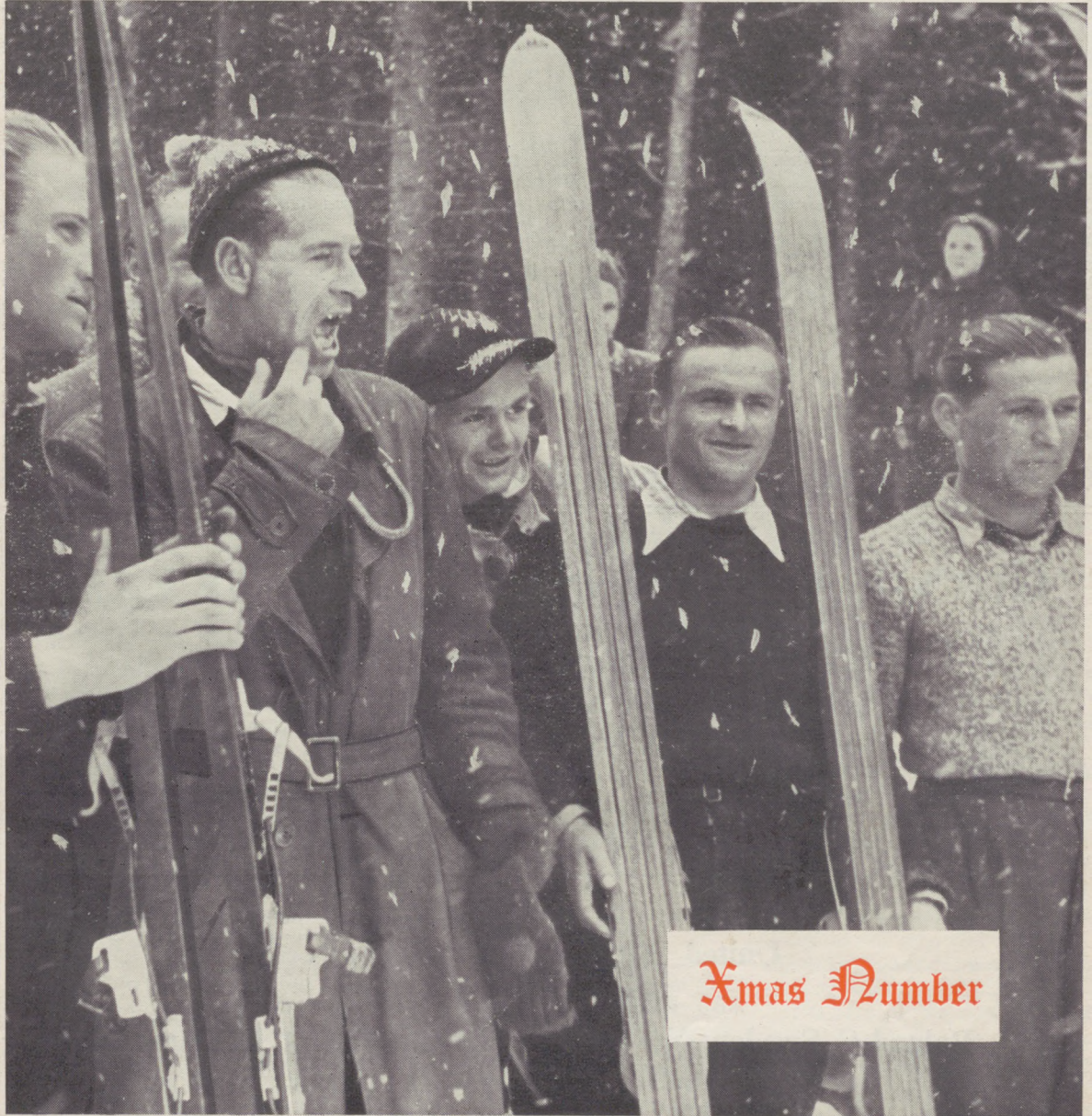


616929 / 1947-1948

New Poland

A MAGAZINE OF BRITISH-POLISH INTERESTS



Xmas Number

Snow Sports: Skiers assemble on Zakapane's slopes

**IN THIS
ISSUE**

- ★ *Pearl Binder's Polish Diary*
- ★ *Xmas in Poland*
- ★ *Three Questions by—D. H. Ennals*

DECEMBER

1947

2

6^D
MONTHLY

A Christmas Message

To the Polish People:

We know now that Hitler had more than one Fifth Column. Perhaps the hardest to deal with and conquer is the Fifth Column of destruction and shortages (of materials, transport, machinery, houses, food, clothing—worse, of men, women and children) which his aggressive wars inflicted on Europe and the world. The Polish people have suffered more than any other people in Europe from this organized murder and planned plunder.

I had the privilege in June, 1946, and the summer of 1947, to see the Polish people grappling with the huge task of establishing the free life of the Polish nation after the terrible years in the Nazi shadows. I salute their courageous determination to live as a free and democratic nation.

The alliance between Poland and Great Britain has withstood the fires of war. It will also survive the trials of this difficult peace. Long live the friendship between the Polish and British peoples!

—Elwyn Jones.

From the President of the British-Polish Society,

Maj. F. Elwyn Jones M.P.

GDYNIA-AMERICA SHIPPING LINES LTD.

also MANAGERS of

POLISH-BRITISH STEAMSHIP COMPANY, Ltd.
and ZEGLUGA POLSKA, S.A.

45/7 WHITCOMB STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

Telegraphic Address:

Inland: POLAMERYKA, LESQUARE, LONDON
Overseas: POLAMERYKA, LONDON

Telephone:

WHITEHALL
7561 (10 LINES)

REGULAR PASSENGER & CARGO SERVICE between

United Kingdom and Poland

Also REGULAR SERVICE from

**Poland to Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium,
Near East, U.S.A., and South America**

Head Office: 13/15 ULICA PORTOWA, GDYNIA, POLAND

No. 2

New Poland

Vol. 3

A MAGAZINE OF BRITISH-POLISH INTERESTS

Contents for December 1947

Three Questions by D. H. Ennals	2	Book review: "Russian Zone"	10
I went to see for myself— Capt. Farr	3	Names in the News	11
Scots Diary	5	A Polish "Borstal without bars"	12
Christmas in Poland	6	That 'Free' Market— Maurice Dobb	13
Pearl Binder's Polish Diary	8-9	Parliament: Maj. D. Bruce, M.P.	15
		The Polish Press say:	16

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor: STEWART VALDAR

Chairman: Mrs. Cecil Chesterton, O.B.E. Gordon Schaffer
Mrs. Joseph Macleod, Com. L. P. M. Milner (R.N. retd.).

Commentary

MR. GERALD BARRY, editor of the *News Chronicle*, has recently returned from Poland. The account of his visit, published in that journal, makes interesting reading.

Describing the "iron curtain" as a "myth," he adds: "The foreign visitor finds nothing more substantial to penetrate than a piece of pantomime gauze (a seasonable simile!) He is free . . . to move and talk as he pleases."

Of course, Mr. Barry is not the first journalist to discover that the "iron curtain" is a fraud, but representing as he does a substantial section of the Liberal press his voice must surely help to disperse the clouds of doubt which still exist in the minds of many of our fellow countrymen and women.

In Poland, Mr. Barry tells his readers, "Britain can still count on strong reserves of goodwill if she chooses to draw upon them." He

describes how often he found a keen desire for more trade with Britain.

If further proof is needed to show the efforts which the Poles are making to strengthen contact with Britain and the West, we can point to the fact that about 400 delegates left Poland to attend conferences or for study abroad (mainly Britain, Czechoslovakia and Denmark) this summer.

Coal is the Key

Polish coal deposits are among the greatest in the world, and despite the shortage of machinery and capital investment in this industry, output is still rising rapidly.

Production of coal in Poland has risen by 22,500,000 tons compared with 1945. Domestic consumption of coal is increasing with the tempo of industrialisation.

Recently M. Topolski, Director-General of the Polish Coal Industry,

gave comparable figures of pre-war and post-war domestic consumption and population. The figures, revealing a curious transposition, are: 1937, population 34,000,000, coal consumption 24,000,000; 1946, population 24,000,000, coal consumption 34,000,000 tons. This year home requirements will be 40,000,000 tons. Here is the measure of the expansion of the coal industry on the one hand and the industrialisation of the country on the other.

Coal exports are even most significant. Under the Three-Year Plan, Poland will export 18,500,000 tons this year, rising to 25,000,000 tons in 1948 and 30,000,000 tons in 1950-51. By 1950, Europe will need at least 100,000,000 tons of coal. Since it is improbable that Britain and the Ruhr will be able to provide more than 60,000,000 tons, the importance of Polish coal is at once apparent.

Poland, at the moment, is not only the sole coal supplier to Central and South-East Europe, but is sending countries in North and North-Eastern Europe over 8,000,000 tons of coal as a contribution to the European Coal Organisation.

Propaganda for War

On the eve of the Big Four discussions, which include the problem of Germany, the Polish Government has sent a note to the Allied Control Council in Berlin protesting against the revival of anti-Polish propaganda in Occupied Germany.

Certain imprudent utterances by some Western statesmen, who question the wisdom of the Potsdam decisions and who seek a revision of the Oder-Niessa frontier, have been used by these neo-Nazis.

The fear of the emergence of a new militant Germany dominates the lives of Europeans to-day. As Gerald Barry (already referred to) says: "They (the Poles and the Czechs) are deeply suspicious of 'Germany First' spokesmen and writers who declare that the reconstruction of the Ruhr should come before the help for Hitler's victims."

Three Questions on Poland

—and the answers

by D. H. Ennals (North Western Regional Officer, U.N.A.)

MY STAY IN POLAND WAS all too short, but I was keen to find the answers to three questions: their attitude to the discussions on the Marshall Plan; the extent to which personal liberty exists; and their attitude to the United Nations. These questions could, of course, be answered in several ways, and I give the following views with the realisation that each is *an* answer rather than *the* answer.

1—The Marshall Plan

It seemed that there was at first a certain regret that the Government decided not to attend the Paris Conference, but as soon as the Conference started popular support seemed to veer in favour of the Government's decision. The Government said from the start that they could not attend an *ad hoc* conference where the building up of German economy was to be discussed. That argument carried more weight when, in fact, the Ruhr became an important part of the plan.

It is interesting to note also that Prime Minister Cyrankiewicz made the point that the plan should have been drawn up by the Economic Commission for Europe where Poland would have played her part—a view that coincides with our Association's policy. The American

decision, announced during the Paris Conference, that post-U.N.R.R.A. relief was to be cancelled was greatly regretted, and was said by the Polish Government to be an indication that America never really intended to give relief to both Eastern and Western Europe.

An important point—made to me by General Grosz, the Minister Plenipotentiary—was that Poland might still participate in any scheme which did not also include the creation of Germany as an industrial power. "Anyhow," he said, "we already have trade agreements with 16 of the 22 countries now at Paris—and hope to extend them further. Our improved relations with Great Britain is a cause for mutual encouragement."

2—Personal Liberty

Most people will admit that things were not too easy for the opposition parties during the election campaign in January, and the Government majority probably did not reflect its true level of popularity at the time, but, since the election, the Government's stock has risen enormously. The amnesty, the great increase in personal freedom, and the wise leadership of the Popular Front have all helped to rally public support. The coun-

try is now very much settled down after its spell of banditry. The opposition Press continues to criticize the Government, people are open to express their views in buses and trams, and Government propaganda is reduced to a minimum.

The only sight that would shock a Western visitor is the fact that Polish soldiers are normally armed—it is, however, their custom and the shock is lessened by the realization that except for the small volunteer regular army, the majority of troops are youngsters doing their one year's conscription service.

3—Attitude to U.N.O

Except for the I.R.O., Poland is a member of every established international organization related to the United Nations and takes an active part in the work of the U.N. itself. There is frequent reference to the U.N. in the newspapers of every party, and in his latest speech the Premier pledged full support for the organization. The development of all-party Polish U.N.A. and the setting up of a U.N. Information Centre in Warsaw will both serve to increase the support of a people who perhaps more than any others have cause to hate war and to work together for world peace.

No one would deny that Polish economy is closely tied up with that of the Soviet Union—their proximity makes it almost automatic. The choice that Poland sees is not between East and West but between Russia or Germany—and her sufferings at the hands of the latter make the choice obvious. Yet—like Czechoslovakia—there is still a high regard for British culture, and the Shakespeare Festival while I was in Warsaw was a great success. We must do all we can to strengthen these cultural ties and increase mutual understanding and co-operation between ourselves and a country which lost a fifth of her population in the war against the Axis powers.

NEW POLAND

"THE COLD-BLOODED Englishman" they called me there, and between themselves they said, "He is not interested . . . He has a brain but no heart . . . He doesn't understand us . . ." They were wrong of course, but I had to admit that the difficulties in the way of mutual understanding were real.

I found myself involved in explanations "It is hard to find words." I said, "We British are unaccustomed to expressing our feelings . . . I am embarrassed at revealing my emotions . . ." In the end we did understand each other and I came back rich in friendship and left something of myself in Poland for all time. But more than ever before I realised how much conscious effort is needed to achieve full understanding and how much patient work the British-Polish Society has to do to carry out its aim "To cultivate and strengthen friendship between the British and Polish peoples."

In my first hours in Warsaw I was driven through that monument to barbarism, the miles of destruction, terrible deliberate destruction, of that once beautiful city. After a few minutes I just sat in the car shocked and silent, my throat dry and constricted, controlling my face by sheer will-power. That was when they said, "He is not interested!" An easy mistake to make of course, but how much easier it is to make much bigger and more serious mistakes from here. How easy, for instance, to form a completely wrong judgment when dependant on a garbled Press report of some complex political problem in a country you have never seen, whose language is a mystery of tangled consonants and whose very position on the map has changed two or three times since your schooldays! How little chance there is of friendship between the peoples developing unless there is a constant interchange of news, information and ideas between the countries. I went and saw for myself and experienced myself the difficulties in the way of

DECEMBER 1947

I went to see for myself

by

Capt. F. L. Farr
Organiser, British-Polish
Society

(This is not an article about Poland, but about an Englishman's impressions of, and reactions to, that country. Captain Farr recently spent a month in Poland "to see for himself," and to obtain material of interest to the people of Britain to help in the work of the British-Polish Society).

mutual appreciation, and I came back more than ever determined to extend the work of the Society and the range of this magazine. Knowledge is life, especially to friendship between nations.

* * *

I went and saw for myself. I travelled freely, sometimes alone, sometimes with friends, sometimes with strangers and I saw a lot. But more than I saw I felt a lot. One sees destruction and reconstruction, poor equipment and rich crops, great factories and peaceful villages, fast modern aeroplanes and old worn-out tramcars, and all the other things, pleasant and not so pleasant, relics of the old and signs of the new, that goes to make up the visible physical picture of Poland as she looks today. But one

feels the vital will to live that pushes back the oppression of destruction and brings busy, bustling human activity to streets that are literally the graveyards of thousands, the confidence of the leaders in the Polish people, the faith of the people in their own destiny and, above all, one feels the deep earnest patriotism of all types and classes burning with a flame, now bright, now dim, but unquenched through centuries of history. That simple and much misused word patriotism came to have a completely new meaning to me in Poland, a far deeper meaning than the mere dictionary definition, "Love of country," could encompass. I found it in the faces and voices of the people as they spoke of their country and its future, in the worker who said, "This is *our* country," the peasant farmer, "This

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

is my land," the architect in the planning bureau, "We will build a new city, a Polish city here," and the writer-artist aiming to re-create cultural Poland as "A home worthy of our history." They tell me that this feeling is explained by Poland's history. I wonder—perhaps it is that Poland's survival to possess a history is explained by this patriotism.

Dreams can be wonderful things and I am not materialist enough to discount them, but realism demands that ideas should be judged by their results. It is at this level of practical achievement that the visitor to Poland is most impressed. What has been done in Poland in the two years of peace would be wonderful anywhere, but when it is realised that of all the countries of the world this was the worst devastated by war and occupation, and in addition had to cope with changed frontiers and economic resources and a loss of population of nearly 20 per cent., the achievements seem nothing short of amazing. That life is hard work for almost all the people is natural enough, and they accept it as such, but what is strange is the almost casual way they take it for granted that their lives go on in an ordered society. There is law and order throughout the land—something which did not exist for over six years. Roads, railways, bridges, cables and airlines net the country, the ravages of years of war made good in months. Factories that were wrecks two years ago (I saw the photographic records myself) are now working at nearly pre-war productive level and in some exceptional cases above it. The great spaces of the Regained Territories, which two years ago were German, are already fully populated, fully productive and completely Polish. Everywhere there is an air of cool self-confidence. Difficulties are recognised and understood and precisely because they are recognised and understood they are not feared. I found only one fear in Poland today, the fear that war might again come and divert them from their

work of reconstruction. On this they said to me "That depends on you," for they believe, perhaps quite rightly, that Britain can preserve peace in Europe and they look eagerly to us for signs that we stand for peace.

All Poland is great to me and I number my friends wherever I went, but it was with Warsaw that I fell in love. This heap of ruins, this wonderful, incredible city, takes the heart by storm and makes all those who know her love her. All my life I shall remember the rich-voiced, grey-haired woman architect in the Bureau of Reconstruction saying "... prove that Warsaw was never morally destroyed—physically yes, 85 per cent., but

POLAND'S LEADERS—10



JAN DAB-KOCIOL
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE

JAN DAB-KOCIOL was born in 1878, the son of a small peasant. Persecuted by the Sanacja for organising peasant youth and promoting understanding between national minorities, he left Volhynia and, from 1934 to the outbreak of the war,

morally Warsaw still is, as she has been and will be, the capital and the heart of Poland." And so it is. Warsaw, though devastated, is passionately and gloriously alive and her people live with that kind of fierce intensity which comes from the consciousness of a great destiny. Warsaw will be rebuilt greater and and lovelier than ever before and her rebuilding will be the vindication of European civilisation. But somehow I shall always love her as she is, her patches of loveliness breaking through the vistas of destruction and her people, bright-eyed, looking to and working for the future. It was my privilege to stand with them for a little while and look with them into that future—I looked, and I found it good.

was an Inspector of the Union of Controllers of Territorial Self-Government.

During the Occupation, he helped to organise the S.L. and Peasant Battalions. He fought with the A.L. (People's Army) detachments against the Germans. On behalf of the K.R.N. (National Council of Poland) he organised a provincial National Council in Lodz.

Under the pen-name "Dab," he edited the clandestine "Informator." After the liberation he was elected Provincial Governor of Lodz, and won a reputation as an able organiser.

He has received many decorations, including the Polonia Restituta, the Cross of Grunwald, the Gold Cross of Merit and the Partisan Cross.

When M. Cyrankiewicz formed his cabinet, following after the January elections this year, Jan Dab-Kociol was appointed Minister of Agriculture—a fitting recognition of his efforts to improve the lot of Poland's peasantry.

The flag was ready, but

Scots Diary

by

John Cartwright

(Our Scottish Correspondent)

MR. Henryk Drozdowski, Director of the Gdansk International Fair, has written me to say that the Fair, which is now closed, was a great success. There were 34 foreign firms participating, but my good friend regrets there were no British firms represented and that "we could hoist the flag of Great Britain prepared some weeks before."

He also asks me for literature "which might assist the approach between the Polish people and the people of Britain and to influence the Poles in Britain, to come back to their country." My good friend whom I met at Gdansk, was one of those kindly people who is never satisfied with my answers about his countrymen remaining in this country when they would be welcomed in their own where there was so much to be done.

While the Fair was a success, it was a first attempt under the new Poland, the next Fair to be held between September 20 and 28 1948, is expected to far exceed the first one and Mr. Drozdowski thinks and certainly hopes to see British firms plentifully represented then.

With Mr. Drozdowski's letter fresh in my mind it was disappointing to meet a Polish N.C.O. who told me he was on his way to France and under no circumstances would he return to Poland where he was likely to be imprisoned or shot. He had read all about it in the Polish newspapers, newspapers printed in Polish but produced in Britain.

This man's English was very good and feeling friendly disposed, for after all he was not altogether to blame for his malinformation, I gathered he was on his way to join the French Army. This was a wrong impression for later I learned he

Union Movement, falsifying the whole position in Poland, bewildering the recipients in some cases, until at last, in most cases, the stuff is never opened at all.

According to a Coal Board report, there are now nearly 650 Poles working in Scottish coal mines and that a fresh recruiting drive has been started in the Polish resettlement camps. Poles are also being employed in the shale mines at Burngrange and Westwood, and being housed at Forth and Armadale, but wages paid will be less than the shale miner until they are fully trained.

was one of those invited by high-ranking Polish officers to join a Polish Legion in France.

Five minutes later I conversed with three Polish soldiers, two of whom were waiting repatriation, but the third had the same story to tell as the N.C.O. only it was the Russians who wanted to have a shot at him. He was a strong able fellow and expressed his contentment with membership of the Resettlement Corps.

Ross Calder, in an article in the "People," deals with this type of "work shy" and refers to "easy going officers who are superannuated nuisances." Much harm is being done to the character of the Polish people by this class as Scots folk are apt to think they are representative of the whole.

Another unfortunate feature about the literature referred to above, is that loads of it finds its way into Trade Union offices and elsewhere in the Labour and Trade

Mr. Dobrowolski, M.P. of Krakow, and Chairman of the Polish Foreign Affairs Committee, spent some time in Glasgow during October and visited the Scottish Labour Party Conference at Dundee, where he met Mr. John Taylor, Secretary of the Party and other delegates to the Conference. He is Secretary of the British equivalent of the Workers Educational Association and spent most of his time investigating conditions associated with these institutions. (See page 11.)

Behind schedule, due to engine trouble, The Eastern Prince, a British transport ship, left Glasgow on October 21 carrying nearly 1,500 repatriates. Amongst them were 133 invalids, Displaced Persons from all parts of Europe, wives and babes of Polish soldiers, and officers and men of the 1st and 2nd Polish armies.

January New Poland will tell the story of the first Anglo-Polish film ever made.

Christmas in Poland

by Maria Chrzanowska

CHRISTMAS TREES, poppy seed, carols, loads of various pastries including ginger bread, Nativity plays, and above all Christmas trees, are invariably associated with the memories of anyone who has spent a Christmas in Poland.

The Christmas trees are quite an institution in Poland and are considered to be the most necessary item for a proper observation of the great holiday, both in cities and in the countryside. From the beginning of December, farmers' carts can be seen rushing all over the country from forests to towns and villages, every cart loaded to capacity with fir trees of various sizes. No power in the world has ever been able to stop this wholesale devastation not only of forests but also of parks and gardens. Even during the war under the sharp eye of the German occupying forces who considered that their fellow-countrymen were the only people worthy of a Christmas tree, the Poles always succeeded in raiding forests and parks to provide every Polish home with a fir tree.

These fir trees are brought to the town and sold to the dealers who emerge every year in all large public squares. Two short planks are put across one another and a hole is made in the middle in which to stick the end of the trunk of the tree so that it stands upright. Then the trees are put in dense rows and transforming all the public squares into forests overnight. Narrow passages are left between the double rows of trees permitting the people to circulate around to select

the tree they like best. Should there be a restaurant on the square, the people in the neighbourhood often hear during the night calls for help from merry-makers who, having celebrated Christmas in advance and decided to return home by a short cut across the square, find themselves lost in the labyrinth of trees.

Together with the appearance of Xmas trees traditional stands with various trimmings emerge in the neighbourhood of the tree markets—small candles of various bright colours are sold there together with small fancy candlesticks for fastening to the trees. Silver threads, white cotton, powdered with a shiny dust to look like snow glittering in the sun, miniatures of Santa Claus, bright stars for the top of the tree and many toys and trinkets to be suspended to the branches are also displayed. In the old days the bulk of these Christmas trimmings made of shiny glass was imported from Germany, but since the beginning of the present century, home-made and very ingenious trinkets out of straw, pieces of bright paper and egg shells replaced the foreign imports.

Large fat women, with straw shoes over their boots to keep their feet warm during the long days spent in trading in the open, loudly advertise the superiority of their goods, while urchins walk between the stands of Christmas trimmings trying to deafen the owners of stands by loud shrieks. They often display much wit and poetical talent in encouraging the prospective

buyers with appropriate rhymes. There are, of course, numerous cases of pilfering so that the owners of stands must be well on their guard. Policemen are seldom called; generally two or three slaps settle the matter. Sellers of gramophones and records are also to be found which make such market places an ideal paradise for school children, who pour into them at the school closing hour and are invariably late for dinner at home.

The grocers exhibit barrels with herrings, smoked fish, poppy seed, ginger bread, the latter being baked in the shape of various objects and all covered with icing. Torun is the famous place for this Christmas ginger bread. The local bakers have developed, through centuries, very artistic moulds representing historical figures. The bakeries are full of various pastries, especially of long cakes stuffed with poppy seed or ground nuts. The main food articles sold before Christmas are not turkeys, game and geese, but various species of fish and poppy seed because the pivotal event of the holiday is not on Christmas day proper, but in the evening of Christmas Eve which is a day of strict fast. During that day many people have nothing to eat between a very frugal breakfast and the big Xmas dinner of the evening during which no meat is served; exclusively fish and traditional dishes with poppy seed. The Polish farm folk observe the fast during that day very strictly, but in cities the male population, knowing that they will be a burden at home

(continued on next page)

NEW POLAND

(Continued from previous page)

where the women are busily engaged in preparing the elaborate evening meal and being idle since all offices are either shut all day long or at noon, try to kill the time before the dinner with a few drinks at restaurants. In order to have their conscience clear, only fish is eaten as a snack with these drinks. These celebrations are therefore called "little fish"—little because one may not have too many drinks as one must be sober at the moment when the stars in the skies announce it is time to sit down at the Xmas table. The custom of sitting down together with the appearance of the first star is linked with the story of the star announcing the Nativity of Christ.

THE Christmas Eve dinner is a strange mixture of the old Christian and pagan traditions which have survived throughout centuries. On this occasion a white table cloth is laid on a table covered with hay to remind the revellers that Our Lord was born in a manger on hay, but in the middle of the table in many parts of Poland people put a big bun called "the old man" which is not supposed to be eaten—this last custom originates from the pagan days when one left some food on the holiday table to nourish the souls of the deceased ancestors.

The Christmas Eve dinner is a purely family affair to which only intimate friends are invited. Polish people take special care that those of their friends who have no relatives do not remain by themselves during this night. On the farms one generally leaves two or three free covers for persons who might knock at the door and ask for hospitality should they have been delayed on their way home. According to the tradition the number of revellers must be even as an odd number would bring bad luck to the house. The number of dishes, on the contrary, must be odd. Before the meal the oldest member of the family takes a large white wafer and breaks

it with all members of the household in turn during which ceremony good wishes are exchanged. The dinner begins with herrings, followed by special Christmas soups, then comes fish or several fish dishes depending on the financial situation of the family, cabbage with mushrooms, the poppy seed either mixed with noodles or served very sweet with pieces of shortbread stuck in it. In the southern districts honey and unground boiled wheat are mixed with the poppy seed, which dish dates from the old days when mills were unfamiliar to humanity. Stewed fruit ends the meal during which, in most houses, Christmas carols are sung.

THE Christmas carols have greatly developed in Poland and constitute such a prominent part of the Polish folk music that even the great Chopin inserted one of them in his B Minor Scherzo. The Polish carols represent a great variety beginning with most dignified hymns sung in church and finishing with gay comic songs, including that about the humped-back goose.

The meal is a long one and the singing does not make it any shorter to the great impatience of the children for whom the holiday begins after the end of the dinner when the candles on the Xmas tree are lit and the gifts are distributed. The Polish Christmas is definitely a children's holiday and it is only in towns that grown-ups exchange presents, and this on a much smaller scale than in Great Britain.

At midnight churches are crowded with worshippers who come for the midnight mass during which the whole congregation sings carols. At one of the altars there is always a crèche representing the Nativity. It is generally surrounded by fir trees—fir tree and not the mistletoe is considered to be the Xmas emblem. In some parts of the country the trees in the church are all trimmed with toys so that the In-

fant Jesus could have his share in the children's rejoicing.

Whereas the New Year is celebrated in Poland in public places and rather noisily, Christmas is a family holiday and people do not make a point of having large parties or special theatrical entertainments at that time. Some of the younger cast, especially office workers, have lately developed the habit of profiting by the few free days they enjoy at Xmas time to go to the mountains for winter sports, but the bulk of the people prefer to remain at home. Children's parties are the only exception. In many offices workers collect money to buy a tree and presents for the children of their colleagues and hold a joint party for these babes.

In respect of theatres, Poland has developed special Nativity plays which are being performed from Christmas to the end of January, mainly in puppet theatres where the devil taking the bad King Herod to hell causes just as much joy as the punishment of Punch in this country. Grown-ups also enjoy these puppet performances by introducing political satires into them.

In the countryside children perform these plays dressed as the main figures of the Scripture—those who enjoy the privilege of playing the parts of domestic animals round the crèche and of Herod and the devil seem to be the happiest. Boys spend their evening going around the village with a huge lantern in the shape of a star singing carols before each cottage. They are offered cakes with poppy seed, ginger bread, apples and nuts, which also serve to trim the Xmas tree and are considered to be requisites of the period.

The vast world changed its aspect several times during the long years when candles were lit on Christmas trees and carols sung and people gathered round the tables with hay underneath the tablecloth—but all these traditions have remained.

The Journey Begins :

SATURDAY, JULY 26. Off we go after early breakfast. Nice day. Fearful crowds at Waterloo. Queues even for lemonade. Shoals of Poles seeing each other off. Flowers—presents—luggage. Non-stop to Southampton to find the *Batory* hours late due to fog round Isle of Wight. She steamed in at last. Lovely boat. Children continually lost. We must teach them their cabin number. Very good food. Children ate everything with gusto, including goose and ice-cream. No ill effects.

TUESDAY. A cold day. Caught unexpectedly in shower of surprisingly English dankness whilst exploring Copenhagen with the children and splendid old Polish General with dramatic white moustaches, returning to Poland after eight years' absence. 750 lively Polish children came aboard with attendant nuns and priests. They have been recuperating and building up their health as guests of Danish families. They are buzzing about the ship like a thousand hives of bees. Dan lost for two hours before breakfast today . . . found at last after searching the ship twice, getting matey with a Polish Boy Scout. After dinner an exuberant impromptu Polish dance blew up suddenly. Mr. Gouzowski, who runs the Polish-Shipping Mission, taught me to dance the Polish polka. Most gay



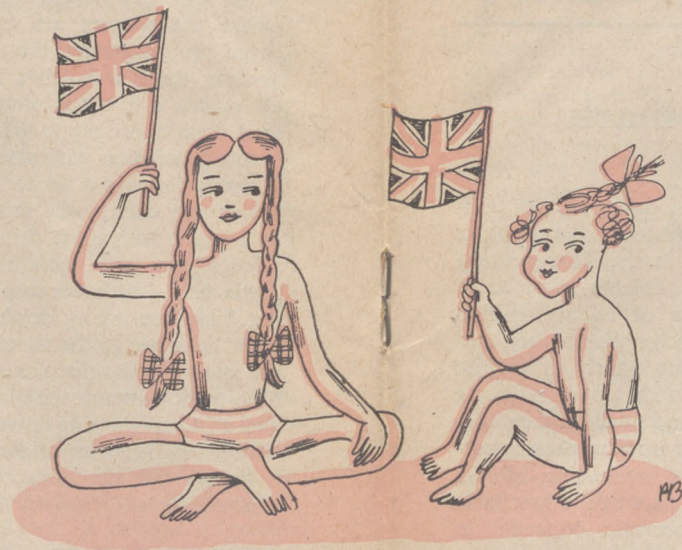
PB

evening. Toast. We arrive in Gdynia to-morrow.

WEDNESDAY. Great excitement on board as we approach Poland. Flags waving and everyone throwing flowers. Minister Chajn waiting on the quay-side to receive us. He caught Lou up in his arms and lifted her above the crowds. Cameras snapping and a delegation of judges and their wives to meet us at the Customs. How kind everyone is. By car through former German Pomerania. Nazi plane smashed in one of the fields, cultivated to the last inch all round it. Very few cows (Jerseys from U.N.R.R.A.) . . . one or two goats . . . a few geese and a couple of chickens at each farm, and vast acreages of corn and potatoes practically dug by hand. No tractors. Very few horses. Mr. Chajn left us in charge of a women lawyer named Jannina Ordinzova, who is intelligent, and very witty. He will return with his wife in a week.

THURSDAY. We are staying at Ustka on the Baltic—a simple and attractive rest-home run by the Ministry of Justice for its officials. Children feel at home at once. Rushed to the beach and struck up friendship before long with a most lovely child named Ewa, on holiday with her grannie. Ewa is golden-fair with blacklashed blue eyes . . . a perfect little Botticelli. She speaks excellent French. But the children don't seem to need a common language. Her father—a mathematician—was killed in the war. More friends are Teraynia, Little Hannia and her brother Zbishek.

SATURDAY. The children are quite used to Polish food and already eat cucumber soup with sour cream, cheese pancakes, and even smoked eels without turning a hair. However, the favourite is undoubtedly bilberries and sugar which they go for in a big way. The cook is indulging them in bilberry jelly nearly every day. Our favourite walk is along the harbour in the sunset after supper. There are lots of students here on holiday who flock there too. We have met an interesting young film director and his wife named Anthony and Ariadne. She is really ravishingly beautiful, dark



PB

My Polish Diary

by

Pearl Binder

and graceful, but alas T.B. She is a writer and adores Katherine Mansfield. We bathe together and talk poetry on our walks through the pine-woods. I admire the wicker beach-chairs (of the period 1900 I should say), with extending arm-rests and foot-rests, a pocket to hold a book, even a hook to hold a towel. When it rains suddenly the children pull two together, face to face, and creep inside to play houses.

MONDAY. Anthony and Ariadne took us out to a café this evening. Dancing in the open air. Coffee and cherry-brandy. Mostly American dances but a few Polish ones too, and then they played "My Bonnie lies over the ocean" (as a waltz) in our honour. I think the Polish soldiers must have brought the tune back from Scotland. Also "Two lovely black eyes" which fascinated Ariadne. She kept singing



PB

it all the evening. How she would love Nellie Wallace! I noticed one of the girls as she danced past. She had a number tattooed on her arm from the concentration camp. And a tall fine-looking lawyer staying at our rest-home, who was one of our party, told me he was in Auschwitz for nearly six years. Everyone here has a ghastly story to tell of the German occupation. Mostly too terrible to be printed in England.

WEDNESDAY. Minister Chajn, his wife Mira, and young son Jasio have arrived. We converse in a mixture of English German and bits of Russian. Mr. Chajn's aide Bronnek is a big good-natured blond from Ukraine who sings us long sad songs about Monte Cassino. We are teaching him "Drink to me only."

FRIDAY. I went for a sail in the Polish training-ship "General Zarewski" manned by students and apprentice sailors. Boys and girls dressed in everything from oilskins and military uniform to print dresses. Sea choppy and squalls of rain. Thank goodness I didn't disgrace myself but some of the others were sick. At sea five hours. I hear terrifying accounts of the Warsaw Insurrection from all our friends. How they the blazing streets and so on. In the evening we walked past an apprentice camp in the pine-woods with youngsters singing and dancing outside in the moonlight. The sailors of the "General Zarewski" gave a farewell dance tonight at the local café. Tomorrow they leave for a trip to Sweden under sail. We all turned up. Lots of fun. I learned to dance a Kujawiak. This morning Teraynia's mother wore a most fetching beach-suit of crimson stuff. Made, she told me, from bits of a Nazi flag! But somehow the women do contrive to be charmingly dressed, though clothes and especially shoes, are very hard to come by.

We went to the fair at Gdansk (Danzig) today, leaving the children in charge of Hannia's mother and father who took them to a gym and to a cinema and bought them "Lodies" and what all. I was most interested in the Polish peasant art, well displayed in a big pavilion; and also gingerbread baked in the shapes of madonnas and troikas, and exquisite cut-paper offerings for shrines (this



PB

cut-paper seems to be a Polish speciality . . . I have never seen it elsewhere (the nearest is, I suppose, the Balinese palm-leaf cut-outs) . . . wonderful wall rugs . . . lace caps . . . painted eggs . . . carvings in wood of cheese . . . bone . . . all sorts . . . Came back with migraine from too much sightseeing. Mr. Chajn prescribed cherry vodka—which worked.

SATURDAY. Up at five. Breakfast at six. Off with the Chajn family and our three in a Chevrolet and an open German touring car right across Poland. Excellent farms the whole way. God knows how they manage it with so few horses and less tractors. Grains, sugarbeet, and maize mostly. Stopped for lunch in pinewood clearing in an old partisan shelter scraped out of the earth. Into old Poland. Garlanded tall crucifixes by roadside at every village. Poznan with ancient wall sundial badly damaged but rebuilding rapidly the Minister tells us. And so it looks. On to Breslau. Hopeless, destruction for mile after mile. Every major village we pass either totally or largely in ruins. Driving through sunset into warm darkness of woods, getting higher and higher. Children sleeping for hours. Three punctures and lost our way twice. Barefooted peasants in kerchiefs tell us our direction in shrill voices and bow us onwards. At last, at midnight, we reach Swieradow, near Czechoslovakia.

TUESDAY. We all go scrambling through the woods following little streams every (Continued on next page)

Special Establishment No. 1

Poland's 'Borstal without bars'

Visited by G. D. H. Douglas

Our Warsaw Correspondent

Much interest has been aroused in this country by the girl's "reform school without locks" at Astwell Park, Kent, and also by the women's "prison without bars" at Askham Grange, York. In Poland, too, experiments have been undertaken in reform schools and prisons to remove the emphasis from "punishment" to "reform." The writer describes one of these experimental schools—Special Establishment No. 1.

IF you closed your eyes, you could imagine yourself listening to some numerous, specially trained and handpicked choir.

They were singing Polish folk-songs in four parts: there were deep contraltos, mezzos and remarkably pure and clear sopranos.

Opening your eyes, you saw 25 little Polish girls between the ages of 9 and 17 in the dark blue dresses of "Special Establishment No. 1." They sang without music, without a piano, without a conductor.

Sometimes one of the smaller ones in the front came to a piece she didn't know. So she crept in behind one of the others so that we shouldn't see she had stopped singing.

When we asked their headmistress about a singing teacher, she said: "Oh no. There is no special teacher. Sometimes I teach them a song, sometimes one of the other mistresses. Sometimes they just learn it by themselves."

At Grochow, just outside Warsaw on the east bank of the Vistula, Special Establishment No. 1 deals

Page Twelve

into a room of her own the day we arrived; there is still one dormitory—for an additional 15 girls—unfinished, but the whole place breathed an almost alarming air of spotlessness and order which led one to believe that it must be ruled by something of a martinet.

In fact, to a large extent, the girls rule themselves. They decide all punishments in special "Courts." "But sometimes we have to tone down the sentences," said Mrs. Zarebinska. "The girls are apt to be too severe."

The girls do nearly all the essential work themselves—sweeping, washing, needlework, helping in the kitchen, and growing their own vegetables in the grounds.

A typical punishment, if a girl's work is scamped, is not to let her do that job for a week or so. Mrs. Zarebinska said: "They soon start asking to be taken back on the job. Not being allowed to do it makes them feel they are of less value than the others, no longer 'one of them.' They will do anything to get back."

They are paid for extra good work, and are allowed to spend the money on anything they like. They also take it in turns to do the shopping for the orphanage. If something is found to be wrong with their accounts, they miss their turn when it comes round again.

ALTHOUGH these are girls with a reputation for running away, the gates are always open. Sometimes they do run away, but sooner or later they always come back. There are some, who have been used to selling under the Germans, who run away in the spring and come back in the autumn.

They are quite free to mix with the children outside, but are warned to be careful not to gossip too much. Sometimes the children outside get to know that such-and-such a girl was a thief or did something particularly wicked. Then, when a

(continued on next page)

NEW POLAND

(continued from previous page)

quarrel arises, they bring it out, and that causes unnecessary tears and misery.

Unlike other Polish orphanages, these girls do all their lessons in the orphanage. They stay there, until they have finished their elementary schooling, which in Poland is normally at 15, but girls who have been retarded are allowed to stay on to 17 or 18.

Mrs. Zarebinska said that her greatest problem was to know what to do with the girls when the time came for them to leave. Most of them—"all the most unsuitable ones"—wanted to become teachers, or nurses or lady doctors. But for many their best prospect was to find a job in a shop or factory and then get married.

Mrs. Zarebinska was modest in her claims for the success of her methods of treatment. "We only cure about 50 per cent.," she said. "The rest will continue to have difficulties of character all their lives." Before the war, results were better, but present conditions were unsettled.

IT is perhaps not difficult to understand why the runaways return to "Special Establishment No. 1." It is generally described as "the second best-equipped orphanage in Poland," with the addition "that is how we aim to have all our orphanages in a year or so's time."

The cooking, in which the girls help, would do credit to a good hotel; there is a wireless (which gets London), a library (in immaculate brown-paper covers) and large, wooded grounds where they are starting to repair the tennis-courts. Once a month they go to the theatre or a cinema. They spent their holidays in Zakopane, Poland's most famous mountain resort. And then there is the atmosphere of the place.

In a few weeks' time they will have a piano—as if they needed that to make them sing!

DECEMBER 1947

That 'Free' Market

by Maurice Dobb

Lecturer in Economics, Cambridge University

UNFORTUNATELY the visit which I recently paid to Warsaw (at the kind invitation of the Minister of Education) was too short to enable me to express any opinion upon the economic condition of the country and upon the degree of success in achieving the aims of the National Economic Plan for Reconstruction. But I was able to have some very interesting and informative talks with economists and others. A considerable part of my time was occupied in giving lectures about the economic situation in Britain (which was the purpose for which I was invited); and the time available for studying the facts of Poland's economy was all too limited.

I learned enough, however, to be impressed by the fact that the Index of Industrial Production had virtually reached the 1938 level, while some industries such as engineering, mining, fuel, power and chemicals are substantially above it; and that the trade unions are playing a very big part in the battle for production. In the summer months, I was told, there had been something of a building boom; which was taken as a sign of confidence, even in bourgeois circles, in the political stability of the Government. Private enterprise is given free rein in the patching up of ruined buildings as far as the first floor; and in such patching up there were signs of quite widespread and feverish activity.

The visitor is struck by the existence of the free market, where the peasant farmer has the right to

freely trade his produce at prices much higher than those obtained for goods from State industries. In other words, there is "a price-scissors" working to the peasants' advantage. But since this encourages the farmer to buy machinery and fertilisers and to put up buildings, and hence to re-equip agriculture and raise its productivity, this is not regarded as a bad thing for the time being. As supplies coming into the market increase, and as State trading extends, and can exert a stabilising influence over the free market, it is the intention to close the "price-scissors" and lower prices on the free market. There is no present intention of dislodging individual enterprise from farming and introducing collective farming in its place.

In the universities, I found both in the curriculum, customs, self-government and teaching personnel a surprising degree of continuity with the past; the same subjects are being taught, mainly by the same people in the same way, to an eager throng of students who have to be crowded into quite inadequate lecture-room and laboratory space.

In my own subject, I found much the same books being read (including some recent translations of English colleagues) and much the same doctrinal discussions taking place today as in this country. In fact, when I lectured to an audience of economists upon "Recent Tendencies in English Economic Thought," I found that I was telling them little, if anything, that most of them already knew!

Page Thirteen

PII-221
1947

SERVICES for Goods to and from Central Europe and Overseas by SEA - RAIL - AIR

for prompt service and economical rates consign through

PSA
and their



Transport Ltd.
Organisation abroad

Additional Specialities: Chartering and Passenger Service

PSA TRANSPORT LTD.

Coventry Court, 47 Whitcomb Street, London, W.C.2

Telephones: WHIttehall 9161/5

Travel WHIttehall 7561 (Ext.42/43)

Telegrams: Polsteam, London

C. & H. PRODUCTS, LTD.

Manufacturers of Herring Delicacies

Famous for its Smoked Herring Spread

136, New Kent Road, London, S.E.1

(and at Great Yarmouth)

The Sign of Quality . . .

a C. & H. Product

Trade enquiries invited.