass and chromium plating, where on one side smiling ladies graciously sell you betting-slips and on the other where grave-looking men hand out your winnings, if any.

The whole place has something of the atmosphere of New York Central Station, except that it is quieter and more religious. A hush of mental calculation hangs over the solemn queues at the ticket offices and the periodical circulation from the paddock to the ticket counters and from the counters to the rails seems to have a ritual significance.

Very different was the crowd at the Legia Tennis Stadium which watched the Davis Cup Match between England and Poland—the first international tournament in which Poland has taken part since the war. The heads swivelled eagerly to and fro; every point was applauded; there were shouts of ad-

(Continued on next page)

vice and "rooting" in chorus for Hebda and Skonecki. It was a pity that Poland was robbed of victory because her best player, Ignacy Tloczynski, stayed in England—apparently under the influence of the same sort of bogey stories that keep so many Poles away from their homes and families.

Two weeks later, on the hottest day of the year, a team of wiry Warsaw boxers fought eight hefty Swedes to a draw before a crowd that swarmed all over the new wooden stands, put up for the Davis Cup, clinging to beam-ends and clambering about in the in-nards to peer out through the legs of more fortunate spectators.

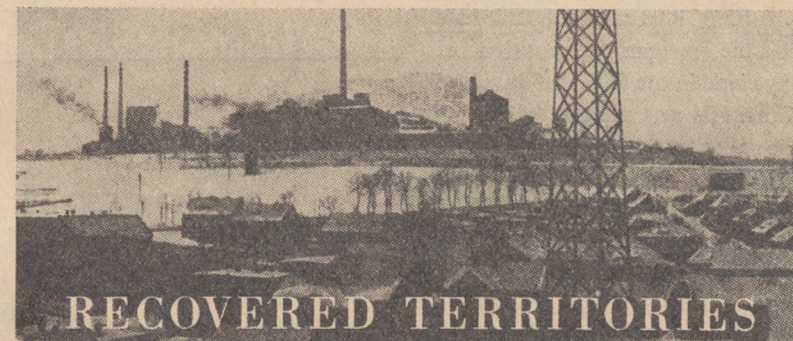
Other foreign visitors to Warsaw were a team of French footballers. They delighted the crowd at the Army Stadium by losing 8-2 to the Polish team, whose shooting would have given any First Division side a lot to think about.

Stabilisation in Warsaw can not only be seen but heard. To judge by the racket going on outside my window, we are in for another Weekend of Unsilenced Exhausts and Screaming Brakes—i.e., the Warsaw Motor Club is organising another of their road races for cars and motor cycles.

Unpleasant though they are, these noises are at any rate more cheerful than the rattle of tommy-guns and the clatter of running feet that used to enliven Warsaw nights a year ago.

The voices of the newsboys tell the same story. A year ago, at the height of M. Mikolajczyk's brief parabola through the Polish political heavens, you heard nothing but: "Gazeta Ludowa! Organ Wice-Premiera Mikolajczyka!" They liked selling the Gazeta because it was priced at 2 zloties and could be sold for 10.

Nowadays they are glad enough to sell the Gazeta for the price marked on the outside, and they are calling . . . Surely not already? . . . Well, you know how newsboys exaggerate . . . They are calling: "Fight against Speculation. Big Falls in Prices."



RECOVERED TERRITORIES

## NEWS IN BRIEF

ON JANUARY 1, 1947, there were 4,584,000 Poles living in the Regained Territories; on June 1, 1947, there were 4,985,000. Of over 400,000 Poles who have arrived in these territories in the past five months, the bulk came from Central Poland. A certain percentage were returning emigrants from France and Belgium. From June 1, up to date the Polish population in the Regained Territories has increased by 150,000.

On January 1, there were 433,000 Germans in these territories; on June 1, there were only 289,000. The scheme for repatriation of Germans from Poland will be completed by mid-October this year.

The total population of the Regained Territories was 5,028,000 on January 1, 1947, and 5,283,000 on June 1. The intensive repatriation of Germans in the last few months has not caused any loss of population; on the contrary the considerable influx of Poles has more than made up the loss caused by the departure of the Germans.

OUT OF 91 POLISH MINES 23 are situated in the Recovered Territories. The output of the mines on Western lands was above 30 per cent. in 1946 and now 33 per cent. of the whole production.

A FACTORY FOR ELECTRICAL machinery which will be the largest of its kind in Poland is being built in Wroclaw. The factory is expected to start production at the end of next year and will employ 4,000 people, for whom special housing will be provided at a cost of Zl.70,000,000 (£175,000).

RECENTLY 23,220 JEWISH FAMILIES, including 72,000 Jewish repatriates, arrived in Lower Silesia from the U.S.S.R. and German concentration camps. 420 persons have settled on the land, 14,308 persons are now working in industry and others are in the Co-operative Small Handicraft Workshops. Jewish farms are of a high level of agricultural technique. An inventory of these farms includes 445 horses distributed by the authorities and 1,179 brought by repatriates, 2,927 cows, 1,900 swine, 165 goats and 100 sheep.

A GROUP OF AMERICAN ARCHITECTS, headed by Professor Field, arrived in Wroclaw to study the plans of reconstruction of recovered territories. They are leaving next for Szczecin.

IN LOWER SILESIA 2,750,000 acres have been brought under cultivation out of 3,125,000 of arable land.

DURING THE SUGAR CAMPAIGN, which will begin in October, 76 sugar refineries will be operating, including 26 in the Regained Territories, five more than in the last season.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN experimental model village, Piaseczno, in the war destroyed area on the Pilica river, has been completed. Fifty-seven farm buildings and a large school building were built. The use of timber was eliminated in constructing the village, only concrete and bricks were used. Another model village will be constructed in Witkowice, near Wroclaw.

# 'Passed to you'

or

## The memo that came back

*In Poland, as in Britain, the civil service and "red tape" are the butt of humour. All Governments at all times supply a stock target for comedians and humorists, but to-day, in Poland, such jokes have another purpose. The Polish civil service is an instrument of popular administration and the process of making that machine more efficient and less bureaucratic has become a serious task in which ridicule plays an important part.*

word "law" marked it "Legal Department."

Some time later the jurist to whom it was referred, plunged into its study. Of course he began reading from the last underscored word. "Something about politics," he muttered. "That's not me. Messenger—to the Political Department please!"

After a month the Political Department decided that "this appeal should be, in the first place, shown to the department head." No use, therefore, to read on.

The memo remained longest of all on the desk of the department head. But finally its day arrived.

The department head, casting a look at it, noticed with his usual and inborn perspicacity that the signature was missing. And so he signed it himself. Without reading it.

The secretary, separating the various letters and memos, came across one that was marked by all the departments of the bureau.

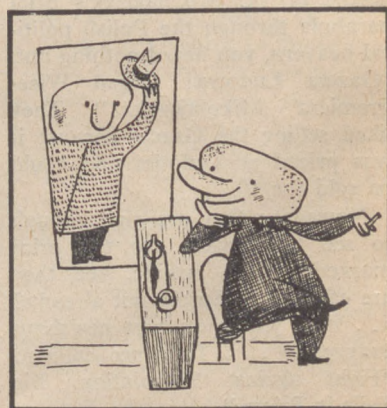
It's all O.K.—he thought. And he sent it to the "ad acta" files.

So it came back to our clerk Scribblefinger who had tried so hard to upset the smooth working of the red tape machinery.

*—Is this the Department of Weights and Measures?*

*—Can't say, I've only been here a fortnight!*

—Przekroj, Krakow.



NEW POLAND

THANKS to the strenuous work of Miss Pauline Miller, Scotland has learned something about the real Poland, the Polish Government and the objects of the British-Polish Society. It is unfortunate she had to leave Glasgow in the midst of her organisational work, a job sticky enough to begin with, but in the end the response justified the energy expended.

Arising out of this work meetings and conferences were held at Edinburgh and Preston-pans in the East of Scotland, Aberdeen in the North, Cowdenbeath in Fife, Greenock in the West and Glasgow and Clydebank in Central Scotland. A fairly good cross-section of Scotland which heard the speakers attentively and sympathetically.

All meetings were held under the auspices of the British-Polish Society and sponsored by trades councils, except in the case of Glasgow which was sponsored by the Glasgow City Labour Party, Glasgow Trades Council and Glasgow and District Co-operative Association.

Ex-Sgt.-Major Stanislaw Brzozczak, Polish miner and ex-soldier of the Polish 1st Army, was the principal speaker at all meetings outside Glasgow. Reports show that his meetings were very successful and valuable in cementing friendship between the Scottish and Polish peoples. Greenock was a bit disappointing compared with elsewhere due to a technical hitch which prevented the Trades Council from advertising a public meeting without the co-operation of the local Labour Party.

Brzozczak, at these meetings had numerous questions put to him, one or two of a hostile character. These he answered to the complete satisfaction of the questioners and audience. *New Poland* and Cardinal Griffin's address in pamphlet form were on sale at all meetings.

Despite the "Indian summer" evening over 400 people attended the Glasgow public meeting and cinema show to celebrate the signing of the

# Interest in Poland is GROWING

Scots Diary

by John Cartwright

British-Polish Trade Agreement. The meeting was held in the Argyle Cinema and the speakers were Mr. Tom Cook, M.P., and Mr. Szeminski, First Secretary at the Polish Embassy. Councillor John Johnstone, Chairman Glasgow Trades Council, presided.

Mr. Cook, in his speech, poked fun at the "Iron Curtain" declaring it to be a figment of the imagination. He also insisted that trade and friendship with the countries of Eastern Europe were the surest and safest ways of world peace.

Mr. Szeminski's address was factual and appreciated by an attentive audience, particularly interesting was his handling of the speedily-built up nationalised industries which were complementary to Poland's agricultural production and whose progress was faster than any other war-ridden country in Europe.

According to the sporting papers Staroscik, Third Lanark's new Polish player was the "star" without the "oscik," at Hampden against Dundee. "Staroscik gave Bobby Ancell a roasting and was always a danger when in possession," wrote Harry Miller, "Star" is a boy of strong character who resisted the attempt to make him join the Re-settlement Corps as a condition for signing for Wolverhampton Wanderers. He is now on the staff of the Polish Consulate in

Glasgow and unlike Konrad, who signed for Celtic, plays as an amateur in the traditional Polish way.

Konrad and Lesz (who has signed professionally for St. Mirren) are both members of the Re-settlement Corps and having become professionals will be barred from playing football if they should happen to return to Poland.

A Scottish Area Conference of the National Mineworkers Union has decided to accept Polish miners into the collieries on condition they join the Union and that in the event of redundancy they will be the first to go. Thus a system of vagabondage is imposed, naturally enough, on Poles whom the N.U.M. have repeatedly stated would be better employed in Poland where conditions are superior to most Scottish coal mines and where they would not be employed on sufferance.

Dr. Kwasmica, from the Warsaw Institute of Physical Culture has been in Scotland studying Scottish Folk Song and Country Dancing. She is the authoress of many books on Polish music and the Scottish Country Dancing Society has given her every assistance and advice.

At the same time The Celtic Ballet of Scotland under the directorship of Margaret Morris is seeking permission to visit Poland with a view to exchanging ideas and to stage the Scottish Ballet, Dance and Song, with twelve of her Company. Thus is the importance of the non-material manifested in all forms of creative art in Poland and in Scotland. Margaret Morris was a dancer at eight years old. Actor-manager and producer in London at twenty, she toured with plays and ballets with her own Company. A student of modern painting in Paris which she taught in her schools, no fitter person could be found to expound the cultural side of our lives to the Polish people than Margaret Morris.

MR. SCRIBBLEFINGER held the responsible position of filing clerk in the Office of Involved Affairs. His was the task of stuffing huge piles of documents into the appropriate folders and marking them with the words "ad acta."

Scribblefinger was an upright man. It hurt him to see the piles growing bigger and bigger, while the corridors kept filling with waiting people who were continually cursing at the red tape and at the improper handling of affairs.

One day he conceived a courageous and revolutionary plan. He decided to shake the numbed consciences of his colleagues and to reform conditions within the office. To this end he secretly typed out the following manifesto:

"Colleagues!

"The press has repeatedly branded the red tape that winds through our office. Matters are dealt with in an unrealistic and abstract manner by applying the mere letter of the law and ignoring the spirit. Things must change! This appeal should be shown, in the first place, to the department head. He is an old ass of a bureaucrat and responsible for the scandalous state of affairs in this office. Down with the department head! Down with red tape!"

With trembling hands Scribblefinger deposited the memo on the desk of one of the officials.

This gentleman, catching a glance of the word "Colleagues" underscored it with the remark: "Personnel." Of course he did not continue reading.

In the course of normal office routine, the memo found itself on the following day on the desk of the personnel chief. This one, discovering the word "press" at the very outset, passed it on, with a sigh of relief, to where it belonged—the Press Department.

As early as one week later, the Press chief held the Memo in his hands, and, getting as far as the

## Two women come to Town

Interviewed by Ann Herbert

IT was my pleasure a few days ago to act as hostess and guide to two visitors from Poland. Madame Maria Szypowska, school teacher, and Madame Maria Turlejska, journalist, had been spending a month in Britain as the guests of the British Council and had attended a three-week school in Birmingham, where they had improved their knowledge of English, and attended lectures on education.

The school over, our friends wanted to see some of our famous historical landmarks. Well, there is no shortage of such places in London, but I discovered they had already crammed into four days a tour which included the Tower of London, the Guildhall, Law Courts, National Gallery, St. Paul's Cathedral, and the dozen and one treasures we possess in our capital. What was there left for them to see? Why, Kew Gardens, Hampton Court and Windsor.

Off we went early in the morning, and after travelling by bus and train, spent hours wandering over the lovely, peaceful lawns, and through the fascinating interiors of England's ancient palaces. I asked our friends for some of their impressions of Britain, but it wasn't easy to get their ideas about us all tabulated, for they were still going through new experiences each day.

However, there were one or two things which they mentioned straight away. The size of London astonished them. "Are we still in London?" they kept asking as we travelled out to Kew Gardens. Our shop windows filled with domestic utensils, with glisening kettles, irons, pots and pans seemed luxurious to

them. I explained they were something for British people to marvel at too. We had done without them all during the war years. They thought we had more tobacco shops with pipes in them, than any other kind of shop. Our large stores like Harrods and Selfridges filled them with admiration. Our food situation seemed to be difficult, even judging by their own standards, and our cakes were awful to look at and worse to eat. Of course, these were just "surface" impressions, the real knowledge of Britain and her people was gained during their visits to factories, schools, in the lectures they had attended, and from conversations with people on our post-war problems.

And so we came to talk about conditions in Poland. We covered many aspects; food, clothing, education, care of children and the work women are doing. Madame Szypowska, teacher of English in a Warsaw school, and herself a mother of three children, was keen to talk about the problem of encouraging Polish women to participate in the reconstruction of Poland. Of course, they explained, all professions are open to women now, and larger numbers are becoming doctors, judges, architects, scientists, teachers. But there is the big, urgent problem of helping the many thousands of women who were left war-widows, women with young children who had spent all their married lives at home, who had no special qualifications, and who needed to be trained in some industrial or agricultural work.

Here the Women's League of Poland comes into the picture. This organisation has set up women's

MARIA SZYPOWSKA is a school teacher in Warsaw, and a mother of three children. MARIA TURLEJSKA well-known throughout Poland as a journalist, is a mother of three children and works in Warsaw.

## VISITING BRITAIN

circles, groups, small workshops, in towns and villages, where courses in dressmaking, weaving, shoe-making, are held. There are also courses in modern technique in agriculture, education in child welfare, the latter specially designed to win women away from old superstitious and unhygienic practices. Through the work of the League, women are rapidly finding a new life for themselves, self-supporting, independent, enjoying equal status and equal pay, and at the same time proud of their share in building the new Poland.

We talked about children. Polish children seem to be priority number one. For while food and clothing are difficult for adults, first preference for both of these goes to the children and they go short of no essentials. All the schools are organised so that the children are fed and cared for after school hours where necessary. Summer colonies in the country, mountains or seaside, are planned for the holidays. The children are examined by the school doctor who recommends to the parents the kind of holiday most beneficial for their child. If they agree, the parents are asked to pay a nominal sum of about 700 zlotys (35s.), for a month's holiday. The Government pays the rest of the cost. Teachers, doctors and diet experts go along to these colonies with the children.

There was a lot more to learn about Poland, but we had had a long and busy day, and the three of us separated with a firm handshake to represent a further link in the better understanding between British and Polish people.

STANISLAW BRZOSZCZAK fought with the British Army for 6½ years as a sergeant-major in the 10th Armoured Brigade, R.A.S.C. He saw action in France in 1940, and was awarded the 1939/45 Star and the France and Germany Star.

## A miner looks at us

Interviewed by Stewart Valdar

AFTER a two-months tour of Britain, Stanislaw Brzoszczak, visiting Polish miner, has summed up his experiences. He went to the Welsh and Scots coal-fields where he descended pits, talked to the miners, and made a study of their conditions.

Arriving in Britain on July 3, for the two week International Trade Union School at Oxford, he was persuaded to stay for a tour of the mining areas. On July 17, he went to Rhondda. "The Welsh miners are a friendly people," he told me, "but the pits are not as modern as ours."

In a rapid trip around Scotland, he spoke to miners in their homes, at work, and at specially called meetings in Preston-pans, Aberdeen, Cowdenbeath (Fife), Edinburgh, Glasgow, Greenock and Clydebank. At every meeting he was overwhelmed with questions about Poland.

"British miners," says Brzoszczak, "were amazed when I told them that in Poland we get a month's paid holiday and eight tons of coal free every year." (British miners get coal at about one-third full price).

Often the question was asked: Is there freedom of religion in Poland? Brzoszczak told them: "You can stay in church 24 hours a day, if you want to!"

In Scotland, at every meeting he was asked why Polish soldiers stayed in Britain to which he answered: "There are many different types in Anders' forces here. Many are good patriots who have had their minds poisoned by lying

propaganda about the conditions in Poland."

Comparing conditions in Polish pits with those in British mines, Brzoszczak finds that our miners eat less and work harder for less coal.

Polish miners get 6lbs. of fat (including butter), and 6lbs. of meat (excluding some tinned meat) a month. They also get fish, usually herrings, in addition. Free meals are provided by pit-head canteens, but if the miner can more conveniently eat at home he receives the equivalent value in money—600 zloties (about 30s.) a month.

He works the same hours as his British colleague (7½ hours, including "winding time"—time taken in reaching and leaving the coal face). In Polish pits three shifts are worked every day.

The tempo is faster in Polish pits, says Brzoszczak, where dust (silicosis is unknown) is kept down by pipe-water and hoses in every gallery. Ventilation in British pits is not good, he adds, and this affects output.

Coal seams in Poland are deeper than in Britain. Seams of 2 to 8 yards are common in Poland. In Silesia, seams run to 27 yards high. Narrow seams in British pits mean more work for less coal.

In Poland, a miner can retire at 60 with a pension of two-thirds of his wage. Disability pensions range from a fifth to two-thirds of the wage according to the extent of the injury. Men with partial disability usually return to work and receive their pension as well as a wage. There are no subscriptions for these pensions.

Miners suffering from heart or

lung complaints receive a pension of two-thirds of the wage, provided that they have two hundred weeks' work to their credit and that they have been under medical supervision for six months or more. These qualifications establish the fact that the complaint has been caused by work in the mine.

No boy under 18 is allowed to work in a Polish mine, and from 14 years until then he spends four hours at a technical school and four hours at surface work a day. All this time he receives his full wages.

Brzoszczak found that British miners' houses are "smaller and poorer-looking" than those in Poland. The British mines, generally, are less mechanised than Polish pits where the use of ponies is unknown.

His final impressions of Britain are:

*London:* "Not the first time that I have been here, but I am always delighted to see the refreshing greenery of London's parks and squares. No capital, except perhaps Budapest, is more beautiful in this respect!"

*British people:* "Folk treat me differently from the other Poles over here. As a Pole from Poland, I was warmly welcomed. British people don't like uniforms, particularly foreign ones! I was greatly impressed and heartened by the obvious British dislike of war. Nobody here wants war."

Asked for a message to Poles over here he said: "We need every pair of hands we can get. We want people from all walks of life: we need workers, farmers, doctors and clerks. For everyone who returns there is work and food."

# Adults go back to the Classroom

A visit to a school in Warsaw  
by a Special Correspondent

WE came to visit the school for adults on Marszalkowska Street No. 95. This school, which is run by the Municipal Board of Warsaw, has at present some 200 students, aged 18 years and up. There are many such schools in the capital, and the school on Marszalkowska Street may serve as a typical example. Classes are held from 7.30 a.m. to 8 p.m., and new shifts of students arrive every few hours. There is not much space or comfort, the classes have been crowded into two adjoining apartments on the fourth floor of a building, but space is at a premium in war-wrecked Warsaw.

The classes in this school offer a peculiar picture. A girl in her teens has as her neighbour a woman of some 60 years or so. Next to the door I see a pair of crutches leaning against the wall. In another classroom crutches are lying on the floor near the seat of a young boy with one leg. During the war he had given up school in order to serve as a liaison for the underground. Only now could he return to the classroom, a grown-up young man and—a cripple.

A 20-year-old girl is pondering over a problem in arithmetic. She is a garment worker, but she would like to complete her vocational high school training. She is from a village near Mlawa where the Germans had closed down the public school before she could graduate. She now wants to make up for the lost school years and is applying

herself studiously, although she must do her homework at night.

Older people are mostly found in beginners' courses. The more advanced students are recruited mainly from among the young people who were unable to finish public school because of the war. Today, after almost eight years, they have grown up. They are all eager to continue their education. In response to my question: "Who wants to go to high-school afterwards?" almost all hands go up. Some are waving both hands as if to speed up that much expected moment.

We are also glad to state that a considerable percentage of students will be proceeding to vocational schools. The war has taught these young people to appreciate a practical trade or occupation. Besides, most of them are already engaged in earning a living. A great number among them wish to graduate from commercial schools, many of the boys want a high-school education in the liberal arts, and one girl is eager to acquire technical training on a high-schools level.

I step up to a young man of 25 who is absorbed in his arithmetic problem. The desk is much too low for him, and he sits there with bent shoulders. His work will ultimately lead him to the goal—graduation from public school, and his graduation diploma in turn will open the road for a shoe repair shop of his own.

I now turn toward one of the

women students. To judge by her looks, she might be in her sixties. I ask her:

"Did anybody urge you to go to school?"

"No, she replies, nobody could have done that. Only children are driven to school. As for me, it has been my dream all my life to finish school, but I could never afford to. I was an orphan and ever since my early childhood I was forced to work hard for a living. Only now, when I heard that they had opened a free school for adults, with classes, in the afternoon hours, I made up my mind to start all over again—despite my age."

In a corner, sitting quietly by himself, I see a man with greying temples and the hands of a worker. He wears the navy-blue uniform of a railroad employee.

"What could I do? I simply had to come here to learn, I was having trouble with my work. They are satisfied with me, alright, but my poor knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic, is a bad handicap."

And there is a woman in her forties, a mother of three children of whom the eldest is a boy of 16. She must have strong will-power indeed, if, over-burdened with housework and without any help, she musters the energy to spend three hours daily in the classroom. She says with complete simplicity: "All my children are in more advanced classes than I am, but I will catch up with them."

In the highest class, a few dozen pairs of eyes are fixed on a big globe, as the instructor asks questions. The students are all volunteering answers trying to get a word in. They are formulating their replies objectively and clearly, and it is obvious that their information is not based on book-knowledge alone, but on personal experience as well. Many of them have had ample occasion to see the world for themselves. The war had driven some of them as far as Berlin, and even farther—to Paris, and so they have grown in these war years in experience and knowledge. They are mature men and women.

THE Ukrainian Insurrectionary Army (UPA) which once terrorised a large area of south-eastern Poland, burning literally dozens of villages and rendering over 100,000 people homeless, and even organising its own "Government," police, schools and cyclo-styled "paper money," has now been reduced to the level of roving bands, confining their activities almost entirely to cattle-stealing and the murder of peasants or workers in remote villages.

Lt.-Col. Jan Gerhardt, who commanded a Maquis division in France during the war and now commands the Polish garrison stationed at Lesko, south-east of Sanok, described UPA to-day as "Unhappy bandits whose main programme is to secure their own existence by robbing the peasants."

In a 60-mile drive through the area in an open car (total armament, one revolver), I was able to confirm this estimate in talks with local people, including peasants, shopkeepers, the parish priest of Baligrod (25 miles south-east of Sanok), a young Ukrainian deserter who had been "conscripted" by the UPA from a village under their "rule," and two German prisoners-of-war captured with the bands.

The priest described how at the height of their power UPA bands had murdered 41 of his Polish parishioners as they came out of church.

Captured documents, shown me by Col. Gerhardt, indicated that German officers were still serving with UPA. They mentioned a German Army doctor, described as "Fritz" (he had been sentenced to 25 blows with a stick for describing UPA as "a gang of thieves and murderers"), and an SS captain calling himself "Hans Gut."

Other documents described the collaboration of UPA with the Polish underground organizations, NSZ and WIN. There was, for instance, the appeal sent to UPA by Zubry, leader of an NSZ detachment, who lamented that fights with Polish troops had reduced his following to eight men and asked UPA for reinforcements; or the account of the joint burning of the village of



The game is up. Once an army, now just bandits and killers.

## The last of the terrorists

by G. D. H. Douglas

Pobiedno, near Sanok, during November last year. preventing the repatriation of 482,000 Ukrainians; 30,000 of whom remain have expressed their preference for staying in Poland. Against the remnants of the U.P.A. the Polish Army is waging a successful campaign of annihilation.

During the repatriation of Ukrainians from Poland to the Soviet Ukraine, the UPA tried its best to prevent the movement and to terrorise those who volunteered to go. But they did not succeed in

Some are German, others Ukrainian Fascists. Justice awaits them.





A Co-operative chocolate shop at Lodz.

## Co-operatives are thriving

says Leon Reinschmidt

OVER two million Poles are today organised in 12,000 co-operatives, and these undertakings, which employ 50,000 people, are playing an increasingly important part in Poland's economy.

The history of the Polish co-operative movement is more than a hundred years old, and for the past 70 years it has been following the principles of the English Rochdale Pioneers. Yet Poland, too, has produced a number of outstanding theoreticians in this field, and such names as those of Romuald Mielczarski, Edward Abramowski and Stanislaw Wojciechowski are well-known among co-operative workers in other European countries.

In the period between the two world wars, the Polish co-operative movement grew enormously. By

*Mr. Leon Reinschmidt is a Polish economist, and author of a number of books which deal with the problem of the Polish co-operative movement.*

1939 there were some 14,000 co-operatives in Poland with a total membership of almost 3 million and a working capital of over 240 million dollars.

It was not surprising then, that the German occupant tried to exploit the co-operative apparatus for his own purposes. Thus he used the co-operatives as distribution centres for the rationed goods. Meantime, however, the Germans did their best to turn them into instruments for stripping the country of its basic food supply. The

Polish co-operatives for their part resisted these German attempts to plunder the country by means of their organizational apparatus, and, indeed, many a member paid for this with his life or liberty.

It may be added here, in this connection, that the only territory where the Germans showed some measure of consideration was in the Government General, but in the rest of the country the movement was dealt with in the most brutal manner. It was because of this that the Polish co-operatives had to start their work all over again, as soon as the country was liberated; worse still, they had to start out with shortages of basic materials and under conditions of starvation and of complete economic ruin.

In the two years that have elapsed since the day of liberation, the Polish co-operative movement has achieved results to which it may justly point with pride. The 12,000 co-operatives in Poland today cover all the important branches of co-operative activity. Foremost among them are the consumers' co-operatives 4,000 in number; next come the peasants mutual aid co-operatives (2,000); savings-and-loan co-operatives (1,128); dairy co-operatives (769); labour and producers' co-operatives (884); agricultural - trading co-operatives (over 500), etc.

The co-operatives run quite a number of factories of their own, such as: 95 flour mills, 19 canneries, 11 candy factories, 11 chemical plants, 7 spaghetti factories, 6 breweries, etc. The peasants' mutual aid co-operatives have set up over 7,000 industrial-agricultural undertakings and organised rural trade in agricultural products. The dairy co-operatives are effectively combating the post-war plague of small speculators and organizing an efficient delivery system of dairy products to the cities. The agricultural-trading co-operatives provide farmers with such important items as fertilizer, seeds and tools.

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The greatest advances, however, have been recorded by the consumers' co-operatives. The largest, which has 250 stores of its own, is in Lodz. There it has opened a department store as well as a number of restaurants, cafes, bake shops, etc. The second largest is the Silesian Consumers' Co-operative with 200 stores. Warsaw has over 200 co-operative stores and the Warsaw Federation of Consumers' Co-operatives manages, among other enterprises, the big restaurant of the Polonia Hotel which is well-known to visitors from abroad. Not only do we find co-operative stores in every major city but there are also quite a number of them in the Army.

Among other types of co-operatives, the publishers' co-operatives have come out with a number of dailies, periodicals and books. Chief among these co-operatives are the huge organisations "Czytelnik" (The Reader), "Wiedza" (Science) and "Ksiązka" (The Book).

### "SPOLEM"

Two large central organisations have the task of co-ordinating Poland's co-operative activities: The National Control Association of Polish Co-operatives, and "Spolem" (Unity). With the aid of its control officers and experts, the former supervises the entire co-operative apparatus, watching lest it should violate the general co-operative principles or otherwise conflict with law and order. The Control Association also audits the accounts of its members and promotes the spread of the co-operative idea. Finally, it helps to establish new co-operatives and furnishes them with the necessary instructions.

The other central organization is the National Economic Association of Polish Wholesale Co-operatives "Spolem." It was founded as far back as 1911 and has been extremely active ever since. "Spolem"

has 25,000 employees and its annual turnover amounts to over 40 billion zlotys. It is in charge of 271 wholesale undertakings dealing in textiles, books, paper, iron, coal, etc. These wholesale co-operatives facilitate the nationwide distribution of goods produced not only by co-operatives but also by government and private undertakings. As for the agricultural branch of "Spolem," its main task is to purchase agricultural produce for urban consumption by means of its rural co-operatives. Of late "Spolem" has been taking an increasing interest in foreign trade.

### A CENTRAL BANK

On July 1, 1946 a merger of the two most important co-operative credit institutions took place: the Bank "Spolem" and the Central Savings Bank of Agricultural Co-operatives. As a result of this merger we now have the Bank of Co-operative Economy which:

- (1) Plans the financial activities of co-operatives.
- (2) Accumulates the deposits of co-operatives and their central organisations, of non-profit organisations, of public institutions and of the working population.
- (3) Is engaged in the rational financing of co-operative undertakings.

As regards this last function, one of the new bank's main tasks consists in giving financial aid to farmers' organisations, especially for the reconstruction of war-wrecked property, for purposes of soil improvement, better stock-raising, fruit growing, fisheries, etc. Special consideration is given to co-operative farms.

No less important, however, is the extension of credits to urban co-operatives which suffer from a shortage of cash, investment funds, etc. In such cases, the Bank for Co-operative Economy distributes its aid evenly among both rural and urban co-operatives. Of late the Bank has been particularly active in the Recovered Territories.

## TOLD BRIEFLY

TWENTY-FIVE PER CENT. of the medical profession in Poland are women. This, according to "The Lancet," is higher than in Britain where the proportion is 14 per cent., Czechoslovakia 15 per cent., Canada 3 per cent., U.S.A. 5 per cent., and Belgium 1.5 per cent. The journal states: "In Poland, where all posts are open to them, women doctors exert great influence, but in some countries there is still prejudice against their appointment to senior hospital posts."

IN A REPORT ON EUROPE, broadcast over the C.B.S., correspondent Howard Smith, who recently visited Poland, said: "The gravity point in Europe is shifting from west to east. Poland is the only country which has exceeded her pre-war level of production, Yugoslavia the only country where post-war reconstruction is concluded."

AN EXHIBITION OF CONTEMPORARY British graphic art arranged by the British Council will be shown in Poland from November 10 to December 8.

The exhibition consists of etchings, engravings, lithographs and fine illustrated books, and includes the works of Blair Hughes-Stanton, Sir Frank Brangwyn, David Jones, Sir Muirhead Bone, Walter Richard Sickert, Anthony Gross and Stanley Hayter.

TWELVE MILLION EGGS WERE exported by the Polish Co-operative Society, "Spolem," to Britain during the first six months of this year. A total of 28,000,000 were exported by the end of September, compared with 2,160,000 last year. Also exported to Britain are fish, furniture, vegetables, porcelain and chemical goods.

THE POLISH YOUTH BRIGADE, which participated in the reconstruction of the railway line Samac - Sarajevo in Yugoslavia, have returned to Poland. The title of "Leading Work Brigade" was given to the Polish brigade as a result of a work competition.



# Poland's Struggle for Power\*

## Part 3—Fight for Freedom

*This book, already reviewed in "New Poland," is so essential to the proper understanding of Polish history that we are publishing extracts dealing with the most salient points.*

THE first Partition had a profound effect on Polish public opinion and stirred the remainder of Poland into action. The danger of complete destruction was now not merely hypothetical but threatening and imminent. Conferences between the Emperors and their diplomats were numerous and were all directed to one end—the wiping out of Poland, which was becoming a centre of "dangerous" revolutionary propaganda.

From the point of view of intellectual life in Poland the twenty years between the First and Second Partitions were more fruitful than had been the previous two hundred years.

All discussion centred round the question of the constitution. On one point the patriots were unanimous: the whole régime was rotten and had to be changed at all costs.

They accepted the principle of the division of executive, legislative and juridical powers; but they did nothing for the liberation of the peasants.

The Constitution of May 3, 1791 provided among other things:

The Landed Gentry: Honouring the memory of our Ancestors as Founders of the Independent Government, we most solemnly promise to the Nobles' Rank all liberties, privileges, priorities in private and public life; we recognise the

Nobility as the foremost Defenders of liberty and of this Constitution.

"... The peasants: We take, in justice, humanity and Christian obligation as well as for our own Interest, under the protection of Law and the National Government the agricultural people, from whose hand flows the most abundant source of the country's riches, who represent the most numerous population in the Nation, and thus the bravest force in the country."

Such a Constitution could obviously not save Poland nor liberate the sleeping forces of the peasantry, although conditions were more favourable than they had been before. The serfs began to recover their faith in their own power and to forget their defeat during the uprisings in 1648-50. The aristocrats began to complain that the peasants "threatened continually to imitate the French action, that they talked about 'better times' and believed that the king ordered them not to do week-work."

### THE MAGNATES REBELLION

The answer of the magnates, even to the innocent Constitution of May 3, 1791, was rebellion. The Constitution was adopted against their will—and they began to fear lest a precedent had been created. All the available evidence points to the fact that any patriotic feeling was alien to them.

### WHEN POLAND CEASED

After the Second Partition (1793) Poland ceased in fact to exist. The

king was still nominally in Warsaw as head of an independent state, but the Russian garrison and Catherine's Ambassador took care to prevent any further *faux pas* on his part. Even before 1791 the Ambassador, Count Repnin, was daring enough to arrest four leading Polish senators and bishops of the Opposition and to send them to prison in Russia.

The patriot opposition came to the conclusion that in these circumstances the only possibility was an armed struggle, the success of which depended, as they gradually realised, on the co-operation of the serfs as well as of democratic elements outside Poland. Soon after 1791 armed groups of peasants were formed. They chose the Kosciuszko Cap, a Polish counterpart of the French Tricolour, which later became famous as their democratic revolutionary badge.

Kosciuszko's insurrection was the first attempt to re-establish Poland's independence on a broader social basis. The history of all subsequent struggles for the liberation of the Polish people shows the gradual absorption of democratic principles into the minds of those who organised and fought against the occupying powers and their Polish allies; after each defeat the Polish democratic leaders were able to enlist the support of larger sections of the population, and also came more and more to distrust the sincerity of most of the nobility.

In July, 1830, revolution broke out in Paris; in August Belgium rose in revolt. The time had come to act in Poland. The Paris revolution inspired the people of Warsaw to become more courageous and firmer of purpose, and even to proclaim openly that there would be a revolution in Poland.

War broke out in February, 1831, and again private interests were stronger than the public welfare; the peasants were asked to help, but there was no mention of their liberation. In consequence it was difficult to expect them to join in any larger numbers; the insurrec-

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tion was doomed in the face of the overwhelming power of the Russians. After six months, in the autumn of 1831, the vanquished remnants were forced to leave the country.

### REVOLUTION OF 1863

The Revolutionary Committee of the Democratic Party issued a manifesto on January 22, 1863, proclaiming the insurrection and declaring "all sons of Poland, irrespective of religion and family, origin and rank, free and equal citizens of the country." The manifesto implied the liberation of the peasants and equality of rights for everyone. Out of a population of about five million persons, only 10,000 badly armed, ill-clothed, inexperienced insurgents joined the struggle, though they managed to harass the armies of the Russian Empire for almost eighteen months.

The insurgents, except on rare occasions, did not have the support of the landed aristocracy.

"The behaviour of the majority of the gentry towards the insurrection was shocking. If they had not been

afraid they would even have been ready to help the Russian Government to capture the insurgents. They sowed despondency, spread defeatism among the leaders of the insurrection... All the members of the Galician White Committee, an organisation of the gentry, with the exception of Prince Sapieha and some others, declared themselves against the insurrection. One of them, Alexander Dzieuszycycki (later Regent of Galicia), declared that 'Galicia had to think only of alms for the barefooted, the naked and the hungry, who would flee from the (Polish-Russian) kingdom... the enormous concentration of Russian troops, a reign of terror, the gentry's fear and shrinking from all action and the approaching winter, all this very much aggravated the difficulties of the insurgents. Driven from the manors of the nobles, they found asylum with the poor gentry and in the hovels of the peasants. Without the protection and the help of the peasants they would not have been able to survive the winter; billeted in hamlets, disguised as peasants, they awaited the coming of spring.'

The insurrection of 1863 closed the last chapter in Poland's feudal history.

(to be concluded)

## POLAND'S LEADERS — 8



J. RABANOWSKI

MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS

J. RABANOWSKI was born in 1907 in Warsaw. He was educated at the Warsaw Polytechnic which he left in 1932. While a student, he worked as an electrician on the railway. He was an active member of students' Socialist parties. Later he worked at the Warsaw Railway Directorate. After the campaign in 1939, he lived in Stanislawow and from there he went to the U.S.S.R. and worked in industry. He served at the front as a soldier of the Polish First Division. He is a member of the S.D. (Democratic Party) Executive's Central Committee and Political Committee and head of its Economic Committee. In November, 1944, he became head of a department at the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs. He has now been appointed Minister of Communications.

CHANGING EPOCH SERIES  
Number Three (Birch Books 2/6d. post free).

COAL is a word now on everybody's lips. Increased production of coal is by general agreement a big question for our own country; an increase in production from the Ruhr mines is equally a big question for Germany, but the question arises in a vastly more complicated setting. The editors of the "Changing Europe" series have assuredly deserved well of their readers by including Mr. Christopher Freeman's informative article "Economics of the Ruhr" in the third and latest number. That a rise in the level of production of coal and coke is desirable from the point of view of all Western Europe there can be no doubt, but there are basic disagreements as to how the increased supplies should be distributed. Mr. Freeman does not fail to point out that the determination of sincere democrats not to allow the Ruhr industry to become yet again a most potent weapon in the arsenal of the aggressor is shared by a considerable section of the Ruhr population itself, which has a long tradition of struggle against the coal-barons and steel-kings who helped Hitler to power and kept him there.

Other articles in this number deal with the astronomical inflation of currency in Hungary—now happily overcome by vigorous measures which are illuminatingly described—and with economic planning in Norway. Co-operators will be most interested in the two articles on Yugoslavia. In that country, the ground lost by the Co-operative Movement during the war period is being rapidly regained, but more significant perhaps is the emergence of new forms of co-operation, particularly in the sphere of agriculture production. The present Government of Yugoslavia is giving substantial encouragement to the extension of co-operative enterprise. — N.B.H.

\* "POLAND — THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER 1772-1939" by Henryk Frankel. Lindsay Drummond Ltd.

## Poland's New Writing

by

Richard Matuszewski

LITERATURE has two characteristics: on the one hand, it is an attempt to escape from reality, on the other it is its reflection. Thus, the new Polish post-war literature would like to shake off the nightmare memories of the Hitler terror as quickly as possible, yet at the same time European, and especially Polish minds are still full of these very memories. Nine tenths of post-war fiction, half the dramatic production and at least half the lyric poetry have the war as their theme. Often enough, the material of the author's own memories and experiences is so rich that it has a damaging effect on the literary form and acts as a disorganizing element. In some cases this phenomenon is evidence of a young author's lack of experience—and the young are in the majority in Poland today, since the ranks of the older ones have been decimated by the German terror—but in other cases it reflects something altogether different.

A number of literary compositions are springing up which can hardly be classed as novels or short stories, although they are more than just features or diaries. They are in many cases original and first-rate works of art. What we have here, is therefore not so much lack of experience as rather a new and

*Mr. Richard Matuszewski is one of the younger generation of Polish writers. He has written many poems and essays, and is now on the editorial staff of the Lodz Weekly "Kuznica" ("The Forge").*

ambitious search for additional art forms.

Reviewers have dubbed these compositions "authentic prose," although it does not necessarily imply that the reproduction of one's personal experiences must be ruled by absolute factual truth. The prerequisite is rather an authentic recreation of the atmosphere at certain exceptional moments shared by the whole community. In this connection there is much talk in Poland of a renaissance of realism, but there again this does not mean a return to the writing methods of the mid-nineteenth century, although frequent mention is made of Balzac as the one writer who succeeded in explaining his epoch entirely in terms of the actual factors shaping it.

Picturing the war and the Nazi system, Polish writers are aware that they are presenting to posterity documentary statements of facts which even today some people, especially in other parts of the world, are reluctant to accept as truth. For it is indeed hard to believe that the 80-million German nation had succumbed in its en-

tirety to the Hitler psychosis, and it is equally hard to believe the truly fantastic adventures, the tragic fate and miraculous escape of thousands of people, adventures such as had been hitherto regarded as belonging to the realm of fiction. In this respect, life has left literature far behind.

Polish literature dealing with war topics, may be divided into three groups: (1) tales about the battles of liberation such as those fought by the Army, the underground and partisan groups in the country itself; (2) diaries and memoirs from German camps (concentration camps, labour camps, prison camps); (3) exploits of Polish troops outside Poland (Norway, Africa, Russia, Italy, France, the Polish Air Corps, etc.).

Favourite subjects in the first group are the first phase of World War II, namely, Poland's defence against the German aggressor in 1939, known as the September Campaign, and the Warsaw Uprising of 1944. A great many books have been devoted to Warsaw, the capital whose heroic stand is the pride of every Pole. The best work in this field is a book by the young author Kazimierz Brandys, entitled "The Unconquered City" (Miasto niepokonane). It is a description of the five years which the author spent in the Polish capital. Three times during this period Warsaw served as a battleground, three times it was the scene of conflagrations and the target of bombardments from land and air. Attacks on Gestapo chiefs, conspiracy, the atmosphere of continued terror on days when the Germans staged manhunts in the streets of Warsaw as if they were chasing animals in the African jungles—these are the themes of this book.

Another book of similar character (there are many such today) appeared as an illegal publication during the occupation. Its author, Jerzy Kaminski, was the editor of one of Warsaw's underground papers. It describes the exploits of one of Poland's most gallant resis-

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tance groups, the members of which were Polish boy scouts. For a long time this group had engaged in so-called minor sabotage, such as distribution of leaflets calling for action against the aggressor, or night-time jobs such as writing anti-German slogans on walls, tearing down swastikas and German posters. Then after adequate preparation and schooling, the group had proceeded to more serious diversionary action. They carried out a number of attacks on Nazis, liberated prison transports from the hands of Gestapo and S.S., and blew up arms and ammunition trains bound for the eastern front.

This book which is based entirely on authentic material, is called "Stones of the Rampart" (Kamienie na szaniec), for its heroes were—to quote the words of one of Poland's great poets—"like stones piled onto the rampart of liberty." They perished almost to a man. The symbol of these young people who were dying for the cause of freedom, was an anchor—the emblem of Fighting Poland, drawn in chalk on the walls of almost every house during the occupation. And it is this symbol which adorns the cover of the book which has been re-published since, and which has become a best-seller.

*(to be concluded)*

## THE BRITISH-POLISH SOCIETY

*The Organiser says:*

BY the time these notes appear in print your organiser will be in Poland discussing and making arrangements for the work of the Society during the coming winter. A number of meetings and interviews have produced a really formidable list of suggestions and requests for new material. The job of the Society is, of course, to connect the people in Poland with the people in Britain, and it is obviously felt here that we need more practical contact than we have had in the past. Suggestions include regular news contributions from Poland in our magazine, also news and letters from repatriated Poles and their British wives, exhibitions of Polish arts, handicrafts, etc., films of life in present day Poland and the presentation of Polish artists in our theatres and concert halls. Meanwhile we are continuing our programme of meetings in various parts of the country and will welcome any enquiries from your district for speakers.

Circular letters have been sent out recently on the subject of the new Associate Membership of the

Society. Briefly it amounts to this: instead of separate subscriptions for membership of the Society and for *New Poland*, a composite membership fee has been approved of 10/6d. per year which not only covers the two subscriptions but also entitles the Associate Member to a free copy of every other publication published or issued by the Society. This material is authentic information from Poland and much of it is unobtainable from any other source. In particular, organisations of an educational character will find it of great use for reference purposes. When your own subscription runs out why not renew as an Associate? It's worth it!

The next event for members of the Society will be a social gathering to meet our President Mr. Elwyn Jones, M.P., on October 20 at MANSTON HALL, PORTLAND PLACE, W.1.

This will have an extra interest as Mr. Jones has himself just returned from a holiday visit to Poland, the first visit of a representative of the Society as such. We hope to see all our London members there—CAPT. F. L. FARR.

## INFORMATION PLEASE!

**Mesdames Maria Szybowska and Maria Turlejska (see page 8) answer a reader's question on clothes' rationing in Poland.**

In Poland, working people get clothing coupons which can be spent in the shops. Usually, people register with an outfitters, and about every three months your turn comes round for some item of clothing, perhaps a coat, a suit, or underwear. Things have not been easy. The acute shortage of leather caused by the Germans stealing and slaughtering cattle has meant a scarcity of shoes. A pair of shoes can be bought with coupons for 500 zlotys (25s.), or on the free market for 1,500 zlotys (75s.). Expensive, yes, but the natural consequence of acute shortage. Sometimes a consignment of new clothes is sent to a factory or office, and people wanting to buy them can select the articles they want. If there is any argument about particular articles, lots are drawn for them, and in this way a solution found with no hard feelings!

Advertisements in the newspapers and over the radio tell people about the new goods just becoming available, and in which shops they are to be found. Clothing in general is still expensive, but the tendency is for prices to scale down as more goods become available.

### New Poland

Offices: (Editorial and Business):  
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LONDON, E.C.4.

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